Reading and Writing the *Northern Star*, 1837-1847

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

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Abstract

The Chartist movement (c. 1835-1855) was the first mass suffrage movement in Victorian Britain. This thesis explores the workings of the leading newspaper of the Chartist movement, the *Northern Star* (1837-1852). While several articles and book chapters discuss aspects of the *Star* as a means by which Chartist organisations were kept abreast of developments in the movement, this thesis instead argues that the *Star* is not only of significance to historians of Chartism, but to periodical studies more widely. Focussing on the first decade of the *Star*'s print run, this thesis argues that the *Northern Star* straddled several spectra of identity, including both 'local' and 'national', 'general' and 'Chartist'. These identities, furthermore, were reflexively defined by readers and editors, in a process of dialogue through the 'Readers & Correspondents' column. The *Star* was a politically radical paper, but advocated self-improvement strategies usually attributed to the middle classes in order to circumvent educational and financial barriers to suffrage for working-class men. The *Star* also marked a turning point in the development of early Victorian periodicals, maintaining the radical imagery and linguistic style of the unstamped press, with news and miscellany features pre-dating the 'new' journalism of the 1870s. This thesis argues that the *Northern Star* was not just a newspaper, but a tool for the creation, maintenance, and strategizing of working-class political communities.

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List of Abbreviations

ACLL – Anti-Corn Law League

CC – (Scottish) *Chartist Circular*

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

ECC – *English Chartist Circular* (and Temperance Record)

GNU – Great Northern Union

LI – Leeds Intelligencer

LM – Leeds Mercury

LT – Leeds Times

LWMA – London Working Men's Association

Leeds WMA – Leeds Working Men's Association

NALA – North American Land Agency

NCA – National Charter Association

NCSE – Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition

NCSU – National Complete Suffrage Union

NL – Northern Liberator

NS – Northern Star

OCR – Optical Character Recognition

OED – Oxford English Dictionary

R&C – 'Readers & Correspondents'

SDUK – Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge

SoF – Star of Freedom

Introduction

> TO THE PEOPLE
> MY DEAR FRIENDS,--It is the practice of Newspaper writers to watch the progress of events before they venture to give any decided opinion to the public. They write in a kind of semi-prophetic, semi-anticipatory, semi-approving, and semi-condemning way. On the other hand, I have at all times taken the more manly course of placing my own sentiments upon record on all great questions, rather than allow myself to be guided on factions and sectional opinions, which, in general, emanate from selfish feelings.
> Feargus O'Connor, 1844, p. 1.[1]

The *Northern Star* was the leading newspaper of the Chartist movement. Originating in Leeds on the 18th November 1837, it was also the longest-running Chartist paper, surviving until 1852, almost in parallel with the movement. Feargus O'Connor, proprietor of the paper and one of the 'gentleman leaders' of the movement, writing above on the topic of 'war' for his weekly editorial, invites us to consider the role of the newspaper within the movement and within early Victorian Britain more generally. He separates himself from 'Newspaper writers,' noting the contrast between his 'own sentiments' and the highly mediated liminal space in which these writers shared their opinions. He describes his own approach to discussion of current affairs as 'manly,' even this description more simply expressed than his description of newspaper writers. The editorial, addressed both 'to the people' and his 'dear friends,' suggests that they are one and the same, the people as a political ideal and 'dear friends' his readers. It is this intimacy between writer and reader that I explore in this study. This thesis argues that the *Northern Star* created a liminal space between several topics: between public and private writing, between local and national news, between advertising and discussion. The *Star* was an unusual newspaper for many reasons, not only as a stamped broadsheet emerging from a tradition of radical unstamped tabloids and newsletters, nor because of its rebranding from 'Leeds General Advertiser' to 'National Trades' Journal' almost exactly halfway through its print run. The 'Newspaper writers' of which O'Connor speaks didn't exist in the *Northern Star*. The *Star* was comprised of accounts, meeting minutes, advertisements, letters, reviews, and editorials collated from its own correspondents, as well as O'Connor, the editors, other newspapers, and its own readers. While the *Star* is a vital tool for Chartist historiography, I

[1] 'War,' *Northern Star* [*NS*], 24/8/1844, p.1. All dates given for periodicals follow the British 'DD/MM/YYYY' system.

explore the relationship between the newspaper and the wider movement, examining the relationships between its writers, readers, and the early Victorian media landscape.

It is due to the longevity of the *Star*, as well as its high circulation, that historiography of Chartism has relied heavily on it for material: Joan Allen and Owen Ashton note that although there were at least 120 Chartist periodicals and journals, 'the *Northern Star* provided publicity as well as oxygen of publicity.'[2] Both Ian Haywood and Mike Sanders' works on Chartist creative literature relied on the *Northern Star*, which in its later years serialised Martin Wheeler's Chartist *Bildungsroman*, 'Sunshine and Shadow' (1849-50); while the *Star's* regular poetry column published 'a jackass load' of creative entries from upstart working-class writers as well as maintaining a radical canon of works from Byron, Shakespeare, and Shelley.[3] The *Star* is used mostly by historians as an archive of the many local meetings of individual radical or Chartist groups, enabling maps to be drawn of the movement in work from the Kennington Chartist Project to Katrina Navickas' *Politics of Public Space* book and website.[4] In this thesis I have drawn literary and historical methods together to explore the *Northern Star* as a newspaper during the first decade of its print run. There are two reasons for this scope. The main limitation was the practical impossibility of reading all fifteen years' worth of the paper. The second reason, (conveniently for the first) was that the years 1837 to 1848 were the most active of the Chartist movement. Although agitation for the six-point Charter ran from approximately 1835 to Feargus O'Connor's death in 1855, we can define the energy devoted to the three Chartist petitions, delivered in 1839, 1842, and 1848 respectively, as the busiest organisational periods for the movement. As we will see in the chapters ahead, these periods are also particularly busy for the *Star*, as various areas of the paper ebb and flow. Looking beyond the Chartist movement, we can see the end of the *Northern Star* as the end of the 'taxes on knowledge,' foreshadowing the abolition of newspaper stamp duty in 1855, a major point of contention for radical papers. The *Star* was intentionally founded as a stamped paper in order

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[2] Joan Allen, Owen Ashton, 'Introduction: New Directions in Chartist Studies,' *Labour History Review*, 74: 1 (2009), pp. 1-5, p. 2.

[3] Ian Haywood, 'Introduction,' in *The Literature of Struggle: An Anthology of Chartist Fiction,* ed. by Ian Haywood (London: Scolar Press, 1995). Mike Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

[4] Marietta Crichton Stuart, 'Back to the Land: Findings of the Kennington Chartist Project research group,' Kennington 1848: Another Look (London: Independent Publishing Network, 2019). Katrina Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), see also *Protest History* <http://protesthistory.org.uk/#6/53.797/-1.544> [Accessed 20/08/2020].

to legally publish news. Its first publisher, Joshua Hobson, is acknowledged as a 'veteran of the unstamped press,' having been imprisoned for the publication of the illegal unstamped paper *Voice of the West Riding*.[5] The establishment and survival of the *Star* as a stamped paper must be seen as a response to the 'Six Acts' following Peterloo in 1819, an attempt to suppress the radical press by raising stamp duty from 1*d* to 4*d* on the publication of news and current events.[6] The first decade of the *Star's* print run furthermore coincided with the establishment and failure of over 100 radical periodicals, including O'Connor's ill-fated attempt at a London Chartist daily, the *Evening Star*.[7] The *Northern Star* must also be considered not just within the genealogy of radical periodicals, but mainstream publishing too. During its early years the *Star* enjoyed circulation figures on a par with its Leeds contemporaries, the *Leeds Intelligencer* [*LI*], the *Leeds Times* [*LT*], and, most famously, with the Tory *Leeds Mercury* [*LM*].[8] Within its pages, the *Star* asserted itself within wider literary culture, with advertisements for books on a variety of subjects, and reprinted 'varieties' and 'tit-bits' from other periodicals including *Punch*. The *Star* was additionally significant in the Victorian media landscape for its pioneering portrait giveaways, which we can understand not only as an excellent marketing ploy but in terms of Chartist material culture and the commemoration of leaders of the movement.[9]

Literature Review

The culture of the Chartist movement has been considered in earlier scholarship as essential to the organisation of the movement. Asa Briggs' 1952 collection *Chartist Studies* cemented the study of the movement a century after the *Northern Star's* demise. Work on working-class history more broadly, including texts by Eric Hobsbawm and E. P. Thompson situates the

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[5] James Mussell, 'Northern Star,' *NCSE* (2007) <https://ncse.ac.uk/headnotes/nss.html> [Accessed 20/08/2020].

[6] Newspaper Stamp Duties Bill (1819), p. 575. <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1819/dec/01/newspaper-stamp-duties-bill> [Accessed 20/08/2020].
Martin Hewitt, *Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain: The End of the Taxes on Knowledge* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 7-9.

[7] James Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star*,' *International Review of Social History*, 21: 1 (1976), pp. 51-97, p. 92.

[8] The *Star* and the *Mercury* famously fought a 'circulation war,' each accusing each other of having purchased fewer stamps, and thus having a lower circulation than the other. See Aled Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture in Britain, 1830-1855,' in *Papers for the People,* ed. by Joan Allen and Owen Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), pp.1-24, pp. 14-15.

[9] Malcolm Chase, 'Building Identity, Building Circulation: Engraved Portraiture and the *Northern Star,*' in *Papers for the People*, ed. by Joan Allen and Owen Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), pp. 25-53.

movement not only chronologically between Peterloo, the Luddites, and the birth of Communism in Britain, but arguing that these key historical moments are part of a genealogy of radical left-wing policy, the culture of each informing the traditions of the others.[10] Using material accounts and editorials from the *Northern Star,* as well as archived correspondence and other preserved Chartist periodicals, these works have shed important light on the differences between Chartist organisations across the country. Likewise, Alex Wilson's studies of Chartism in Scotland and D. V. Jones' article on Chartism in Wales have highlighted not only the different organisational aspects of Chartism in these countries, but also the different Chartist reading cultures.[11]

One central thread of Chartist historiography has been the emphasis on literacy within the movement. Given the reliance on the Chartist press as a source of information for historians, this seems evident. Chartism takes its name from the six-point Charter, which was not published until after the establishment of the *Northern Star*. As Dorothy Thompson has noted, 'Chartism was preceded by a number of movements of varying size and influence in which printed journals, pamphlets and broadsides played an important part. It was itself organised and made into a national movement by the growth of a national working-class press.'[12] While the movement was centred around the document that was the Charter, the signing of petitions is further evidence of this culture of literacy. The relevance of Chartism as a literary movement related to class hierarchies and trade skill is heightened when we consider that literacy, at this point, was defined as the ability to write rather than read, or as production rather than just consumption of texts.[13]

As has been asserted by countless others, Gareth Stedman Jones' 'The Language of Chartism' marked a turning point in Chartist historiography, which came to be known as the 'linguistic turn' in 1982. Jones argued that we cannot simply 'infer - with the aid of a decontextualised quotation,' but must instead '[attempt] to identify and situate the place of language and form,' resisting 'the temptation to collapse questions posed by the form of

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[10] Eric Hobsbawm, *Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion, and Jazz* (London: Abacus, 1999). E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1968).

[11] Eric Hobsbawm, *Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion, and Jazz* (London: Abacus, 1999). D. V. Jones, 'Chartism in Welsh Communities,' *Welsh History Review*, vol. 6 (1973), pp. 261.

[12] James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartist Experience* (London: Macmillan Press, 1985). p. 6.

[13] Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 65.

Chartism into questions of its assumed substance.'[14] Jones' approach – which included identifying a kind of Chartist vocabulary, including the use of terms such as 'patriot' and their political background, dating back to Jacobin rebellions – invited Chartist historians to dig deep into the language of the material used, drawing links between different areas of political thought and examining how Chartists defined ideas from what a 'Chartist' was to clearly delineating 'the people' as working class.[15] While Jones situates his analysis of Chartist ideas within a linguistic framework, tracing changes in Chartist political thought, this turn happily led to fruitful studies on the relationship between the content of Chartist writing (and speech) and the forms in which they were published.

Joan Allen and Owen Ashton's collection *Papers for the People* (2005) has proved particularly useful, especially in terms of its bridging the unstamped press and a more mainstream, commercial press for the working classes.[16] These essays, exploring the many facets of regional Chartist presses, as well as Paul Pickering's essay on the Chartist press in Australia, where several leading Chartists, including John Frost and William Cuffay, were transported due to their political agitation, invites us to consider not only the international reach of the Chartist movement but also the 'Do It Yourself' culture of the Chartist press in representing the movement.[17] It is within the last twenty years that we have begun to see more work detailing the relationship between Chartist messages and the media through which these are conveyed. Janette Martin's (2010) doctoral thesis argues that 'nineteenth century print historians have tended to overplay the importance of the written word in the dissemination of political ideas at the expense of oral and visual forms of communication.'[18] Her thesis challenges the balance afforded to oral and print cultures within Chartist studies, arguing that the print culture from which I am working 'fed upon orality and vice versa,' both in terms of production and consumption of political tracts.[19] The remediation of speech into writing and back again in public readings highlights the role of discussion within the Chartist movement, not only of speeches and ideas but of literature and text. We are also seeing more on the role

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[14] Gareth Stedman Jones, 'The Language of Chartism,' in *The Chartist Experience*, ed. by James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), pp. 3-58, p. 6.
[15] Jones, 'The Language of Chartism' (1982), pp. 12-13.
[16] Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton, eds., *Papers For The People* (London: Merlin Press, 2005).
[17] Paul Pickering, '"Mercenary Scribblers" and "Polluted Quills": The Chartist Press in Australia and New Zealand,' in *Papers for the People,* ed. by Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), pp. 190-215.
[18] Janette Martin, 'Popular Political Oratory c. 1837-1860' (unpublished PhD, University of York, 2010), p. 120.
[19] *Ibid*, p. 120.

of Chartist material culture, from Malcolm Chase's essay on young Ann Dawson's needlework sampler of O'Connorville, to Dave Steele's examinations of the daguerreotype of the 1848 mass meeting at Kennington Common.[20] Recent work by Paul Pickering and Katrina Navickas, respectively, has considered the political symbolism of clothing.[21] In this thesis I argue that, aside from the portrait giveaways, we must consider the *Northern Star* as a part of this material culture, the medium of Chartist messages.

Surprisingly, few articles have set out specifically to explore the role of the *Northern Star* within the Chartist movement. James Epstein's 1976 article 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star'* has been useful in providing arguably the most detailed description of O'Connor's behind the scenes work on the *Northern Star*, including notices of his characteristic typographical features that remain a great help to present-day critics in attributing authorship to unsigned articles.[22] Epstein argues that the *Star* was the 'essential medium of national communication and organisation of the Chartist movement. [...] It brought national perspective to the localities and gave local radicalism national coverage.'[23] We can identify Epstein's train of thought within the consideration of 'local' or 'regional' Chartisms explored prior to Jones' work. Where Epstein uses a mixture of editorial matter from the *Star* and biographical details about O'Connor to look behind the scenes of the *Northern Star* to see O'Connor as a gentleman leader and businessman, I look at the paper column by column to identify how it was created in conjunction with its readers, still within an O'Connorite political position. A more recent chapter by Stephen Roberts asks 'Who wrote to the *Northern Star*?' (1995). This essay is, by his own admission, 'not a full explanation,' but, 'one window on the role of the *Star* and its importance to working people,' glancing at some of the comedic highlights and the themes of correspondence.[24] This thesis seeks to open that window, going further than Roberts to offer a

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[20] Malcolm Chase, 'Chartist Lives: Ann Dawson,' *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 261-270. Dave Steele, 'Salt Pork and Daguerrotypes: Unpacking Evidence from 1848,' lecture, 19th May 2018, *Kennington Chartist Project* <http://www.kenningtonchartistproject.org/2018/05/25/talk-salt-pork-and-daguerreotypes-unpacking-evidence-from-1848/> [Accessed 20/08/2020].

[21] Paul Pickering, 'Class without Words: Symbolic Communication Within the Chartist Movement,' *Past and Present*, 112 (1986), pp. 144-162. Katrina Navickas, '"That sash will hang you": Political Clothing and Adornment in England, 1780-1840,' *Journal of British Studies*, 49: 3 (2010), pp. 540-565.

[22] J. A. Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star'* (1976), p. 51. For a brief discussion of O'Connor's characteristic 'spic[ing] with capitals,' see p. 84.

[23] Epstein, *Ibid*., p. 51.

[24] Stephen Roberts, 'Who wrote to the *Northern Star*?' in *The Duty of Discontent: Essays for Dorothy Thompson,* ed. by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts (London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1995), pp. 55-70, p. 55-56.

more comprehensive overview of how the 'Readers and Correspondents' column functioned as a discursive space within the Chartist movement.

My thesis operates at the intersection of literary periodical studies and Chartist historiography. Lyn Pykett argues that the study of the press is 'inevitably interdisciplinary,' 'not only challeng[ing] the boundaries between hitherto separately constituted fields of knowledge, but also challeng[ing] the internal hierarchies and subdivisions within discrete academic disciplines.'[25] Laurel Brake *et al's* edited collection *Investigating Victorian Journalism* (1990), appearing between Jones' 'linguistic turn' and the *Papers for the People*, sought to situate periodical studies between literature, history, and material culture. Margaret Beetham's essay, 'The Periodical as a Publishing Genre' invites us to consider the centrality of time to the periodical form, in a way that markedly differentiates it from novels or pamphlets.[26] Furthermore, 'The Periodical as a Publishing Genre' emphasises the relationship between the periodical and its readership, both 'between this reader [defined by the periodical], invoked or positioned in the text, and the historical reader, who buys the magazine or newspaper and actually reads it,' reminding us that it is 'not a direct or simple one.'[27] This is especially important when we think about different reading practices, including communal reading, the mediation of an assigned reader to children, or the illiterate, or people whose impaired sight prevented them from reading themselves; as well as the acquisition of texts second-hand, by which point the new issue has come out and the reader's relationship with the timing and 'new' information delivered by the periodical becomes more complicated. 'Each number,' of the periodical, asserts Beetham, 'must function both as part of a series and as a free-standing unit which makes sense to the reader of the single issue.'[28] Edward Royle, building on these ideas of the relationship between the form and content of messages, including Chartist messages, reminds us that historical newspapers cannot be taken too directly, noting that, 'one has to be careful, lest one assumes, for example, that all readers of the Chartist *Northern Star* were constipated hypochondriacs, judging by the number of advertisements for patent medicines.'[29] In the last decade, Beetham has considered the relationship between time,

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[25] Lyn Pykett, 'Reading the Periodical Press: Text and Context,' in *Investigating Victorian Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (Basingstoke: Macmillan), pp. 3-18, p. 5.
[26] Margaret Beetham, 'Towards a Theory of the Periodical as a Publishing Genre,' in *Investigating Victorian Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 19-32.
[27] Beetham, *Ibid*, p. 29.
[28] Beetham, *Ibid*, p. 29.
[29] Edward Royle, 'Newspapers and Periodicals in Historical Research,' in *Investigating Victorian Journalism* ed. by Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 48-59, p. 53.

industry, and commodity culture through an exploration of advertisements, reminding us that the periodical, both in terms of the content of the text and the objects themselves must be interpreted within a construct of time as regulated by industrial capitalism, that '[n]ewness or "nowness" became transferred from the magazine to the commodities it featured.'[30] The passing of time and the relationship between commodities, the periodical, and its readers furthermore needs to be understood through systematic barriers and identity markers including class and gender, with Beetham noting that, in her study of Ladies' magazines, '[b]y the time a fashion magazine like the *Queen* had found its way into a working-class home in Manchester, the significance of the date had largely disappeared.'[31] This, I argue, is where the *Northern Star* is unusual. As a protest newspaper, the *Star* is designed, produced, and largely consumed with the purpose of updating readers of the purpose of this political movement. Although matter such as 'Literature and Reviews' may have a comparatively long shelf life, the 'news' of the *Star* has an urgency to it, with reports of meetings and plans for Chartist conventions reliant on being fixed to a particular point in time.

More recently, work by Andrew Hobbs has looked more comprehensively at relationships between readers and periodicals within local and regional contexts. Although the brunt of his work focuses on the latter half of the nineteenth century, the conclusions of these case studies are still applicable to contexts earlier in the century, especially when we consider regional trade identities whose importance has been highlighted in studies of local Chartisms and trade union activities.[32] Additionally, studies of Victorian press networks, including Joanne Shattock's recent case study of William and Mary Howitt, shed light on the relationships between different periodicals and their staff.[33] These studies, including Patrick Leary's *The Punch Brotherhood* (2010), tend to focus exclusively on a single periodical.[34] It is this approach that I have taken to the first study of the *Northern Star*. This allows us to construct a fuller picture of different communities within the media of the Victorian period, tracing how, where, and to whom ideas and styles travelled. While potentially anachronistic, I argue that twenty-

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[30] Margaret Beetham, 'Time: Periodicals and the Time of Now,' *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 48:3 (2015), pp. 323-342, p. 329.
[31] Beetham, *Ibid*, p. 330.
[32] Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2018).
[33] Joanne Shattock, 'Researching Periodical Networks: William and Mary Howitt,' in *Researching the Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press: Case Studies,* ed. by Alexis Easley, Andrew King, and John Morton (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 60-73.
[34] Patrick Leary, *The Punch Brotherhood: Table Talk and Print* (London: The British Library, 2010). See also David Finkelstein, ed., *Print Culture and the Blackwood Tradition* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

first century ideas around networks and professional networking can be helpful in understanding local, regional, and national relationships within press communities of the nineteenth century. This furthermore has important implications for other overlapping communities, including radical politics.

This thesis originated as an exploration of Chartist masculinity and fraternity within the *Northern Star*. Influential essays on Chartist studies produced during the second and third waves of feminist scholarship suggest that class tensions between gender and labour were a mobilising force for many to join the Chartist movement. Dorothy Thompson, whose studies of Chartism have shaped the historiography of the movement over the late 20th century, repeatedly asked 'who were the Chartists?' exploring Chartist identity through a variety of frameworks from trade identity to the disparity between economic class and education to gender. In 'Women and Nineteenth-Century Radical Politics' (1976), Thompson asserts that changes to wages through the industrial process during the early Victorian period disrupted established relationships between class, gender, and labour. She argues that women certainly were involved in the Chartist movement, as evidenced by the existence of specifically female or women's radical and Charter associations, 'of which more than twenty are mentioned in the *Northern Star* during the first two years of Chartism's formal existence.'[35] However, she notes, 'there are no nominations from [the National Charter Association] for women members to serve on local or national committees, nor any suggestion that any women ever held office...'[36] and that, by the late 1840s 'the withdrawal from public activity by the women of the working class is incontrovertible.'[37] She suggests the increasingly formalised methods of organisation as one reason, as 'skilled workers [sic] left behind the unskilled workers and the women, whose way of life did not allow their participation in the more structured political forms.'[38] However, even if 'sentimentalization of the home and the family' resulted in changes to women's participation in politics outside the home, Thompson does not account for the potential for more private or low-key activism, including letter-writing and the education of children. Furthermore, if women did leave the movement, this still begs the question as to why Thompson treats 'masculine' as 'neutral,' rather than being interrogated, as femininity and women's participation in the movement has been. Thompson's analysis of women in the

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[35] Dorothy Thompson, 'Women and Nineteenth-Century Radical Politics: A Lost Dimension,' (1976) *Outsiders: Class, Gender, and Nation* (London: Verso Books, 1993), pp. 77-101, p. 89.
[36] Thompson, *Ibid,* p. 97.
[37] Thompson, *Ibid*, p. 99.
[38] Thompson, *Ibid*, p. 99.

Chartist movement, framed in terms of participation and exclusion to the domestic sphere, has parallels with middle-class feminist activism and entry into white-collar work at the time of publication in the 1970s. By contrast, Jutta Schwartzkopf's *Women in the Chartist Movement* (1991) offers a more comprehensive analysis of gender in the movement, specifically criticising the tendency of previous scholars to view social class as an 'ungendered social category,' and adding depth to Thompson's analysis, foregrounding that even within class solidarity, women were still oppressed.[39] Even class liberation in Chartism was 'one in which women's needs and requirements were submerged in those of men and in which unquestioned male authority and female subservience, its counterpart, became the proclaimed hallmarks of working-class masculinity and femininity respectively.'[40] Schwartzkopf's book remains the most comprehensive study of women's involvement in the Chartist movement, although aspects of gender within the movement and its writing have been fleshed out more recently by a number of scholars. Anna Clark's 'The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity' (1992) critically unpicks ideas of Chartist masculinity and positions them in terms of labour and household economy. Situating her argument within the Chartist home, Clark lays the foundation for the study of the Chartist family and sexuality which have more recently been discussed by Malcolm Chase and Tom Scriven.[41] Clark specifically hones in on the use of gender as a rhetorical framework in Chartist writing and speeches, specifically through melodramatic tales of idealised family setups: 'Melodrama could condense working people's diverse experiences of family economies into one potent narrative of a past golden age, present domestic misery, a wicked villain, rescue by heroic Chartist manhood, and a future of domesticity brought about by manhood.'[42] The use of melodramatic storytelling defines and elevates Chartist masculinity and paints the family patriarch as the hero in his tale, mobilising individual families and family members to collectively bring about political change. It is through these studies that we can understand the political significance of the disenfranchisement not only as the loss of political citizenship for all those excluded by the £10 property barrier, but as a form of emasculation which coincided with significant changes to wages and the value of labour. Eileen Yeo's edited

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[39] Jutta Schwartzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p. 1.
[40] Schwartzkopf, *Ibid*, p. 6.
[41] Chase, *Chartism* (2007) ch. 1, ch. 8,; '"Resolved in Defiance of Fool and Knave?": Chartism, Children, and Conflict,' in *Conflict and Difference in Nineteenth-Century Literature,* ed. by Dinah Birch and M. Llewellyn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 126-140. Tom Scriven, 'Humour, Satire, and Sexuality in the Culture of Early Chartism,' *The Historical Journal,* 57:1 (2014), pp. 157-178.
[42] Anna Clark, 'The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity: Gender, Language, and Class in the 1830s and 40s,' *Journal of British Studies*, 31:1 (1992), pp. 62-88, p. 65.

collection, *Radical Femininity* (1998) further outlines how femininity can be defined as an othering of 'masculinity,' as well as highlighting the ways that women experienced the public sphere not only of politics, but industry and class-based oppression differently to men.[43] Gender, class, and labour cannot be isolated in the study of the Chartist movement and its writing, including that within the *Northern Star*.

A much wider range of feminist and gender studies scholarship, including Angela Davis' *Women, Race, and Class* (1983), invites us to consider the intersectional relationships between identity markers and institutional power within more recent politics, but these enable us to understand expressions and definitions of identity and community in other political contexts.[44] It is for this reason that we also need to accept whiteness as an identity marker of the movement. The majority of the Chartist movement, and indeed of the *Northern Star*, were white, working-class men.[45] Although recent research has begun to give due consideration to notable men of colour in the movement, especially the London Chartist leader William Cuffay, we cannot ignore the concept of whiteness especially with regards to the labour struggles of the movement and the rhetoric of anti-slavery within early industrial capitalism.[46] Davis' understanding of capitalism is the economic framework in which these political changes occur, and that this framework is part of the struggle for intersectional power and citizenship. It is within this capitalism that whiteness is the dominant racial category; along with patriarchy as a system of gendered power. The *Northern Star* was the self-defined 'national organ' of the Chartist movement, and because it was created through the submission of letters, reports of meetings, and speeches at assemblies, it made more sense for this thesis to explore definitions of identity within the *Northern Star,* and within the movement as it related to the *Northern Star*. Study of women or identity within the Chartist press as a whole is a practical impossibility

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[43] Eileen Janes Yeo, 'Introduction,' *Radical Femininity: Women's Self-representation in the Public Sphere,* ed. by Eileen Yeo (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 1-23. See also Helen Rogers, '"The prayer, the passion, and the reason" of Eliza Sharples: freethought, women's rights, and republicanism, 1832-52,' pp. 52-77; and Michelle de Larrabetti, 'Conspicuous before the world: the political rhetoric of the Chartist women,' pp.106-125, both in the same volume.

[44] Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Random House, 1982). Davis explores the ways in which white femininity has been used to further oppress or deny black citizenship following the Abolitionist movement in the United States. Her study begins in the 1850s through to the 1980s. I argue that any kind of political history must also be studied through its legacy.

[45] See Chase, 'Chartism, Democracy, and Marx and Engels,' *Theory and Struggle,* vol. 116 (2015), pp. 32-37. See also Tom Scriven on the mixed-race white British and Indian Dr. John Taylor, *Popular Virtue: Continuity and Change in Radical Moral Politics, 1830-70* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), pp. 59-60.

[46] Chase, 'Chartist Lives: William Cuffay,' *Chartism* (2007), pp. 303-311; Martin Hoyles, *William Cuffay: The Life and Times of a Chartist Leader* (Hertford: Hansib Publications Ltd, 2013).

for one thesis, and singular identities of gender or class, as we have seen, cannot be studied in isolation from each other. This thesis therefore explores the role of the *Northern Star* in creating and maintaining an intersectional community of Chartists.

In order to define and understand the communities that made up the *Northern Star's* writers and readers, we need to define community to begin with. This thesis explores the *Northern Star* as a discursive space whereby communities of writing and reading are established and contained. Where physical spaces, such as greens, moors, pubs, and platforms enabled the physical gathering of activists during the Chartist movement and other radical movements, the expression of these events in the *Northern Star* represents meetings of communities on the page, remediating these events into a new space, and enabling a kind of mobility. Jürgen Habermas' conceptualisation of the 'public' and 'private' spheres of intellectual activity provides the foundation for this interpretation of the *Northern Star* in relation to public meetings and activist communities. Habermas' understanding of the origin of the bourgeois public sphere is one in which capitalism, citizenship, and discussion dates from the 17th and 18th centuries. This helpfully situates his formation of the 'public sphere' alongside the radical traditions from which the Chartist movement sprung. According to Habermas, '[t]he status of private man combined the role of owner of commodities with that of head of the family, that of property owner with that of 'human being' *per se,* 'separating masculine patriarchal power from the 'privacy' of home into citizenship more widely in the 'public' sphere, or political activity outside of the home.[47] Buildings or institutions for the discussion of political and intellectual activity, whether civic buildings or spaces which required the exchange of money for commodities, such as coffee houses or *salons*, blurred the lines between publicity and secrecy.[48] These physical institutions create community not only through shared interests and purpose, but through exclusiveness, including some while denying access to others. The physical walls and pricing of commodities create physical and economic barriers to access. Writing complicates these separate physical spheres of public and private, as words can be carried, hidden, or shown in different physical spaces through the mobility of the page. Early public reading societies, notes Habermas, 'excluded women and forbade gambling, [and] [...] create[d] a forum for a critically debating public: to read periodicals and

[47] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, transl. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), p. 28-29.
[48] Habermas, *Ibid*, p. 35.

discuss them, to exchange personal opinion, and to contribute to the formation of an opinion that from the [1790s] on will be called "public."'[49] The exclusion of women firstly suggests that literate and intellectual activity based on gender not only mirrors wider political attitudes to women in society, 'public,' 'private,' or otherwise. Furthermore, the creation of groups to subscribe jointly to periodicals reconfigures barriers to entry: a group of people cannot provide the physical barriers to access that walls and doors do, but instead relies on policing of and by the reading society community. Considering the transformation of the public sphere over the nineteenth century, we can still understand the role of the mass press as an institution of the public sphere as a discursive space, if not a physical place. 'The mass press was based on the commercialization of the participation in the public sphere on the part of broad strata designed predominantly to give the masses in general access to the public sphere.'[50] The availability of cheap periodicals, including the *Northern Star,* widens access to political discussion in the 'public sphere.' The boundaries between private correspondence and 'public' politics are further complicated on the page, as Habermas notes, with gossip and '*belles lettres*.'[51] More recently, Kevin Gilmartin has critiqued Habermas' conception of *bourgeois* public sphere, noting the existence of the counter-public sphere of radical (and working-class) political communities. The relationship between orality and print in the counter-public sphere, Gilmartin argues, was how 'the movement assembled its component parts and effectively linked metropolis, leadership and constituency, literate and illiterate audiences, traditional and emergent forms of agitation' in the run-up to Peterloo.[52] While the *Northern Star* would, according to these works, be defined as 'counter-public sphere,' compared with the *Leeds Mercury* as Habermas' public sphere, this thesis draws inspiration from Habermas' concept of 'public' in terms of the contestation of public space. The 'public sphere' of political discussion, and the use of the printed page as a space for community discussion also leads to questions of authenticity and performance.

Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech* (1997) draws on the semanticist J. L. Austin's Speech Act theory, which 'distinguishes 'illocutionary' from 'perlocutionary' speech acts: the former are speech acts that, in saying do what they say, and do it in the moment of that saying; the

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[49] Habermas, *Ibid*, p. 73.
[50] Habermas, *Ibid*, p. 169.
[51] Habermas, *Ibid*, p. 170.
[52] Kevin Gilmartin, 'Popular Radicalism and the Public Sphere,' *Studies in Romanticism*, 33.4 (Winter 1994), pp. 549-557, p. 551. See also Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Camrbidge University Press, 2008).

latter are speech acts that produce certain effects as their consequence; by saying something, a certain effect follows.'[53] This theory suggests that speech (or writing) performs a function in being said (or written), but there is a difference between a performance and a performative. In this thesis the word 'performance' refers to the portrayal of one thing, while 'performative' or 'performativity' refers to the bringing about of an understanding through a linguistic assumption. 'We do things with language, produce effects with language, and we do things to language, but language is also the thing that we do. Language is a name for our doing: both "what" we do (the name for the action that we characteristically perform) and that which we effect, the act and its consequences.'[54] As Butler has famously argued with regards to gender, it 'proves to be performative-- that is, always constituting an identity it is purporting to be.'[55] Language, she notes, is the means by which 'gender is always a doing [rather than being], though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed.'[56] What I understand by this is that an identity marker, including gender, can be actively asserted by a person through language (including writing), and that this identity can be fixed upon them by somebody else. (The example Butler gives of the latter is a doctor delivering a female baby and announcing to the parents 'it's a girl!'[57]) For Feargus O'Connor to assert that he, compared with 'Newspaper writers,' has 'at all times taken the more manly course of placing [his] own sentiments upon record,' he is, in Butlerian terms, performatively constituting his 'manliness'. To have done so 'at all times' is to continually reaffirm this. This, furthermore, is contrasted with the lack of such 'manliness' performed by 'newspaper writers,' claiming a moral authority. The pages of the *Star*, I argue both in this example from O'Connor and for the Chartist community more broadly, was the medium through which gender norms and class expectations could be redefined and performed by those writing to it, publicly asserting these identities and policing those of others in the community. Within the *Star*, 'Chartism' was not only the agitation modelled on the six demands of the Charter, but entailed a variety of different behaviours and characteristics which could be performed by its followers and attributed to or even revoked from others. Adapting these theories of Butler and Habermas, I have demonstrated the *Northern Star* was a discursive space within the Chartist movement in which identities and communities could be negotiated.

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[53] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 3.
[54] Butler, *Ibid*, p. 8.
[55] Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 25.
[56] Butler, *Ibid,* p. 25.
[57] Butler, *Excitable Speech* (1997), p. 49.

Methodology

Scholarship on the theory and application of Digital Humanities ages quickly. Patrick Leary, just 15 years ago, treated 'Googling the Victorians' as a novelty.[58] A decade on, Laurel Brake reassessed these claims, noting the rise of social media use by academics as further changes to academic practice within Victorian studies and the application of networks both to and within scholarship.[59] Different modes of access to archived print materials, whether digital or analogue, change scholarly perceptions of the material. Brake comments that, '[w]hile print seems to render the digital visible and vice versa, at the same time the perception of print formats and their properties is nudged towards the graveyard of the archaic.'[60] Access to archived materials has become increasingly challenging. Fortunately for myself and many others, scholars in 2020 have benefitted from the digitisation of many historical periodicals. This project has been conducted very differently from twentieth-century historiographical work on the Chartist movement thanks to the British Library's digitisation of selected records, as well as that done by technology giants including Google in digitising material from Oxford and Harvard libraries.[61] This thesis is not a digital humanities project, but has been made possible thanks to digital resources and practical approaches to Victorian studies. Jim Mussell notes that in our dependence upon digitised periodicals, we lose some of the materiality and ephemerality of the periodical as an object. 'There is much that can be learned about the press through the process of digitization,' he argues, 'but for users, who are often positioned as passive consumers of content, there is little that could not be learned from looking at the appropriate hard copy.'[62] What we gain from digitised texts is the ability to search (although this comes with problems of its own) and greater ease in treating these as repositories of data ready to convert into statistics. Digital Humanities projects in the 2000s and 2010s focussed on digitising material, including Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition [NCSE], the Yellow Nineties project (which provides a wealth of resources on the *Yellow Book*), and the Olive

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[58] Patrick Leary, 'Googling the Victorians,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 10: 1 (2005), pp. 72-86.
[59] Laurel Brake, 'London Letter: Researching the Historical Press, Now and Here,' *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 48: 2 (2015), pp. 245-253.
[60] Brake, 'London Letter' (2015), p. 247.
[61] Leary, 'Googling the Victorians' (2005), p. 77.
[62] James Mussell, 'Doing and Making: History as Digital Practice,' in *History in the Digital Age,* ed. by T. Weller, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 79-94, p. 88.

Schreiner letters written between 1871-1920.[63] These projects have widened access to the content of the materials, if not the material and sensory aspects of the texts, and as a result we are now beginning to see projects making use of the resources. Adrian Wisnicki praises these digital repositories, noting that projects such as 'the [Victorian poetry] index also holds great as yet largely untapped potential due to its production of raw data on the publication of poetry in the nineteenth-century periodical press. Such data, in future phases of work, might become the basis for innovative computational analysis or visualization, areas that scholars working in digital Victorian studies are only beginning to explore.'[64] Data visualisation projects, such as mapping, as has notably been carried out on the work of writers including James Joyce, as well as Chartist meeting places, can be done with pen and paper, but through interactive digital tools like Google Maps these can be shared and used further by scholars and interested readers.[65] These visualisation projects allow us to recreate the journeys described in these texts, using the content of the texts as the data rather than the periodicals (as objects) themselves. Mapping projects further allow us to consider the geographical and spatial contexts in which these writings were produced, aiding close readings. Johanna Drucker has argued that 'quantitative approaches are always limited by the partial, skewed, an heterogenous evidence in the cultural record,' while conversely, 'close reading has been criticised for attending to aa handful of supposedly exceptional canonical texts […] against which corpus analysis proposes an inclusive view.'[66] As Mussell has noted, reluctance to see Victorian texts as data, as well as corpus linguistics methodology, stems from a privileging of close readings, especially by literature scholars, prioritising depth of analysis over breadth of material.[67] Taking my cue from Drucker and Mussell, I argue that these are complementary methodologies, and as such have used both in my analysis of the *Northern Star*. My chapter on the *Northern Star*'s relocation from Leeds to London, in 1844, uses some mapping in order to examine the *Star's* relationship with location between 1843 and 1845, especially in terms of its radical and journalistic networks. Furthermore, close readings of material isolated through corpus linguistics methodology has not only allowed me to offer a greater insight into the *Star*'s readership demographics but offers potential for a range of future research projects.

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[63] Adrian S. Wisnicki, 'Digital Victorian Studies Today,' *Journal of Victorian Culture,* 14 (2016), pp. 975-992, p. 980-81.
[64] Wisnicki, *Ibid*, p. 985.
[65] Jasmine Mulliken, *Mapping Dubliners Project* (2012) <http://mappingdubliners.org/>. Navickas, *Protest History* (2016).
[66] Johanna Drucker, 'Why Distant Reading Isn't', *PMLA,* 132.3 (2017), pp. 628-635, p. 632.
[67] Mussell, 'Doing and Making' (2012), p. 90.

It is in my methodology that my approach to studying the 'Readers and Correspondents' column changes from previous work in periodical and Chartist studies. Fortunately, the vast bulk of the *Northern Star* is digitized and available to read online, either through institutional subscription to the British Library 19th Century newspapers collection, or free via Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition [NCSE]. Unfortunately, as has been lamented by Malcolm Chase, Mike Sanders, and Jim Mussell, these systems are not adequately searchable for narrowing focus.[68] The significance of such methodology has been recognised by Maurice Lee, who has drawn parallels between the Victorian past and twenty-first century present, noting that 'the nineteenth-century recognised the informational problem of what [Walter] Benjamin would figure as the debris of history piling ever skyward. […] Nineteenth-century and modern readers alike may feel overwhelmed by the progress of textual production, but searching technology makes a potential difference as scholars today pluck needles from archival haystacks.'[69] However, for this searching technology to function, the relevant transcript needed to be readable. Creating a fully-searchable corpus of the whole paper was a practical impossibility in the time allowed, so I narrowed my focus for this aspect of study to this particular column. The reason for this scope is the continued existence of the column throughout the *Star's* entire print run. It is self-referential, has a standardized format that does not change during the decade, in comparison to other columns like 'Chartist Intelligence' which change more markedly. As such, this column lends itself to statistical analysis more easily. Given the large volume of individual correspondents, as well as the three editors running the *Star* at different times, consistency of the format is especially important. It is important to note here that, due to issues of readability, neither the British Library collection nor the NCSE repository are, at present, functioning corpora. The scanned pages of the *Northern Star* available here are, due to the condition of the paper or quality of scanning, not sufficient for Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software on the sites to effectively recognise the text. Thus, instead of sifting through every page of the *Northern Star* to read the column and search for keywords with little accuracy, I transcribed my own corpus. As Mussell notes, the issues with OCR 'means that the searchable index [of these websites] only provides a partial representation of the text printed upon the page and reproduced on the scanned facsimile images.' With some exceptions for

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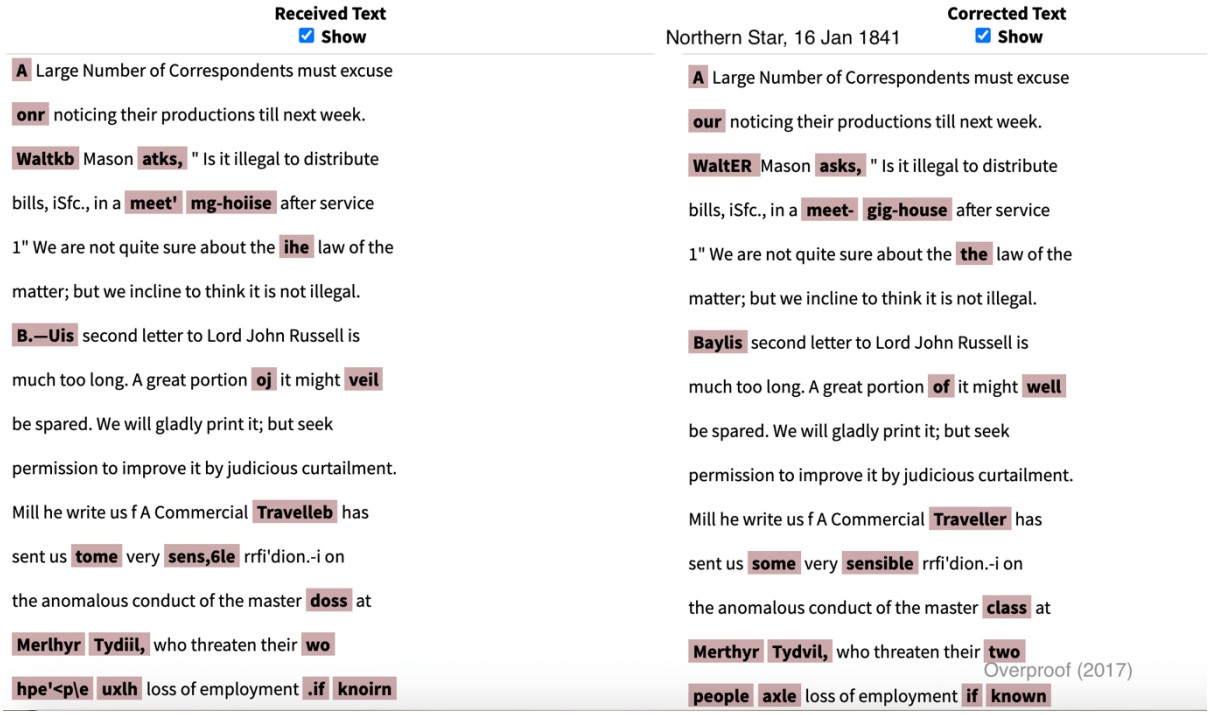
[68] Malcolm Chase, 'Digital Chartists: Online Resources for the Study of Chartism', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 14.2 (2009), 294-301. Mike Sanders, 'The Chartist Text in an Age of Digital Reproduction', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 14.2 (2009), 301-307. James Mussell, 'Doing and Making' (2012), p. 88.

[69] Maurice Lee, *Overwhelmed: Literature, Aesthetics, and the 19th Century Information Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), p. 59.

comparative purposes, my data for chapters one and two come from the Readers & Correspondents column as it appears on the NCSE. I downloaded the OCR transcripts of the column pages for the date parameters I had set into individual plain text files, which I then had to manually 'clean', or correct, myself. This was by necessity a time-consuming process. Through a system called Overproof I was able to 'autocorrect' the transcripts (see fig. 1), which would generally remove any stray punctuation the OCR had mistakenly translated from poor scanning or ink smudges on the image scans, and then continued to manually tidy the entries.[70]

Figure 11: Screenshot of original NCSE OCR transcript and corrections by Overproof. Changes made by Overproof highlighted in pink.

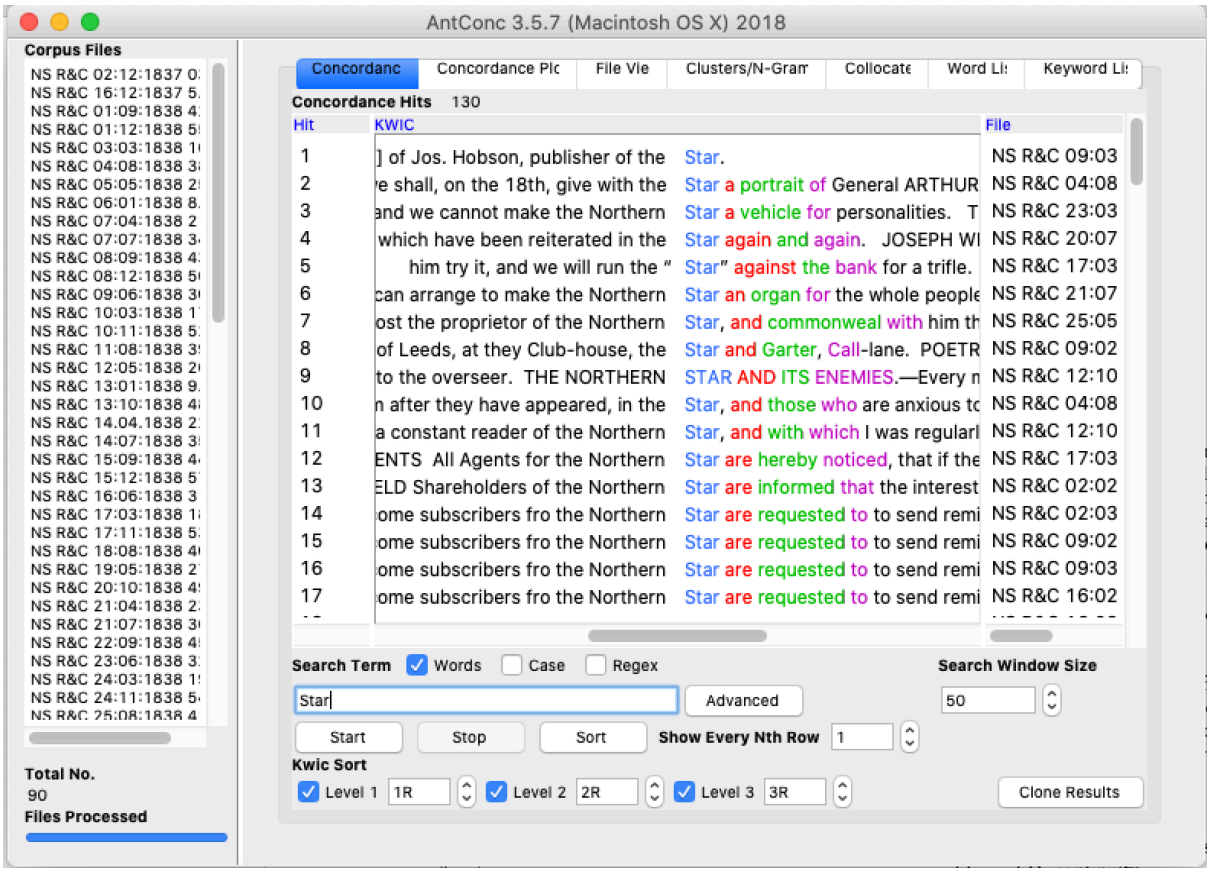


Typographical formatting in the pages of the *Star* could not be translated into a plain text digital file, so I made a coda to represent these typographical changes digitally, using *asterisks* to denote italics and _underscores_ to denote bold text. Any use of capitals I kept the same. As James Epstein identified, this is of particular importance when we consider the letters published in the column by Feargus O'Connor, his use of typographical variants adding emphasis to mirror his speech. Following this process I was able to create a fully searchable corpus of the

[70] Project Computing, *Overproof* (2016) <https://overproof.projectcomputing.com/about> [Accessed 20/08/2020). I am extremely grateful to Kent Fitch at Overproof for processing the files for this thesis free of charge.

column in a format that enables statistical and computational analysis (see fig. 2). To conduct this analysis I used the free concordance software AntConc. The computational analysis I conducted for chapters one and two were concordances and cluster terms, which allowed me to see the frequency of terms and compare how these were used by writers and the *Star* to comment on or assert identity markers, including gender. This also enabled me to measure the length (in words) of the column over time, compared with measuring column inches with a ruler via my computer screen or on the delicate archived documents.

Figure 12: Example of the searchable corpus. This screenshot features the column years 1837-1839 as the search directory, with a concordance search for 'Star.'



While corpus linguistic methodology was appropriate for my chapters on the 'Readers and Correspondents' column, the variations in other areas of the *Star* called instead for a more traditional literary analysis. Because this thesis examines how the *Northern Star* represented communities, rather than the Chartist movement more broadly, I have limited much of my primary material to the pages of the *Star*. I took a systematic approach to studying this material, separating and selecting the columns most appropriate for different aspects of publication

communities. The 'Intelligence' columns are one aspect I isolated for this reason. The 'Chartist intelligence' column (see chapter three), for example, appears two years into the *Star's* print run. This makes this column, unlike 'Local Intelligence,' specific to the *Star*, compared even with other radical journals, and tells us not only about the use of 'Intelligence' as a kind of newsworthiness in Victorian periodicals, but specifically the relationship between the *Northern Star*, Chartism, and newsworthiness. Likewise, 'Literature and Reviews' is unique within the paper for demonstrating professional media relationships with other publishers and papers, although this kind of column is typical for periodicals of the period. These systematic analyses involved reading the column in question from 1837-1847, noting the number of individual items or entries within each column in each issue, and making a tally of the different qualities, *i.e.* names of periodicals reviewed or type of reform group represented. These could further be grouped by categories, such as whether a periodical was a regional newspaper or a literary magazine. In this way I was able to convert the text into some usable data for statistical analysis, for example, to identify different trends in activism across the decade covered by my study. This then allowed me to narrow down the material on which to focus my close readings. There is a risk, as we saw Jones argue, of cherry-picking quotations from the *Star* to use for the sake of argument. In this study I have thematically narrowed down appropriate examples, using the method described, in order to highlight examples that are representative of these general trends. Another advantage of this method, adapted slightly from Critical Discourse Analysis [CDA] is that it builds upon Jones' and John Belchem's proposals for a kind of radical linguistic register.[71] Appropriation of keywords such as 'Chartist' or 'patriot' can vary throughout the different columns of the *Star* as they are applied in different cases: a 'patriot' submitting a suggestion to the Readers and Correspondents' column on how to increase membership of the National Charter Association is different to a poem or literary endeavour being described as 'patriotic.'

Chapter Outlines

This thesis is split into two branches: relationships between the *Northern Star* and its readers, and the relationships between the *Northern Star* and the broader media landscape of Victorian

[71] Teun A. van Dijk, 'Ideological Discourse Analysis,' *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (Amsterdam: Academic Press, 1985). Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); John Belchem, 'Radical Language, Meaning, and Identity in the Age of the Chartists,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 10:1 (2005), pp. 1-14.

Britain. Chapters one and two both make use of the corpus of 'Readers & Correspondents,' exploring the column through different frameworks. The rest of this thesis explores the paper column by column, with the exception of chapter five.

Chapter one explores the Readers and Correspondents column of the *Northern Star*, influenced by Habermas' approach to the private and public nature of published letters. In this chapter I use the corpus of the column to track the ebb and flow of published correspondence within the paper, to examine how editors managed and mediated communication with readers. The chapter argues that the publication of letters is an avenue through which periodical studies scholars can most effectively see relationships between the production and consumption of periodicals, tracking readers' comments or queries on previously published articles. More broadly, the chapter allows us to see the treatment of editorial power within the *Star*, which is especially important for radical journals where political citizenship through the franchise was not a possibility for its readership. Newspaper correspondence is traditionally the only column of a paper in which dialogue between readers and editors goes two ways, rather than the editor (who is in a position of power) speaking to the reader. This chapter therefore explores the negotiation of authority within the paper, as editors and readers, as well as the use of the paper as a public forum for discussion and planning of political agitation. In this chapter I furthermore explore the malleability of publicity and privacy through letters as used by the paper's proprietor, Feargus O'Connor. Not only does this chapter challenge assumptions from O'Connor's critics (both contemporary and modern) that he was a dictator of the paper, but demonstrates that he, too, became a 'reader and correspondent' of the paper during his imprisonment in York Castle Gaol from 1840-41. The publication of letters enabled O'Connor to circumvent his ban on writing for publication during his imprisonment and the negotiation of trust and authority of publishing 'newsworthy' information following O'Connor's conviction of publishing seditious libel in the paper. I conclude the chapter by arguing/demonstrating that the 'Readers & Correspondents' column is a discursive space for defining the *Star's* vision for Chartist agitation in conjunction with readers, as it is used as a kind of metaphorical noticeboard for communication between members of the readership community.

Chapter two continues my study of the Readers & Correspondents column of the *Star*. In contrast to my first chapter, this chapter employs Butler's ideas of performativity to explore how identities are defined and asserted within the column, by the readers and correspondents themselves. This has used the search capabilities of the corpus in order to collate different

gendered pronouns, the use of key words relating to identity markers including region and age to give a snapshot of the demographic makeup of the movement. While this cannot give a comprehensive demographic breakdown of the Chartist movement, it does suggest the personal qualities that the *Star's* readership felt important enough not only to share, but to be publicly identified as through the use of nationally published pseudonyms. This chapter furthermore explores how readers performed their political and social values, including membership of trade groups or 'patriotism,' with groups, as well as individuals, writing into ask questions or make connections with other subgroups within the readership community. This chapter also explores the ways that the column was used to define, police, and brand items, behaviour, or people as 'Chartist.' It takes into consideration the material culture and fundraising aspects of the *Star,* including 'Chartist' branded products and radical biographies of distinguished members of the community. This chapter concludes by arguing that, although the column is by necessity mediated by the editors, readers of the *Star* were able to define within their community what they asserted as suitably 'Chartist' or 'patriotic' behaviour and identity markers.

Chapter three is a case study of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column. Building on information gleaned about community membership and identity markers from chapters one and two, this chapter explores methodologies of activism within Chartist and other concurrent reform movements. In this chapter I explore the tensions between maintaining a Chartist identity and participation in other reforms, identifying overlaps between Chartist, Temperance, and Co-operative activist strategies, and discords with others. Through a systematic close reading of 'Chartist Intelligence,' as well as its predecessor, 'Local and General Intelligence' (1837-1840), this chapter tracks different trends or focusses of the *Star's* Chartist readership over the decade covered by my study. I argue that the *Star's* brand of Chartism was one kind of Chartism, in which the Charter was the most important goal. This chapter also explores the ideological tensions between Chartists and more middle-class reform movements, including the Anti-Corn Law League and Slavery Abolition, both of which the *Star* and its readership community perceived as 'distractions and tricks' from the main cause of the enfranchisement of the working classes. I conclude this chapter by arguing that the *Northern Star* perceived Chartism, including the enfranchisement of the working classes, as its primary and ultimate goal, with community initiatives that could be enveloped within this definition being viewed as acceptable uses of time and resources. The 'Chartist Intelligence' column of the *Star* should

be used by future historians as a guide to Chartist activism specifically by the *Star's* branding and O'Connorite leadership.

Chapter four is a systematic study of the *Star's* 'Literature and Reviews' column. Previous work by Mike Sanders, Ian Haywood, and Gregory Vargo has explored Chartist creative writing, including work published in and reviewed by the *Northern Star*.[72] In this chapter I turn my attention to the reviews themselves as an expression of creative non-fiction, marking an original turn from the work of previous scholarship outlined. This chapter considers the *Northern Star* in terms of professional media networks in the period, exploring the different genres of material reviewed by the *Star*, and whether favourably or not. I also explore the reciprocity of such relationships: while the *Northern Star* often favourably reviews *Punch*, for example, this praise is not reciprocated either in *Punch's* own reviews column or elsewhere in the journal. This chapter furthermore considers the *Star*'s business relationships with other radical and Chartist periodicals, including the Glasgow-based *Chartist Circular*, the leading periodical for Chartists in Scotland. Through coverage of favourable reviews of different genres of periodicals, magazines, and journals, I explore the role of the column in portraying the *Star*'s readership as literary citizens, asserting that literacy is an expression of participation in the public sphere and thus worthy of enfranchisement. This chapter concludes by arguing that the Literature and Reviews column of the *Star* was a discursive space in which an autodidactic identity for O'Connorite Chartists was expressed, in comparison to Lovett and Collins' calls for educational establishments as part of 'new move' Chartism.

In chapter five I conclude my study of the *Star* by examining its regional identity. In this chapter I look more closely at the *Star*'s coverage from 1843-1845, the period surrounding its move from Leeds to London. This relocation is especially significant because of the rebranding of the *Star*, from *'Northern Star* and Leeds General Advertiser' to the *'Northern Star* and National Trades' Journal.' In this chapter I use readings of 'Local and General Intelligence,' 'Advertising,' 'Foreign Intelligence' and coverage of trades meetings to identify changes in the *Star's* relationship with its readers and with other periodicals. I argue that the *Star* was responsible for fostering a community of specifically O'Connorite Chartism, whose primary goal was not only the enacting of the six points of the Charter, but which saw self-help and material culture as means by which to participate in the existing electoral system, culminating in the Chartist Land Plan. This chapter further considers editorial changes, with

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[72] Sanders, *Poetry of Chartism* (2009). Haywood, *The Literature of Struggle* (1995). Gregory Vargo, ed., *Chartist Drama* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

William Hill's dismissal in 1843 and Joshua Hobson in 1845, leaving George Julian Harney at the helm. The *Star's* relationship with the 'North', the capital city, and the nation further changes after 1844, resulting in a more global outlook and appropriation of 'colonisation' from the British empire to refer to Chartist participation in the public (political) sphere.

This thesis aims to be the first comprehensive study of the *Northern Star*. While previous scholarship in both Chartist studies and Victorian periodicals has acknowledged the role of the *Star* in widening access to political discussion, in this thesis I ask how it did so. Drawing from a variety of theoretical and methodological backgrounds, I argue that the *Northern Star* not only re-enacted radical platform culture on the page, but offered a kind of virtual mobility to Chartist meetings and groups across Britain. The *Northern Star* is a discursive space in which 'Chartist' identity is defined and negotiated according to an O'Connorite vision, and where the *Star's* readership community are in dialogue with each other and the editors of the *Star* in asserting these identities. The *Star* furthermore is evidence of the material and educational cultures of the Chartist movement, with non-fictional prose highlighting the creative potential of the community through use of rhetoric and marketing, publicising and contributing to a Chartist economy through which the capitalist state could be undermined.

I argue that this systematic analysis of the *Northern Star,* combining corpus linguistics and use of 'selective reading' practices natural to the periodical format, through use of headings and divisions, demonstrates not only that the *Star* was unique as a newspaper for the Chartists, but within Victorian periodicals more widely.[73] Features including portrait giveaways and hidden advertisements, especially for working-class audiences, were innovative for the early Victorian period and foreshadowed periodical marketing in the 'new journalism' of the 1870s and 1880s. The *Northern Star* should not only be significant for the study of the Chartist movement because it was the most widely circulated periodical of the genre, but because it was created in conjunction with its Chartist readership. Finally, the *Northern Star* was a space for performative self-improvement and educational initiatives, arguing that participation in literacy, debate, and commodity culture was proof that its working-class readers could be trusted with participation in the franchise.

[73] Beetham, 'Towards a Theory of the Periodical' (1991), p. 29.

Chapter One: 'To Readers and Correspondents': Producing and Consuming Letters

Introduction

In his article 'Who wrote to the *Northern Star*?', Stephen Roberts notes the 'wealth of distractions from research,' or material he deemed irrelevant to his research within its pages, before drawing our attention to the Readers & Correspondents column.[1] However, the column has yet to be given the consideration it deserves: Roberts' article quickly glosses over various named contributors and snark-filled responses by editors, and while Mike Sanders has done considerable work on the editors' responses to poetry submissions, this too is a snapshot of the wealth of information in the column.[2] The 'Readers & Correspondents column' creates a space on the page to facilitate dialogue and discussion between readers, the editors, and the proprietor Feargus O'Connor, all of whom become correspondents in these inches. In this chapter I will examine the 'Readers & Correspondents' column in its own right, and explore how it was used within the pages of the *Star* and compared to the local periodical environment of the time. The column facilitated discussion within the movement and with its critics, showcasing the variety of voices and ideas within the movement.

Building upon these approaches, I maintain that the 'Readers & Correspondents' column of the *Star* allowed its correspondents a degree of mobility like that afforded to touring speakers, providing a wider audience for members of the movement to address their comrades across the country. The page, I argue, acts as a shared metaphorical space for activism, where readers can connect remotely, if not in the same physical space at the pub or on the green or in the Chartist hall.[3] The *Star* was an extension of the platform, and the 'Readers & Correspondents' column a discussion of the matters raised. Unlike other regular departments of the paper, this column demonstrates a clear interaction between the producers and consumers of the paper, in addition to communication within and across these groups. It allows us to consider the intersections of readers and writers, publicity and privacy, production and

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[1] Stephen Roberts, 'Who Wrote To The *Northern Star*?', in *The Duty Of Discontent: Essays For Dorothy Thompson*, 1st edn (London: Mansell, 1995), pp. 55-71, p. 55.

[2] Mike Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[3] Katrina Navickas' book on protest spaces uses the *Northern Star* among other sources to identify concrete meeting spaces, with no discussion of the press as a space for discussion outside of these physical meetings. Katrina Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789 -1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017).

consumption of text. It is a relatively open channel of communication, though it is important to remember the various restrictions enforced on the column: the huge volume of communications sent to the *Star* office (never formally counted or measured, but conveyed in comments that their 'table is loaded') were probably never read due to lack of time.[4] Thus, what did appear was largely due to luck of the draw: late correspondence was missed and held over for a week (if at all), some material thoughtfully excluded for fear of publishing seditious libel, in addition to those letters whose content was repetitive, extraneous, or mischievous. Without access to all the letters we are also restricted in what we can know, although reading replies does illuminate how the *Star* and its readers wanted to be seen, both by each other and by the world. I will examine the ways in which the column operated as a space for communication within the movement, as well as how the *Northern Star* operated as a newspaper. This chapter is comprised of three sections: firstly, a consideration of the interactions between editors and readers, the ways that the three successive editors (William Hill, 1837-1843, Joshua Hobson, 1843-1844, and George Julian Harney, 1844-1850) established an authoritative, yet anonymous voice, and illuminated the physical and intellectual labour behind the production of the paper. Secondly, an exploration of dialogue between readers in their use of the column for airing disputes, sharing ideas, connecting with peers throughout the country and establishing a help network. Finally, I will consider how *Northern Star* proprietor and Chartist figurehead Feargus O'Connor used the column as a way to remain in contact with the movement during his physical absences from the *Star*'s office, including his use of the column to circumvent the ban on writing for publication during his imprisonment from 1840-1841.

1. Editorial Authority

From the inception of the *Northern Star*, the content of its columns were subject to negotiation between its editorial team and its readers. Following in the tradition of the 'great unstamped' press before it, with the success and difficulties of papers such as Henry Hetherington's *Poor Man's Guardian* (1831-1835), Feargus O'Connor and his team established the newspaper knowing that writing was activism. This occurred within a wider movement of working class writing, which Kevin Gilmartin asserts was part of a culture of wide ranging print outlets, from pamphlets and handbills, books and magazines, genres of writing including poetry and

[4] 'TPS John T-----', *NS,* 01/12/1838, p. 4.

newspaper journalism.[5] Aled Jones writes that the Chartist press 'had a sense of its own history and destiny,' that 'journalists of the time were enthused and infused with the notion that the press was powerful.'[6] For their stamped press to remain powerful, however, the *Star* found itself bound to certain rules and regulations: not only the conventions of printing and typography, but legal issues like stamp duty and libel, as well as the necessary administrative and physical labour that went into composing and printing a newspaper. Given the short lifespan of most unstamped Radical papers such as publisher Joshua Hobson's own *Voice of the West Riding* (1833-4) that informed the *Northern Star*'s aims, obtaining a strong and consistent audience base was an absolute necessity.[7] Such was an ambitious aim in early Victorian Leeds, establishing itself as both a local and radical newspaper in competition with the three main (stamped) broadsheets: Edward Baines' Tory/Liberal *Leeds Mercury*, the Tory *Leeds Intelligencer*, and Frederick Hobson's (no relation to Joshua) Radical *Leeds Times*, all with high circulation figures.[8] The existence of such a team challenges the traditional historical perception of an O'Connor dictatorship perpetuated by earlier historians such as R. G. Gammage.[9] What the editorial team of the *Northern Star* needed in great quantity was confidence in the value of their paper and the demand for readership: what became the 'People's Paper' required authority to stand as a legitimate competitor within the print market of Leeds, and enable its longevity as a well-produced radical paper. In this section I will explore how the editors of the *Northern Star* established a level of authority in negotiation with its readership, inviting news and opinion contributions from a wide variety of readers while maintaining a level of administrative, literary, and critical control over the subject matter they printed.

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[5] Kevin Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 68, 74, 78.

[6] Aled Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture in Britain, 1830-1855', in *Papers For The People: A Study Of The Chartist Press,* ed. By Joan Allen and Owen Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), p. 5.

[7] A glance at Dorothy Thompson and J.F.C. Harrison's *Bibliography* indicates that few Chartist identified periodicals survived more than a calendar year, some a mere few months. J. F. C Harrison and Dorothy Thompson, Eds. *Bibliography of the Chartist Movement,* 1837-1976, 1st edn (Atlantic Highlands (N. J.): Harvester Press, 1976).

[8] Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007). The *Leeds Intelligencer* was a stamped eight-page weekly broadsheet, costing 4½*d*. The four Leeds newspapers (including the *Star*) were therefore equal in size, price, and schedule.

[9] R. G. Gammage is widely acknowledged as having a personal vendetta against O'Connor, his contemporary history of the movement acknowledges the merit and usefulness of the *Star* while portraying O'Connor as the tyrannical ruler of it. Robert George Gammage, *The History of the Chartist Movement,* 1st edn (London: Holyoake & Co., 1854).

While the original editorial team of the *Northern Star* was full of experienced Radicals, the 'spirit and personnel of the unstamped,' this professional experience did not fully extend to the press.[10] Joshua Hobson, the *Star*'s publisher, had been in discussion with Feargus O'Connor about the possibility of such a radical paper for some time, and had the most experience in the print industry as originator of his own unstamped paper, for which he had been imprisoned on three separate occasions. On Hobson's suggestion, O'Connor appointed the Reverend William Hill, a handloom weaver-turned-minister, combining Hill's own idea for a local Radical journal with their own; as Editor, their ironmonger-turned office clerk and bookkeeper John Ardill; along with a staff of compositors and printers. Their mainstream Leeds contemporaries were operated by professional men, whose education would have been far different to their Trades' backgrounds (O'Connor excepted). They must have been to some extent self-conscious of their standing, especially relying on support from shareholders around Yorkshire, Lancashire, and north east Cheshire, in developing an authoritative voice in Chartism.

The dual labour of newspaper production and administration, as well as the intellectual labour in establishing an authoritative editorial register is shown through the language of responses in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, and should not be understated. It is important to note, however, that this editorial labour is often unacknowledged: Lauren Hinckley writes that Hill was not formally identified in the pages of the *Star* as editor until issue three, in a news report of him addressing a crowd in Huddersfield.[11] Changes to the editorial team in 1843 and 1845, likewise, were not announced as news, but conveyed through snippets such as 'change of address' notices. This anonymity and conventional editorial 'We' allowed the editors to become an omniscient presence in the column, establishing several manifestations of 'rules for writing' as their circulation rapidly grew in 1839.[12] Following the installation of their new printing press they issued an extended notice, requesting that 'the regularly appointed Correspondents to the *Star* will therefore please attend to the following instructions.'[13] Over the years the paper would expand this to include noticeboard for local

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[10] J. A. Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star'*, *International Review of Social History,* 21.01 (1976), pp. 51-97, p. 3.

[11] Hinckley notes that it is only when it is reported that '"MR. WILLIAM HILL, *Editor of the Northern Star*, was received with cheers" that the Historian can identify him as editor.' Emphasis original. ('Important Factory Meeting at Huddersfield,' *NS* 2/12/1837, p. 6) Lauren Hinckley, 'William Hill: An Appraisal' (unpublished BA dissertation, University of Leeds, 2016).

[12] Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007).

[13] 'To Readers, Agents, and Correspondents, '*NS*, 31/08/1839, p. 4.

agents, addresses, requests for reports and reporters in order to avoid taking up other valuable column space with these administrative duties. Their nearest contemporary, Samuel Smiles' edited stamped Radical *Leeds Times* makes several polite requests as follows:

> Individuals transmitting letters which have any reference whatever to the *Leeds Times* newspaper, are desired to be particular in addressing them to the Editor. The non-observance of this rule introduces unutterable trouble and confusion into our office. It is quite as easy to write 'Editor' as to write anything else.[14]

The language used by (presumably) Smiles is overwhelmingly polite – not necessarily stern, but making the request rather than 'rules' as the *Star* go on to do. Fillers such as 'are desired to be particular' indicate the *Leeds Times'* request, rather than an order. Although it is a rule, it is not being enforced as such: the language is fairly indirect in showing that ignorance of it 'introduces unutterable trouble and confusion,' that it is 'unutterable' rather than 'inexcusable,' that it is a bother to them. By co-operating, the reader is being comradely and helpful to the office; meanwhile, the *Star* is direct in its use of imperative verbs such as 'write' and 'make.' The *Star* grew more confident as their circulation rose. In 1842 a recurring notice appeared in the first issue of every month, entitled 'BRIEF RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF ALL WHO WRITE FOR NEWSPAPERS.'

> *— Write legibly. Make as few erasures and interlineations as possible. In writing names of* persons *and* places *be more particular than usual to make every* letter *distinct and clear—also in using words not English.* Write only on one side of the paper. *Employ no abbreviations whatever, but write out every word in full. Address communications* not to any particular person but to "The Editor." *Finally, when you sit down to write, don't be in a hurry. Consider that hurried writing makes slow printing.*[15]

The combined use of italics and capitals for emphasis highlights the importance of these 'rules,' which significantly appear in all capitals as a headline, unlike Smiles' gentler request. This use of typography furthermore demonstrates the ways in which the *Star* stemmed from Radical oral traditions: the typography for emphasis mirrors that which would be stressed when dictating to a compositor, to a crowd – or in the experience of reading the paper aloud. The headline capitalising 'rules' and 'government' both make it easier to read due to the larger font, foreshadowing the use of typographical features including 'scare quotes' and 'sub-heads' in

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[14] 'To Readers and Correspondents,' *LT,* 14/071838, vol. VI, issue 280, p. 4. The *Leeds Times* [LT] was the *Star's* closest contemporary in Leeds: a stamped broadsheet of eight pages, published weekly on Saturdays, priced at 4½*d*, and with the Milton quotation 'Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, above all other liberties' as its subheading.

[15] 'Brief Rules' *NS,* 08/01/1842, p.5. Italics original.

what Joel Wiener argues was the Americanisation of the British press as part of the 'new journalism' movement of the late 19th century.[16] This would furthermore mirror the projection of a voice in the crowd, an authoritative speaker loudly addressing their audience. Through the tradition of Radical speech-making (although Smiles was no stranger to the lecture circuit), we can attribute this authorship to Hill as editor, furthered by a suggestion of O'Connor's made in 1843.[17] Through this, we can already identify a more authoritative stance than Smiles' meandering 'NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.' Unlike the notices for deadlines, each word of this notice is chosen carefully, all with the purpose of making the labour of the compositors easier, that 'hurried writing makes slow printing.' This emphasises the time taken in the physical labour of creating a newspaper for print, and furthermore the necessity of timeliness in publishing a *news*paper so that the movement can be kept as informed and up to date as possible. They furthermore name and shame correspondents who do not adhere to these rules, such as 'ROBERT ALLEN,' in July 1842, who sent 'a very long letter, closely written on both sides of the paper […]. We have not even read his letter, nor shall we do so.'[18] These notices are not infrequent: compared with the calm and civil tone of the notices in the *Leeds Times*, those in the *Star* have a greater sense of urgency, implying that by not adhering to the rules designed to help the compositor, Robert Allen and his fellow rule-breakers decrease the efficiency of the paper and thus, the movement. The Editors ignore the letter to 'save time,' while imposing their specific choice not to read it as a penalty for misbehaviour, meaning that Allen's time and labour in writing the letter was wasted. The 'three pages of blank paper' sent by Allen furthermore imply that he was expecting a private reply by the editors: they retort that, by addressing them to the office, their response would be found in the *Star* as their professional channel of communication with readers.

Further to these formatting rules set out for the correspondents, the *Star*'s recurring feature includes many notices of deadlines, noting that efficiency is their number one priority. The *Leeds Mercury*, their Tory rival, in June 1839, outline in a similar notice that,

> The new arrangements for despatching the Mails from this town involve the closing of the Post Office for Newspapers at a much earlier period than formerly. We are therefore under the necessity of earnestly requesting all Advertisers and Correspondents to send

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[16] Joel H. Wiener, *The Americanisation of the British Press, 1830s-1914: Speed in the Age of Transatlantic Journalism (*Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 173.

[17] Feargus O'Connor, 'A Letter from Feargus O'Connor, Esq., to the Reverend William Hill (Late Editor of the *Northern Star*) in Answer to Several Charges Contained in Recent Documents Published by that Gentleman' (London, 1843), Goldsmiths, University of London [web], Making of the Modern World.

[18] 'Robert Allen,' *NS,* 30/07/1842, p. 4.

> their communications so as to reach our Office on or before Thursday evening, if possible, and, where that is not practicable, early on Friday morning. [T]he accommodation to us would be great.[19]

The *Mercury*, like the *Leeds Times* is considerably more polite than the *Star*, being less direct with their commands: they are 'under the necessity,' 'earnestly requesting' that their correspondents comply 'if possible,' noting, like the *Leeds Times*, that adhering to the new rules would be a friendly help to the office staff, *asking* readers to make the 'accommodation' in sending their correspondence earlier, and imparting some blame on the Post Office rather than their own needs. The *Star*, by comparison, employs more brevity and less flattery, succinctly stating that:

> All Reports of, Meetings, Notices of Magisterial Hearings , or News of Accidents, Offences, &c. as occurring on the Friday; Saturday; Sunday, and Monday, must be forwarded so to reach the Office first thing on Tuesday morning. Whatever requires notice that occurs on Tuesday or Wednesday, to be forwarded to the Office so as to reach here by Thursday morning. Whatever occurs on Thursday, to be forwarded so as to reach the Office by Friday noon.[20]

This schedule provides readers with an insight into the process of compiling the paper, encouraging their co-operation. We are shown that it takes several days to typeset and print each page of the paper, appealing to their labouring readership, while the *Mercury's* more genteel language seeks to flatter readers, making requests of them, as opposed to directing them. In spite of the *Star's* efforts, these repeat instructions were not always followed by readers, however, with frequent replies to correspondents giving the reason for non-insertion that their post arrived too late. The editors at various points demonstrate their annoyance at readers' ignorance with extended notices. In August 1841 a notice 780 words long appears, expressing their lament:

> We regret much that we cannot persuade our friends practically to observe the very clear and plain directions which we have so often given and repeated about the sending of matter for the *Star*. The extent of our circulation obliges us to go to press on Thursday afternoon; and, therefore, our friends seem to think that if their communications reach us by Thursday morning it is quite soon enough. This is a great mistake. They should remember that every word of the paper has to be put together by single letters, and the

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[19] 'To Advertisers and Correspondents, '*LM* 22/06/1839, p. 4. The *Leeds Mercury,* [LM] while famous for its anti-slavery stance in the early 19th century, was a stamped Liberal/Tory broadsheet of eight pages, published weekly on Saturdays, and priced at 4½*d*.

[20] 'Brief Rules for the Government of All Who Write for This Paper' *NS* 25/06/1842, p. 4.

> whole space called before we can go to press, and it is impossible to do this in one forenoon.[21]

This plea is often echoed, and again is designed to appeal to their audience of workers, reminding them of the skill and dexterity necessary for the compilation for the paper. Furthermore, it is the value placed on the precious space of the paper that they draw attention to as well as timeliness and urgency, reminding readers that the creation of the paper is a collaboration, 'that we must give out such matter as we have JUST WHEN THE MEN WANT IT,' placing responsibility upon themselves to 'make the *Star* a truly national organ, equally representing all; but we cannot do this unless the country will aid us rightly in the sending of these matters of communication'.[22] Likewise must the 'whole space be called' before they can print: sending communication in a timely manner ensures a better chance of their copy being chosen to fill the paper; 'called' suggests the relationship between oral and written radical discussion, and evokes imagery of the physical production of the paper in filling the tray of the letter press with the individual letters. The value placed on the paper is emphasised by difficulties in funding. Priced at 4½*d* for several years to remain as affordable as possible under stamp duty, the editors emphasise the importance of the material value of the paper as an organ of the movement by naming and shaming correspondents who fail to pay their postage. Its expanding readership even began to attract a few poison pens, as evidenced in a notice from April 1838 to 'A Constant Reader,' 'who [wrote] from Edinburgh and refuse[d] to pay the postage of his letter,' 'failed of his object. He has not cheated us, but the Post Office. He is not our friend, but a Whig.'[23] The editors send a clear warning to those who try to cheat the *Star* of its precious pence in publicly denouncing them as a Whig, an enemy to the *Star* and to the Charter, the highest insult possible for them to give. Such warnings were commonplace until 1840, after which a more professional approach was adopted: a notice that 'We shall, therefore, refuse all letters that are not pre-paid, come from whom they may.'[24] This approach is consistent with their attempts to claim a moral high ground in refusing to engage with those who use unpaid letters to target them, a warning that they have plenty of correspondence from which to obtain information of meetings and local news.

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[21] 'We regret', *NS,* 28/08/1841, p. 5.
[22] *Ibid,* p. 5.
[23] 'A Constant Reader', *NS,* 28/04/1838, p. 4.
[24] 'All letters from this office…', *NS,* 01/02/1840, p. 4.

This use of editorial authority as a means of demanding accountability was, like the rest of the column, a two-way dialogue. Hill, Hobson, and Harney respectively made apologies for errors of their own. During Hill's reign in mid-1838, a notice was issued to readers in the column to apologise for manufacturing quality, stating that 'Our paper has not been good as we could wish lately, but we pay the same money for it, and upon complaining to Mr. Wrigley he satisfied us that the large size and rapid demand made it impossible to send as good paper as we had when our Circulation was not so great.' The editors here take responsibility for the paper they have received by also publicly implicating their supplier, Mr. Wrigley, but emphasise that they have taken steps to negotiate an improvement, while furthermore boasting of their large circulation as the underlying cause, promoting themselves in doing so. They conclude that, 'He has assured us, however, that he has made arrangements for the future, which will be perfectly satisfactory to our readers,' ensuring that the customers of the 'people's paper' are compensated and truly valued with a high-quality product as they deserve.[25] Once again, the value of the paper is brought into question, in this case emphasising the material value of the *Star* as an object in itself. The *Star* was, according to its own pages, purpose-built as what we might see as a networking tool, 'a national organ; devoted to the interests of Democracy in the fullest and most definite sense of the word; […] supported by every true Democrat in every place.'[26] Consequently the editorial team were under immense pressure to run the *Star* as smoothly and successfully as possible, while acknowledging the financial and content 'support' from their readers. By communicating their administrative demands on a more personal level than their Leeds contemporaries, the *Star's* editors created a distinct print community both within the movement and compared to their more esteemed colleagues in the print market of Leeds.

A common component to many complaints made to the *Star*, and responded to in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, was the disparity between demand and supply of material sent. As a consequence of the growing success of the paper, the flow of material sent to them and published created rifts between editors and readers. Sanders, in his study of the *Star*'s poetry column, notes that published rejections of poetry submissions are funny and nuanced, often begging for relief from the sheer 'jackass load' of material submitted to the editors.[27] The editor therefore became not only an administrative authority but a literary authority too: the

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[25] 'Our paper', *NS,* 26/05/1838, p. 4.
[26] *Ibid.*, as cited in Epstein's 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star*' (1976), p. 62.
[27] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism* (2009), pp. 72-75.

intense value placed upon the *Star*'s columns required scrupulous filtering and many rejections. We have seen the emphasis on deadlines in order to fill the columns with quality material from the perspective of the *Star's* readers. However, the lack of surviving correspondence and manuscript material means that as historians, we can never be quite sure of the editorial process and the role of intermediation from manuscript letter to final printed product, from anywhere between the editors and the compositors, although improvements in shorthand as noted by Janette Martin do give us some clues.[28] That said, the role of the deadline was not only an administrative responsibility but a matter of quality control: many rejections of pieces were marked as irrelevant, as 'stale news.' Within this, however, we also see great importance placed on various news items and charitable cases with promises to insert them as soon as possible: a response to J. S. V. in 1841, for example, stated that 'the case [in reference] indeed is an 'awful and alarming' one. We shall probably return to it hereafter. Want of space forbids it at present, but it will not grow stale.'[29] In using this language, the editors regard the material as organic: a living product that can become unusable if left, and using the language of food to regard the written material as valuable and nutritious, feeding the movement and keeping it alive, with unused or old news material wasted. In their reply to J. S. V., they accept the importance of this 'awful and alarming' case and promise to preserve it for future use, thus assuring their readers of its value. The response from the *Star* gives no further details on the 'case,' and no news items in the three subsequent issues are described specifically as 'awful and alarming' or attribute J. S. V. as a source. As they do not allude to J. S. V.'s whereabouts, it is impossible to confirm whether or not they indeed 'return to it hereafter.' Whether or not it was used, J. S. V. would have known themselves. The *Star* here creates a kind of liminal space between the public and the private, public enough for J. S. V. to recognise the communication, yet private enough to protect them from other readers.

It was for this reason that the *Star* took the step of hiring its own reporters, advertising vacancies in large industrial towns to attend meetings and provide a point of contact for branch secretaries to notify of meetings and have their resolution published for the country to see. The reporters, furthermore, had a responsibility to attend all meetings of which they were notified and report in full. In one 1839 notice,

> WE BEG most respectfully to apologise to our good friends at Huddersfield for the absence of our reporter from their meeting; the reasons which we request Mr. Templeton

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[28] Martin, 'Popular Oratory' (2010), p.131.
[29] 'J. S. V.', *NS,* 19/06/1841, p. 5.

> to explain to them. [Mr. Templeton] has to state as the principal reason, why he was not at the meeting in question, was that he was on that day exceedingly unwell.[30]

Poor Mr. Templeton is required to use as much emphasis as possible for notice of his illness, and contribute to the *Star*'s public apology to Huddersfield. The *Star*'s 1840 advertisement for regular correspondents from the Chartist strongholds of Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Birmingham, and Sheffield requires that correspondents 'must send news written exclusively for that paper [the *Star*], [...] must send more news from their several districts' in order to ensure the *Star*'s material is original and unique to them, while reminding their applicants of the editorial team's strictness for quality control: 'our not inserting all or any, forms no ground for shortening their reports; we presume to be the most responsible judges in those matters, and shall discontinue any Correspondent, who fails to supply matter connected with his district, and interesting to our readers in their cause.'[31] The editors operated literary and stylistic control in order to select the 'cream of the crop' from autodidactic literate working men with some discerning taste and flair for journalistic writing. The editors above all favoured originality, requesting that their local correspondents 'will oblige us by sending paragraphs of original matter and not copying them from other newspapers. We have one who plays this trick constantly; we hope he will take the hint.'[32] This again plays with the public and private spheres: public enough to be news, but private enough to be exclusive to the *Star*, with the *Star*'s own notices to their 'tricky' correspondent coded enough that only he will understand 'the hint.'

In spite of these many requests for original matter of the highest quality, the team were often inundated with letters, taking great time to read them to select the best material. A public notice in mid-1838 states that 'many persons complain of their Communications not being inserted. If we were to print all the communications that we receive we should some weeks, want six or seven *Northern Star*s. Truth to say, it would be the most cruel thing we could do to our correspondents than to exhibit them.'[33] The *Northern Star* is here, by its own admission, an organ of news for the movement, ranging from reports of local society meetings to reports of parliamentary meetings (including motions passed on legislation), plans for organisation, literary reviews, and general town news including crimes, assizes, as well as births, deaths, and

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[30] 'We beg', *NS,* 02/02/1839, p. 4.

[31] 'We wish to receive proposals' *NS,* 10/10/1840, p. 5.

[32] 'Our Local Correspondents' *NS,* 11/05/1839, p. 4.

[33] 'Many persons' *NS*, 26/05/1838, p. 4.

marriages. Thus, they have a level of responsibility in reporting appropriate and accurate content. The discerning reader must place some faith in the editorial team to determine what is not only acceptable to print, but important enough to print: by ignoring some letters, they are being 'cruel to be kind' to ensure the best is done for the whole movement, if at the expense of personal feeling. Further notices declare, 'THE STATE OF OUR COLUMNS THIS DAY WILL BE A SUFFICIENT APOLOGY FOR OUR SILENCE about, and non-insertion of, many articles, both of news and observation, received during the week…' This defines acceptable content for the column to be authenticated 'news' or 'observation.' 'Observation' suggests readers must have empirical evidence of the case. The notice further emphasises the idea of the written news material as organic and living within the movement – that the columns can speak for themselves as an apology on behalf of the editorial team during the heightened periods of agitation in 1842.[34] This 'silent' column is particularly unusual for this period of the *Star's* print run. As evidenced in the table below, the column varied in size over the years, with the largest spikes in 1842, 1843, and 1845. These correlate with the Plug Plot riots of 1842, the founding of the Chartist Co-Operative Land Society in 1845, and the General Election campaigns of the National Chartist Association in 1847. (Fig. 3 below)

[34] 'To our Readers and Friends', *NS,* 20/08/1842, p. 4.

Figure 13: No. of words in the Readers & Correspondents' [R&C] column, by year, average per month, and average per issue.

Year	**1837**	**1838**	**1839**	**1840**	**1841**	**1842**
Total	344	19,267	30,979	37,564	60,060	71,184
Avg. month	173.5	1,604.75	2,566.4	3,130.3	5,000.5	5,932
Avg. issue	173.5	481.67	615.94	799.23	1,177.64	1,547.47
Year	**1843**	**1844**	**1845**	**1846**	**1847**	
Total	93,001	58,255	11,1906	58,928	98,710	
Avg. month	7,750	4,854.58	9,325.5	4,910.66	82,25.83	
Avg. issue.	1,631.59	1,004.39	1,865.1	1,091.25	1,862	

In their apologies the editorial team demonstrate the pressure to succeed in terms of impressing their readership and widening circulation, acknowledging that while they are not solely responsible for the paper (although they emphasise their need to organise efficiently), their desire for representation is an open call for correspondence. Even in their advertisements for local correspondence from self-taught, working-class radicals rather than trained journalists, they effectively crowdsource the paper, and are reliant on the network dialogue for material. In the volume of material that they received, they could then exercise a level of not only organisational but stylistic control, taking on an air of objectivity to raise the bar of quality and encourage the development of critical literacy from their correspondents, asking them to write what is 'interesting' and 'important' to the whole movement.

In terms of the *Star*'s religious identity, the paper was largely secular. Although the original editor William Hill was a Swedenborgian minister, he largely ignored religious content. He does, however, comment on the legality of some acts of the clergy, but is careful with his wording. In one 1839 reply to prominent socialist and atheistic freethinker John Finch,

> we certainly agree with him that the appointment of paid chaplains to workhouses from the established Clergy is intended by the Commissioners as a bribe to the Clergy, wherewith to procure their assistance in working the New Poor Law. There is no principle

> upon which it can be justified. In every instance, and especially in the West Derby Union to which his letter refers, it is a 'shameful robbery.'[35]

The editor states, however, that his letter in full would occupy too much space, but this does not stop the editors from encouraging Finch's sentiment in the agitation against the Poor Law. Likewise they are increasingly open to printing suggestions for organisation of agitation, from fundraising ideas to teetotalism, suggesting that the content they sought was only that which would drive the paper forward. A notice of John Atkins from 1840,

> after writing well and strongly on the total abstinence principle as a sure means of promoting the cause of right, says, 'I also propose that every man that can, instead of taking one *Star* per week, take two, and do as I am doing, send it where it has never been seen; perhaps I have caused several *Stars* to be taken by those who never saw it before'[36]

This particular suggestion not only supports the *Star* financially in the initial purchase, but by widening its reader base and perhaps its correspondence base too: for the *Star*, being radical was to be actively engaged in change. While there may have been many letters in their 'heap', this particular one financially benefits the *Star* from the outset, as well as broadening its reach. The *Star* furthermore makes explicit its definition of acceptable suggestions. Following the notice to John Finch comes another in the same issue to Peter Salmon, stating that 'It is a fixed principle of the *Northern Star* to admit of no religious controversy into its columns.'[37] The intention of the *Star* was to unite, not divide its existing readership. In defining what is appropriate material for the paper, the editors highlight the importance of organised disputes, not personal disputes. While they have no aversion to naming and shaming correspondents who go against tack, they are keen to avoid gossip, such as one reply to S. T., stating that 'our space is too valuable to be occupied with any details of the drunken orgies of the 'Conservative Operatives.'[38] Not only are the Tories political competitors with the radical *Northern Star*, but their 'drunken orgies' suggest juicy, libellous gossip and slander, and in failing to further the Chartist cause, unworthy of occupying space. Although too amusing and cutting to ignore altogether, they still make the comment instead of ignoring it. Part of the repeated 'rules for correspondents' notices of 1842 conclude by reminding readers that,

> our first object being the promotion and enhancement, according to our best judgement, of the success of the great and good cause, the distribution of our time and space so as to

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[35] 'John Finch', *NS,* 06/07/1839, p. 4.
[36] 'John Atkins', *NS* 01/08/1840, p. 5.
[37] 'Peter Salmon', *NS*, 06/07/1839, p. 4.
[38] 'S. T.', *NS,* 06/10/1838, p. 4.

> give least cause of complaint; without fear or favour to any one, and without being, allowed to be turned for one instant from its course by ill-natured snares or bickerings.[39]

This warning urges readers to remain dedicated to their cause, and warns of the ill that could come from division within the network of correspondents, feeding the movement, with the language of value and 'use' again emphasising the importance of the 'great and good cause.' Like the 'details of drunken orgies,' 'ill-natured snares or bickerings' are prime fodder for reputation destroying, a far cry from their 'great and good' intentions to the 'public' rather than 'any one' individual. The adoption of a moral high ground is central to establish an authoritative voice and succeed in the battle for their rights to suffrage in the publicity of the periodical press, against their critics. Asserting a specifically Chartist identity, drawing on Radical traditions, the *Star* defined appropriate content as what was Chartist, while only sufficiently 'Chartist' material could be printed. The paper existed not for the glory of name-dropping or reputation-breaking through slander and libel (so they said!), but to maintain a moral high ground and better the cause through cohesion, not division. The *Star* was, above all, a newspaper for the promotion of working-class suffrage – to win over their middle-class critics, they needed to evidence their respectability. The *Northern Star*'s editorial team were a group of seasoned Radicals, the first generation of which shaped the radical identities and writing of their future correspondents as they progressed through the ranks of editorial leadership. Their distinctive authoritative voice was unconventional for a newspaper of the time, as seen in comparison with its Leeds contemporaries, but overall a success for the longevity of the paper.

2. Publicity and Privacy

The 'Readers & Correspondents' column was not only a space through which the Editorial team could monitor the submissions on which they were so reliant, but participate in a dialogue with their readers, and in turn allow their readers to engage with each other. The production of the paper was, above all, a negotiation, albeit one guided by the editors and their explicitly Chartist agenda. The readers were the *Star*'s main source of funding after 1839, although most periodicals after the 1830s were to some extent reliant on advertising for revenue.[40] Writing on *The Times*, Graham Law notes that 'less than half its columns [were] occupied by editorial

[39] 'Brief Rules', *NS,* 29/01/1842, p. 5.
[40] Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star'* (2007).

material from as early as the 1820s,' as so much space was devoted to adverts both branded and classified.[41] Newspaper advertisements were heavily taxed until 1833, for fear of their political influence, and it is this that can be held partially responsible for the failure of many Radical presses, with Curran and Seaton suggesting that the *Star's* readership had little disposable income (and thus, less worthy of advertising to) and saw themselves as activists instead of consumers.[42] While the *Star* did receive some revenue from advertisers – notably 'Parr's Life Pills,' a strategy satirised later as the *Weekly Warwhoop* in Charles Kingsley's Chartist novel *Alton Locke* (1850) – it was, fortunately, able to largely generate revenue from its loyal readers, who supported it both financially and, as we have seen, with copy. Consequently, the Readers & Correspondents column was a recognition of the editors' debts to their readers, as well as a space for dialogue between correspondents themselves. After aiming to establish themselves as a national organ for news of meetings, the *Star* required commentary to cement its radical agenda in comparison with other Leeds papers. The column did not merely print letters or rejections as we have seen so far, but encouraged further discussion and requested information, and was used as a noticeboard, a space for clarification of points, and interestingly, a way to circumvent advertisement tax for charity appeals and establishing a help network. In this section, I will explore the ways in which privacy and publicity were manipulated in the column by the editorial staff and readers as a means of mutually benefiting each other, and establishing Chartism as a cohesive working class movement.

Although much of the editor/reader dialogue was devoted to style guides and monitoring of content, for the most part the column was devoted to discussion, a space for a two-way interaction between producers and consumers of the paper and demonstrated the symbiotic relationship between the two. The editorial team was dependent on the *Star*'s paid local reporters as well as general reader correspondence (including secretaries' minutes of smaller local club meetings) to fill its 48 columns, and the public nature of this column was their space for negotiating appropriate material. This symbiotic relationship between the editor and reader could only exist on mutual trust. The editors were reliant on their readership, but needed to have trust in the truth of the news they printed: they need to be factual to avoid any

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[41] Graham Law, 'Advertisements', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 5.

[42] Andrew King, 'Advertising', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 5. James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility,* 1st edn (London: Routledge, 2015), p.11.

possible charges for libel or slander, even for local announcements. One polite reply to 'A CONSTANT READER' in 1840 states that they 'don't insert marriages on anonymous authority,' lest the report harm the reputation of a reader in its potential untruth.[43] While in many cases, anonymity was used by correspondents to protect themselves, invitations for private correspondence were opened between readers and editors. A notice to 'S.X' in 1839 asks, 'Will he communicate with us privately and confidentially his real name and character? We perfectly understand his reasons for not wishing to be known, that he may rest satisfied that he shall suffer no harm. We wish to know him.' In doing so, the editors establish a level of trust and promise to protect their correspondent, shielding them from harm, while also being able to obtain the full facts of the communication at hand. As has been noted in previous scholarship of the periodical press, this is a clear expression of the desire for intimacy between editor and reader, building trust off the page.[44] The publication of that reply in the correspondents' column (as opposed to following the postmark for a potential return address) demonstrates their commitment to confidentiality to other readers. However, much like the naming and shaming of those who did not pay their postage, this tactic was applied to those who submitted inappropriate material or potential personal attacks. Later in 1839 'Hugo' is told he 'must be a fool if he thinks we shall insert any such communication as his without knowing whom it is from. How are we to know that it is not a hoax?'[45] Without knowing the content of Hugo's letter we can only speculate from the editors' reply that it was perhaps a falsehood or an attack on an individual – nevertheless, it sparks fears that its appearance in print would entrap the *Star* in legal trouble. Similarly, in 1841, one correspondent is told that they 'must think us fools to expect that we should insinuate a charge of them against an individual upon anonymous authority.'[46] Anonymous claims are not merely a potential trap but an insult to the *Star*'s authority as a newspaper, and to its readers who do submit legitimate news and letters of concern. How much 'authority' can an unnamed *individual,* as opposed to the institution of Editor, truly exert? This need for authentication and distrust of anonymity is particularly interesting given the climate of journalism at the time, where much writing that appeared in the nineteenth century press was anonymous or uncredited, including that of the

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[43] 'A Constant Reader', *NS,* 28/11/1840, p.5.

[44] Anne Humphries, 'Popular Narrative and Political Discourse in *Reynolds' Weekly Newspaper'*, in *Investigating Victorian Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 33-47. p. 39.

[45] 'Hugo', *NS,* 19/10/1839, p. 4.

[46] 'A Subscriber to That and The Star', *NS* 18/12/1841, p. 5. Italics original.

Star. General distrust of the law, especially around issues of seditious libel, could explain why the *Star*'s editors are cautious about *receiving* anonymous information, but *printing* news anonymously protects their own correspondents.

Further exercise in building trust between editors and readers comes from their public notices of errors and clarifications, lest any readers be misled or feel excluded. A variety of apologies appear throughout the paper's run from clarifications on pieces to notices of previous misprints, and are often funny. One early errata notice from 1838 states that 'In Mr. Oastler's letter, page 7, col. 2, paragraph 3.—Line in that paragraph 7, for 'rates,' in italics, read 'RENTS,' in CAPITALS. HIS motto is 'No Rates'—OURS will be 'NO RENTS.'[47] Richard Oastler, a figurehead of Yorkshire Chartism, particularly around labour and factory issues, is afforded celebrity status, the correction to a misprint regarding him is thus all the more important. In correcting their previous error for the benefit of their readers, and to avoid misconstruing the words of Mr. Oastler, the editors' pun not only allows them to poke fun at their own mishap but engage with the syntax of Oastler's original piece to create an inside joke with readers, based on their misprint of 'rents' for 'rates,' creating their own parody motto accordingly; thus gaining their trust while publicly apologising. Errata notices were standard practice for newspapers, but the use of the pun demonstrates an ongoing friendly relationship with readers, and further demonstrates the emphasis on the *Star's* regular readership who would understand the joke, as opposed to each issue being separate from its predecessor.[48] Indeed, engagement with the pieces that were 'errata' strengthens their relationship with readers and shows the level of detail put into the reports. Although most responses are unsigned and unattributed to any individual in the office, occasionally some personal apologies are made on their behalf, one notably from William Hill in 1841:

> THE MANCHESTER RADICALS.—I feel some apology due to our hard-working friends of Manchester for the very unceremonious and uncalled-for criticism on the phraseology of their resolution, which was most unwarrantably affixed during my absence from the office, and without my knowledge or authority. I am fully of opinion that the hateful Whigs richly merit all the opprobrium that can be heaped on them. […] I have, as I hope, taken means to prevent the recurrence of any such liberty.—
>
> W. HILL.[49]

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[47] 'Errata in our last', *NS,* 23/06/1838, p. 4.

[48] This acknowledgement of serial issues is the key feature of the periodical as defined by Margaret Beetham ('Towards a Theory' 1990, p. 29). I argue here that, unlike other weekly newspapers (the *Leeds Mercury, Leeds Times* etc.), that the *Star*'s approach to news was specifically Chartist, and here recognises that this was reliant on a long-term Chartist community.

[49] 'The Manchester Radicals', *NS,* 05/06/1841, p. 5.

In signing his name, Hill takes personal responsibility for the apology and the paper, although he does not take responsibility for the offence caused 'without [his] knowledge or authority.' The emotive adjectives 'unceremonious', 'uncalled-for', and 'unwarrantably' add emphasis to his apology and further distance himself from the original crime (likely committed by Hobson, his sub-editor), while his personal opinion is a rare insertion, unifying himself with the 'hard-working' Manchester Radicals, reminding them of their 'friendship' and engaged in his own personal discussion with them in a public sphere, giving some individual identity to the figures in the *Star* office. While this analysis relies on Jürgen Habermas' original notions of 'public' and 'private' spheres, which have, 'dominated historical approaches to reader correspondence,'[50] I argue that the *Star's* exemplification of this is necessary for their approach to activist news, as opposed to general news. The *Star* accepts that, as a Chartist newspaper, its readership is marginalised in terms of social class, and thus access to literacy. The use of the public newspaper, instead of private replies and letters, sets an example to the rest of its readership, particularly in the case of public apologies and errata notices in which they must publicly own up to their mistakes. Their desire for authentication demonstrates the reciprocal nature of this trust building: if readers must trust them to print fact, they must be able to submit fact to be printed.

The column was a space for a community network to grow. Unlike Chartist leaders and lecturers, who had the luxury of travelling from town to town to build contacts, those who were fixed to the same address for their work and family were dependent on the column to build connections with other towns in the periods between the larger conventions. Through this written space, individuals were allowed a degree of mobility for their language, and a national audience for their concerns, ideas, and grievances. Aled Jones, in his brief study of local journalism in political culture, notes that these columns were open spaces that contrasted with the denial of the franchise that, 'in absence of universal suffrage, Britain enjoyed a press that was, within certain limits, politically diverse, and which encouraged a participatory political culture.'[51] This is most clearly evidenced by public declarations like the Teetotal pledge, as the column was used to publish the fundraising and organisational ideas of the *Star*'s readers, outside of the usual remit of local meetings. These partly reflected the internal politics of the

[50] Allison Cavanagh, 'Letters to the Editor as Tools of Citizenship', in *Letters to the Editor: Comparative and Historical Perspectives*, ed. by Allison Cavanaugh and John Steel (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2019). p. 89.
[51] Aled Jones, 'Local Journalism in Victorian Political Culture' (1990), p. 67.

Star office: Hill and Hobson, for example, were teetotallers, but other suggestions garner their explicit support too. One issue from 1841 is particularly fruitful with three lengthy suggestions published, including one quoted in full:

> RICHARD EDWARDS thinks that 'if the Charter was printed on a large sheet similar to that given with the London Dispatch when the Convention sat, and sold at a penny each, it would be of real utility to the national movement. Thousands of Chartists have never read or seen the Charter, and thousands of our enemies knew nothing of it. If it was printed in this form, it would be a family document in every Chartist's dwelling; all would read, and, by being suitable for placing on the wall of an apartment, or in a frame by those who could afford it, thousands of our enemies by ignorance, would have an opportunity of reading our principles for themselves, and reflecting upon them.' We think so too; the Charter cannot be too well circulated, or in too many forms.[52]

The use of Edwards' full name attributes his credit for the idea, and allows him the claim to fame of being published in the *Star* for its merit, more propaganda relaying the principles of the Charter and the movement to all. What this example also highlights is the role of material culture in the Chartist press: by printing the Charter and displaying it in the home, as 'a family document,' this activism literally becomes an issue close to home, and whether framed or not, as Edwards suggests, the Charter becomes part of the furniture and an everyday part of individual and community life, displayed as an object of importance. The placement of a printed Charter in the home gives the Charter a level of what Colin Morgan describes as 'emotional, as well as intellectual significance.'[53] One of the other 'many forms' of circulating the Charter is suggested in the same issue, by 'A CONSTANT READER OF THE *STAR*,'

> 'for the insuring of numerous signatures to the National Petition, that every town should be provided with its own Missionary, to be called a 'Home Missionary;' very large towns and cities should be provided with two or three, as the extent of their labour might suggest.'[54]

The correspondent's pseudonym is printed so that they may understand it is their idea being printed, while also choosing the label to identify themselves clearly with the movement and the *Star*, integrating themselves firmly as a part of the community and obtaining the trust of its members. In using the *Star,* already a medium of Chartist propaganda, to share more, they suggest widening the network of Chartists so that all 'in every city, town, village, and hamlet' may understand. 'A Constant Reader' invites readers to take up the suggestion on their own

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[52] 'Richard Edwards', *NS,* 17/04/1841, p. 5.
[53] Colin Morgan, 'Material Culture and the Politics of Personality in Victorian England,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17:2 (2012), pp. 127-147, p. 134.
[54] 'A Constant Reader of the *Star'*, *NS,* 17/04/1841, p. 5.

initiative, while using the language of a specifically English religious colonialism to spread the message of the Charter and petition, attributing a level of Biblical reverence to the written document of the Charter. Jones' notion of a 'participatory political culture' is made extremely clear in these suggestions. Although the editors desired the column to be a space for unifying the movement and building networks, they were not above using it as a space to publicise personal disputes – provided they are authenticated and anonymised to save a(nother) libel prosecution. In these cases, there are reports of ill-treatment and cruelty to members of the working class, and are extremely lengthy at over 500 words apiece.[55] In 1842, following O'Connor's imprisonment for libel (May 1840 – August 1841):

> MIDDLE-CLASS RAPACITY.—G A. N., of Sheffield, writes us thus:—
> 'A landlord of this town has some property consisting, amongst the rest, of a hole fit only for a dog. A young man, who had served an honourable apprenticeship in this town, and being well known, took the premises at 4s 3d. per week exorbitant rent for such a kennel—with not a particle of custom connected with the place. Mr. —— very kindly told him, this week, he must pay the trifling addition of £1 13s. per annum—ninepence a week extra, making a total of £13 per year for a hole scarcely fit (as I said before) for a dog. No, this is not all: is the gentleman a Tory? No—can you believe it? a member of the National Complete Suffrage Union.'[56]

The names of the lords have been removed and the informant goes by initials, calling out the cruelty of high rent and the un-Chartist behaviour of the landlord, fitting with the *Star* and O'Connor's antagonism towards the National Complete Suffrage Union [NCSU] and the 'new move' during this year.[57] G. A. N. specifies the authenticity of the case, that 'they are facts, for I have not only heard it from the man's own lips, but fully attested by others,' their own wording evidenced by the sarcastic tone of the 'trifling' increase of £1, and gaining readers' trust, before stating that the man is not even a Tory, but a member of the NCSU, as though his being a Tory would have explained his behaviour. The use of quotation marks following the title indicates that G.A.N. is speaking directly to the readers with no mediation from the *Star*'s editorial team, allowing him to stand clear in highlighting the culprit as a member of the NCSU so that all may see it.

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[55] The average length of a R&C individual entry in 1842 was 25.6 words, by comparison.

[56] 'Middle-Class Rapacity', *NS,* 05/11/1842, p. 4.

[57] See Malcolm Chase, *Chartism: A New History (*Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 198. The 'New Move' refers to Lovett and Collins' publication of *Chartism: A New Organization of the People,* which contained a detailed plan for the education of working-class people. This faction was similar in vision but different in execution to O'Connor's vision for the movement. It is sometimes called 'Knowledge Chartism.' See c. 13i, Patricia Hollis, *Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 1976).

While the use of the column as a newsletter invites some communication between readers to share ideas, it is also used as a space for networking. The space allows local groups to correspond and link up with each other to share information, advice, and organisation strategies; as Epstein succinctly writes, they used it as it was intended: a 'national working class organ outside London, […] a national paper in a local radical stronghold […] to mobilize a movement.'[58] The column becomes an affordable noticeboard for community requests, a way for individual readers to avoid paying large sums in advertising charges. Additionally, the *Star*, can save the front page space for commercial advertisers who would bring in revenue. Part of this 'noticeboard' function of the *Star* was for readers to request correspondence and make connections with each other, opening a new channel of communication to those for whom long distance travel to meetings and events was not always possible. Several Chartists reached out to acquaintances, friends, and even family lost through relocation or misplaced addresses, requesting personal correspondence and giving updates. One 1840 column contains no fewer than two requests for notices, including one to 'WILLIAM BOARDMAN EDGE,' that he 'is desired to write a letter to his friends, directed to the Temperance Hotel, Cheapside, Bolton, for Robert Edge. He is supposed to be living in Huddersfield, or somewhere in the West Riding of Yorkshire.'[59] The use of full addresses indicates the facilitation of this correspondence and that it is requested without the mediation of the *Star* or anyone else, while the supposition of Edge's current locality allows for any mutual connections to pass on information about his potential whereabouts for concern over his welfare from presumably a family member.

Likewise, this system is employed by small Chartist groups who wish to widen participation within the movement as a call to arms: this same issue, 'THE FEMALE RADICALS OF BATH call upon their townswomen generally to address the Throne on behalf of Frost, Williams, and Jones.'[60] This invitation is clearly aimed at widening participation in the movement in the address to 'townswomen generally' who are not active members of the Female Radicals Association, whose male relatives are readers of the paper, or to those who see it in passing in a circulating library or public house. Similarly, 'personal ad' style requests appear in the paper, such as:

> THE GREENOCK YOUNG MEN'S CHARTER ASSOCIATION *are desirous of having correspondence with their brother Chartists, and would be obliged if some of the Young Men's Charter Associations would send a copy of their rules, and give their*

[58] Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star'* (1976), p. 62.
[59] 'William Boardman Edge' *NS,* 05/12/1840, p. 5.
[60] 'The Female Radicals of Bath', *NS,* 05/12/1840, p. 5.

addresses. All letters to be directed (post paid) John Smith, tailor, Hill's Land, No. 9, William street, Greenock.[61]

This open channel of communication circumvents advertising legislation in several interesting ways: not only in the 'personal ad' style of organisational networking, but in charity appeals, part of a help network such as funds for imprisoned Chartists that is built up within the *Star* from the early 1840s due to arrests.[62] These charity appeals are more personal, in comparison to the examples of organisational fundraising we have seen so far. One 1842 column calls attention to the need of the imprisoned 'CHRISTOPHER WOOD, late of Honley,' who is,

> without any other means of sustenance than the casual aid of parties who are indisposed to see a man starved to death in England for being a Chartist. We have reason to believe that that is the 'head and front' of Mr. Wood's offending. We trust that the Chartists of the West Riding, and the country generally, will see that the devils who desire his destruction be disappointed.[63]

The appeal in the *Star* to send food and help to the imprisoned Wood represents him as a martyr to the cause, sacrificing his freedom for servitude in prison for campaigning for their rights, and in doing so highlights his value, and emphasises trust in the community. That the authors 'trust that the Chartists of the West Riding, and the country generally' rise up as a community in support unifies them as a readership and activism group, contrasting their implied 'angelic' and morally upstanding work in helping defeat the 'devils' who imprisoned him.

That the community is doing the lord's work and employing spiritual language in convening for the Charter is repeated in other charity appeals, if not in the provision of sustenance to imprisoned Chartists, for the provision of reading material and channels of communication with the movement. Several calls entitled '*Star*s to Ireland' appear throughout the issues of the *Star* in this column, requesting donations of the *Northern Star* to the Irish Universal Suffrage Association, to the extent that in late 1842 they lament that 'There has been a decline lately in the number of *Star*s which used to cheer the night of the poorer members' of the association.[64] The language in this appeal mirrors that of the appeal for poor imprisoned Wood, thus equating the value of the *Star* as both an organ for news and for communication

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[61] 'The Greenock Young Men's Charter Association', *NS,* 28/05/1842, p. 5.

[62] Roberts briefly notes the plight of these missing persons as well as the 'Whig made widows and orphans,' destitute wives and children of imprisoned and transported Chartists such as Thomas Cooper and William Ellis. See Roberts, 'Who Wrote to the *Northern Star*?' (1995), p. 63.

[63] 'Christopher Wood', *NS,* 28/05/1842, p. 5.

[64] 'There has been', *NS,* 22/10/1842, p. 5.

between Chartists with sustenance or money, 'lighting' 'the night' of Ireland with its news and wit. In placing these appeals in the paper they bridge a gap between different communities and show that calls for help are welcome, that they do have an audience and these concerns are legitimate. It is easy to assume that the attendees of a meeting advertised and reported in the *Star* will be included in its readership, as in the case of 'A PURSE, containing a sum of money,' which, 'was picked up at the meeting held a fortnight since last Sunday, and is now in the possession of Mr. Isaac Kitchen, Bradford Moor.'[65]

The nationwide audience of the *Star* was used for more pressing appeals too, including those for missing persons. A notice for a Mrs. Taylor, appears in 1840:

> JOHN TAYLOR, HOPWOOD COURT, OLDHAM.—His communication, stating that his wife, a sharp, clean-looking woman, with a Scotch accent, a full eye, dark complexion, and about fifty years of age, left home on the 5th of June, in company with her son, a boy about fifteen years of age, and not been seen or heard of by him since—and stating that he is in great distress of mind about her; that he supposes her to be somewhere in Cumberland and that he will be thankful to any one who can induce her to return,—would be considered at the Stamp-office an advertisement: we cannot, therefore, insert it.[66]

John Taylor's emotive appeal of his 'great distress' to find his missing wife and (step?)son includes the same types of detail as that of Mr. Greenwood, including appearance, dates, regional affiliations. Yet it is quoted (albeit in the third person instead of using quotation marks) by the editors as a reply to his, sandwiched by editorial comment in order for it to be accepted in the column free of charge, as it would otherwise 'be considered at the Stamp-office,' not the *Star*, 'an advertisement,' thus inserting it sneakily. Using this linguistic loophole, the *Star* office approve of the use of the column for such personal appeals for assistance, supporting the help network established within the Chartist community, and ensuring the channel remains open for low income, working class readers to use. The column facilitates dialogue between readers not only about Chartism, but causes concerning the working classes in general. While the proportion of advertising matter in the *Star* does increase following the *Star's* relocation to London (see chapter five), with repeated curt notices of the four-shilling advertisement charge made clear in notices from 1847, exceptions are made, as in the case of the missing Mrs. Taylor.[67] The use of the column for what we would now define as networking thus actively creates and maintains a specifically Chartist community, overlapping with the creation of a

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[65] 'A Purse', *NS,* 20/08/1842, p. 4.
[66] 'John Taylor', *NS,* 17/09/1842, p. 4.
[67] 'Mr. Jewitt, O'CONNORVILLE', *NS,* 07/08/1847, p. 4.

community of 'readers and correspondents.' These public notices resonate further than just reader numbers calculated on stamp duty sales through the practice of communal reading. Epstein notes that 'it was common practice, particularly in the villages, to meet at friends' houses to read the paper and talk over political matters,' thus continuing the discussion off the page and facilitating opportunities to discuss initiatives such as temperance or charity fundraising.[68] Privacy is maintained and guaranteed for those who require it for the unofficial policing of injustice, airing of disputes, and sharing ideas for the organisation of the movement (especially by those readers who feared losing work due to anti-Chartist employers), with pseudonyms given and authentication required for anonymity to ensure that nothing libellous was seen and no potential scams shared with the network of readers. Although the final printed matter varied by different local editions (London and Scotland, for example) and of course, by the selection of material for publication by the editors, we see through the column the ways in which the community wanted to be seen, by each other, the public, and by the leaders of the movement.

3. The Public Persona of Feargus O'Connor

Feargus O'Connor was a Chartist celebrity, famous within, outside of, and because of the movement. Paul Pickering, in his biography of O'Connor, cites his proclamation that he 'never wrote a private political letter to any man' during his 1843 trial, and states that this was not a large exaggeration.[69] In his research, Pickering learned that 'there [were] few private letters (most of them frustratingly brief),' to allow us a glimpse into his personal correspondence: for O'Connor, the personal really was the political.[70] The *Northern Star* was first and foremost his paper, in spite of its original conception with Hobson. The *Star* carried O'Connor's vision for the movement, from its beginnings, named for the short-lived *Northern Star* of Belfast, established by his uncle Arthur O'Connor, through to his unwavering promotion of his Chartist Land Plan in the mid-to-late-1840s. His ownership of the *Star* resulted in his constant presence within it, and supplemented his extensive lecture tours of Britain, and later, his native Ireland; columns of the paper are devoted to reporting his own speeches at meetings, and are a great source for historians of Chartist oral culture and popular activism. Jones notes that 'in many

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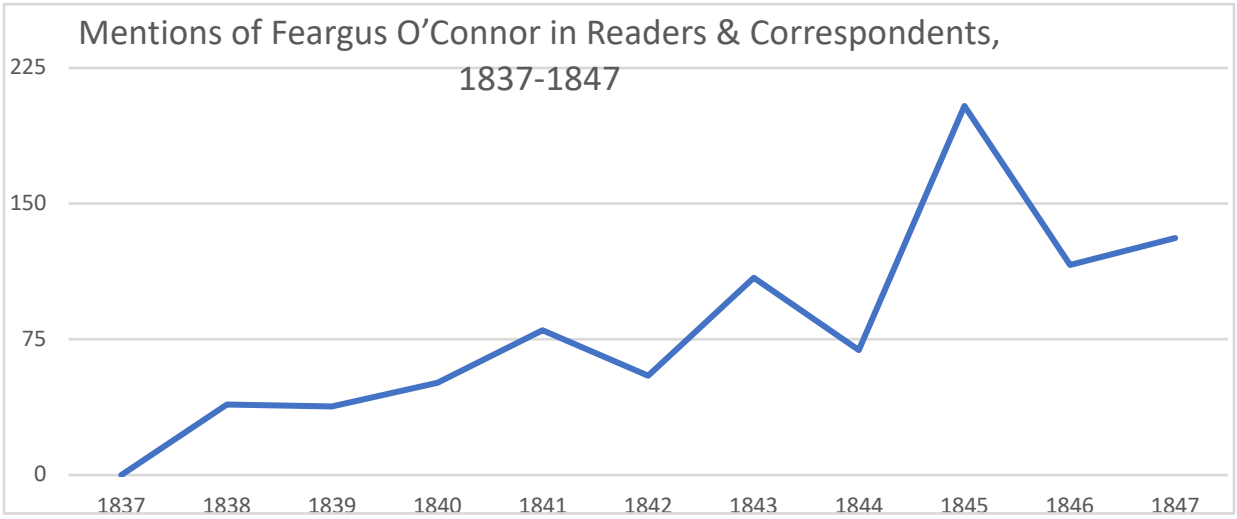
[68] Benjamin Wilson, *The Struggles of an Old Chartist (*Northgate [Halifax]: J. Nicholson, 1887). p.10 as cited in Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor' (1976), p. 74.
[69] Paul A Pickering, *Feargus O'Connor: A Political Life* (Monmouth, Wales: Merlin Press, 2008), p. 2.
[70] Pickering, *Ibid,* p. 2.

cases such detailed accounts […] are the only surviving records of large numbers of transient and peripheral popular institutions.'[71] O'Connor's presence is ubiquitous, from these extensive reports of his lecture tours to his other literary endeavours, 'A Work on Small Farms' (1844) and a monthly magazine co-edited with Ernest Jones, the *Labourer* (1847), both of which are advertised heavily in the *Star*, as well as recipients of suspiciously glowing reviews within its pages. O'Connor's presence is easily measurable, as the below chart demonstrates (Fig. 4).

Figure 14: Mentions of Feargus O'Connor in the Readers & Correspondents' column, by year.



Mentions of O'Connor, which include him signing his own name on responses to letters, as well as other correspondents' enquiries about him, first spike in 1841 during his imprisonment in York Castle Gaol, followed by Hill's departure in 1843, and finally a very dramatic spike during the Land Plan agitation of 1845. O'Connor's weekly column in the *Star*, 'Feargus's Letter,' was addressed to the 'blistered hands, fustian jackets, and unshorn chins' of his readers.[72] This is claimed by Epstein to be a highlight of the *Star*, and a focal point in its readership community, citing W. E. Adams' recollection that 'in a humble kitchen […] Larry […] [appeared] every Sunday morning, regular as clockwork, with a copy of the *Northern Star* damp from the press, for the purpose of hearing some member of our household read out to him and others 'Feargus's Letter' […] [and] settled himself to listen with all the rapture of a devotee in a tabernacle to the message of the great Feargus.'[73] Even within historiography,

[71] Aled Jones, 'Local Journalism' (1990), p. 66.
[72] Pickering, *Feargus O'Connor* (2008), p. 77.
[73] W. E. Adams, *Memoirs of an Atom* (1903), pp. 164-165, as cited in Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor' (1976), p. 73.

O'Connor's celebrity status is made evident, with Adams likening 'the great' O'Connor to an object of reverence, not only leader of the movement but a spiritual guide, figuratively bestowing him with the powers of a church. Indeed, O'Connor's paternalist leadership is evident even in memoirs of reading his words. The power of the *Star* in this scenario is to bring O'Connor into the 'humble kitchen,' providing a kind of nutritional value that would come to characterise Chartist attitudes to literature (see chapter four), and furthering the religious connotations through giving O'Connor omnipresence through the pages of the newspaper. 'Feargus' Letter' appeared, interestingly, in place of the editor's letter (for which Hill, Hobson, and Harney would have been responsible), and for this reason is often cited by historians as his mode of intimately yet publicly addressing his readership. In this section I will explore O'Connor's use of the 'Readers & Correspondents' column to participate in a dialogue with, rather than to, his readership.

The 'Readers & Correspondents' column provided O'Connor with a space to publicly answer his wealth of correspondence. Although it was well-known that the *Star* was his paper, and he was a prolific columnist and writer of open letters to the public, reformers, and parliamentary figures, this column allowed O'Connor to humble himself to the level of his readership: a performative process by which he, too, became a 'reader and correspondent,' a member of the community. Through this, he maintained a public voice while creating a sense of intimacy. O'Connor used the *Star* to record his travels as a lecturer, enabling readers to follow the progress of this 'Tour of the North' in 1839,[74] in which we see O'Connor attend meetings in nine destinations in as many days, but it is through the 'Readers and Correspondents' column that we see these routes being planned. Meanwhile, the 'wealth of correspondence' which overloaded the men of the *Northern Star*'s office was accompanied by O'Connor boasting about his overload of invitations, and making public apologies for non-appearances in the column. One notice in an issue from 1838 states:

> IT IS ONLY necessary to direct attention to Mr. O'Connor's movements, as his apology for having left scores of letters unanswered ; and his engagements must plead his excuse for not accepting as many invitations. Our friends are really unreasonable; but we bear with their good intentions. Would to God that we could attend every one of their glorious meetings, but we cannot. Mr. O'Connor has the following engagements for this and next week: Todmorden, Friday; Macclesfield, Monday ; and Stockport, Tuesday.[75]

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[74] For an example, see Southall, adapted from O'Connor's 'Tour of the North' originally published in the *Star* on 19th January 1839, p.4. Feargus O'Connor and Humphrey Southall, 'The Travels of Feargus O'Connor' *Vision of Britain* (2009) <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/travellers/OConnor> [Accessed 01/06/2017].
[75] 'It is only necessary', *NS,* 29/09/1838, p. 4.

The editorial 'we' is subsumed into O'Connor's, distancing O'Connor from the necessary rejection and chastising of his 'friends.' Jokingly complaining that 'our friends are really unreasonable' in their demand for O'Connor's time, 'we' anonymizes O'Connor while maintaining authority. Intimacy is maintained though the term of address 'friend'; the descriptor flatters and appeases them while teasing them about their 'unreasonable ' expectations. This furthermore highlights O'Connor's absence from the column: while he may have envisioned the *Star* as creating omnipresence, it is most likely Hill responding to his letter. He 'direct[s] attention 'to O'Connor's movements using the imperative editorial voice in order to maintain the *Star's* own good relationship with readers, while also allowing O'Connor's schedule to speak for itself in terms of his neglect of correspondence. O'Connor's movements are reported in the *Star*, showing him to be out interacting with his readership in the flesh, rather than as a wealthy gentleman proprietor hiding behind the page.

O'Connor used the column to maintain a variety of relationships, both friendly and hostile. The characteristic bombast used in his speeches and columns was equally easily used to publicly vilify his opponents. A response to 'A Chartist, Carlisle' in 1842 thanks the correspondent,

> *For the extracts from a letter written from Lancaster Castle to Mr. Warden, of Bolton ; they but bear out what we before knew of the ungrateful man who has done his little best to sting the hand that fed him.' Perhaps 'a Carlisle Chartist' is not aware of the fact that the man in question would have Starved while in gaol, had it not been for the unsolicited bounty of Mr. O'Connor; but we can tell him that the fact is so and that the sum of* SEVENTY-EIGHT POUNDS *was* **GIVEN** *to him by Mr.: O'Connor during his imprisonment ! and, perhaps, 'a Carlisle Chartist' is not aware that the grateful return made for this handsome, nay, generous, treatment was the writing of letters, such as the one he has sent us, to whisper and insinuate away the character of the man upon whose free gifts he was existing !* [76]

Although the letter is unsigned and could feasibly be from the editors or any of the *Northern Star* office, from the use of bold and capital typeface and enthusiastic use of forceful adjectives 'handsome, nay, generous treatment' we can infer that O'Connor had a hand in drafting the response. The triple typographical emphasis on '**GIVEN'** – being in capitals, bold, and not italicised (unlike the rest of the letter) – serves to highlight the generosity of the nature and the importance of it, particularly in the context of a low-income, working class readership. A large sum of money given freely to him is designed to make a point, being 108 times the value of

[76] 'A Chartist, Carlisle', *NS,* 20/08/1842, p. 4. Italics original.

the average male cotton spinner's weekly wages in that year.[77] This emphasis on O'Connor's good qualities is a consistent feature in his rants, as is most evident in the pamphlet war between himself and Hill following the latter's dismissal from the paper in 1843. Hill argues that O'Connor 'occup[ies] several pages of your pamphlet with glorifying your own generosity […] as I have no disposition to spoil your good opinion of yourself, I shall not offer any contradiction to it.'[78] Furthermore, the use of typographical emphasis is typical of O'Connor; as Martin explains, his 'printed addresses […] [were] helpfully broken up with italics and capitals indicating to the reader which words required special emphasis,' creating an intersection of oral and print culture, the bold capitals connoting the emotion behind the content.[79] O'Connor's use of the 'Readers & Correspondents' column for responding to engagements and indeed, to feuds, shows *him* to be a reader and correspondent of the *Star*, demonstrating a level of self-identification and integration with the community, just as he donned his 'Fustian jacket,' 'an unequivocal symbol of working class life' to meet his supporters upon his release from York Gaol.[80]

This imprisonment would be a drastic change to his organisational style, no longer able to appear on the platform on his lecture tours, nor to maintain his omnipresence through the medium of the *Star*. Pickering explains that one condition of his imprisonment was that he was 'not permitted to write for publication, and any visitor found to have carried a communication from him would be banned from any future visits.'[81] This was partly because of his conviction for publishing Bronterre O'Brien's seditious libel against a Poor Law Commissioner in the *Star* in 1840. However, O'Connor needn't have worried about losing popularity, or the physical separation from his followers and the *Star*. The ban on his writing for publication earned him a great deal of sympathy even from his political enemies, who argued that previous Radical prisoners such as William Cobbett had been allowed to continue running their newspapers from behind bars. Even Henry Hetherington, editor of the unstamped *Poor Man's Guardian,* continued to work on the paper despite it being the cause of his imprisonment.[82] O'Connor was

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[77] Calculated based on the Journal of the Statistical Society of London's 1860 data. David Chadwick, 'On the Rate of Wages in Manchester and Salford, and the Manufacturing Districts of Lancashire, 1839-59', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 23.1 (1860), p.6. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2338478> [Accessed 06/04/2017].
[78] William Hill and Feargus O'Connor, *A Scabbard for Feargus O'Connor's Sword* (London: Watson, Hetherington, and Cleave, 1844), pp. 1-12, p. 3.
[79] Martin, 'Popular Oratory' (2010), p. 124.
[80] Pickering, *Feargus O'Connor* (2008), p. 99.
[81] Pickering, *Ibid.,* p. 99.
[82] Edited by Henry Hetherington, *Poor Man's Guardian* remains one of the most famous unstamped radical papers. Running from 1831-1835 and based in London, it was a weekly tabloid costing 1*d*. Joel H. Wiener, '*The*

sure to publicise his impending imprisonment in the pages of the *Star*, as part of a long-standing tradition of the martyrdom of radical political prisoners, from Henry Hunt and Sir Francis Burdett (O'Connor's godfather) before O'Connor to his contemporaries John Frost, and the members of the Newport Rising of 1839. Belchem and Epstein, writing on the role of touring 'gentleman leaders', including O'Connor and Hunt, state that 'in this period nearly every radical gentleman of the platform suffered imprisonment in connection with public demonstrations: Hunt, O'Connor, Wolseley, Burdett, Stephens, Oastler, [and] Jones' due to the act of defiance that public meetings, and likewise the Radical (unstamped) press, were to the establishment.[83] He consequently issued several notices in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column regarding his upcoming prison sentence, as an extension to his engagement diary. Two notices from October 1839 inform readers that:

> NOTICE.—All communications addressed personally to Mr. O'Connor, must remain unanswered, as he was required instantly to proceed to London, to enter into bail to receive judgement next month, in the Queen's Bench, for the libel for which he was convicted at the York Assizes. Three day's notice of bail is required, and the recognisance taken before a Judge in chamber.
>
> NOTICE.—All those persons wishing to visit the prisoners in Chester or other Gaols, should ascertain the day upon which they are to be seen. Mr. O'Connor proceeded from Leeds to Chester on Friday last, and upon his arrival, was informed that Tuesday was the day, and that he could not see Mr. Stephens or McDouall.'[84]

These notices are not unlike his previous notices of appearances at various English towns on his lecture tours, seen previously. The notice informs readers the exact dates of the process of O'Connor's sentencing in terms of the 'three day's notice of bail' and his presence before the judge in London, citing his absence from Leeds and his communications to hammer home the point of his upcoming imprisonment. The second notice on the page furthermore seeks to look ahead, O'Connor not only advocating careful planning and visitation of those Chartists such as Stephens and McDouall currently in prison, but looking ahead for his own time: maintaining a link with his loyal followers and inviting correspondence from the movement, both to keep

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Poor Man's Guardian: A Weekly Newspaper For The People, Established Contrary to the 'Law' to Try The Powers of Right Against Might', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 500-501.

[83] John Belchem and James Epstein, 'The Nineteenth-Century Gentleman Leader Revisited', *Social History,* 22.2 (1997), 174-193, p. 184.

[84] 'NOTICE,' *NS,* 05/10/1839, p. 4.

him in the loop and to publicise his imprisonment. In doing so O'Connor creates his own strategy for good relations with his readers.

Although O'Connor was forbidden from writing for publication behind bars, and his incoming and outgoing correspondence monitored by guards, it is through the medium of the 'Readers and Correspondents' column that he is able to circumvent this rule. Correspondence is limited, but maintained nonetheless, appearing in batches rather than regular snippets as previously:

> MR. O'CONNOR has received a post-office order for 15s., for Peter Hoey, from the Chartists of Holmwood, near Paisley. Their letters shall appear next week.
> […]
> MR. O'CONNOR has made arrangements for contesting the seats for Edinburgh, Norwich, Newcastle, and Sunderland ; but it would be imprudent to publish notice of the intended course, as the enemy generally succeed by secrecy and stratagem : however, Mr. O'Connor says that he has not a shadow of doubt upon his mind as to the illegality of the return in each of the above places.
>
> MR. O'CONNOR received very flattering address from the females of Oldham; he thanks them most sincerely, and will go on as he commenced, and is glad to find he has gained their approbation. He has also received the address and invitation of the men of Oldham, for which he feels much obliged, and if in his power will comply with the latter. But 'first catch your hare'—first, he must be at large.[85]

O'Connor's responses are a combination of organisational plans, public declaration of funds raised for fellow prisoner Peter Hoey, chasing up responses, and giving thanks for correspondence. Although the restrictions on incoming and outgoing post put in place by the prison limited the nature and volume of O'Connor's correspondence, these vague and non-threatening notes to correspondents allow him to maintain a physical presence on the page, if not on the platform. His response to the people of Oldham, reminding them that he must be 'at large' maintains the same sense of friendly intimacy he had created prior to his conviction, in making a joke about his status as convicted criminal. Surviving personal correspondence from this period demonstrates that O'Connor's emphatic style was not tarnished by his imprisonment, and he was sure to use his right to *private* correspondence to his best advantage. One letter dated 19th May 1840[?] complains that, 'I have just learned from the gaoler that the only privilege allowed me beyond felons is that of wearing my own clothes.'[86] A later letter to the same recipient, complains that, 'I am not allowed books, newspapers, chair, table or

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[85] 'Mr. O'Connor', *NS,* 10/07/1841, p. 4.
[86] York City Archives, York Castle Gaol box 5, item 1 [19th May 1840]. Accessed May 2019.

anything even to [pass?] the time. You will believe me, that the affliction must be great when I send an Humble petition to parliament,' while listing a number of M. P.s, including 'most of the Irish members' who he suspects would support an improvement of his conditions.[87] The conditions of his confinement sure enough became subject of national debate, and it is in this context that O'Connor's *Star* correspondence must be considered; the spike in his appearances in the column at this time (fig. 4.) confirms that he was certainly not absent from the *Star's* readership community, made possible through becoming a reader and correspondent: after all, he cannot be an active proprietor of the paper from his cell. Interestingly, while he is able to maintain communication with his followers through the *Star*, his absence does not otherwise much affect the running of the paper: Hill is praised by many, O'Connor included, for his 'able direction of that luminary [The *Star*].'[88] When it is impossible for him to act as a correspondent himself, replies appear in the *Star* on his behalf, responding to concerns for his wellbeing, as was sometimes the case for other exiled or imprisoned Chartists. In November 1840 'JAMES BARROWCLOUGH' is informed that 'Mr. O'Connor is allowed to receive all books and newspapers; but can only see friends under certain restrictions, and in the presence of an officer of the prison. All his correspondence is overhauled before it reaches or leaves him.'[89] In publishing the answers in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, the *Star* continues its policy of publication of letters in noticeboard form, advertising O'Connor's conditions in prison to a national audience, and, importantly for a movement reliant on literacy, emphasises that 'all books and newspapers,' regardless of political content, are allowed.

The use of letters in the *Star*, both in terms of O'Connor's regular column, and as 'reader and correspondent,' give O'Connor the ability to transport his voice wherever the paper was. Pickering notes that 'the letters were personal communications that could have been read aloud by any Chartist […] as though they had been addressed to them in person. The voice was conversational, friendly, direct, immediate, emotive, active, and inclusive.'[90] Because of this intimacy, O'Connor was acknowledged both then and now as leader of the movement, certainly to a greater extent than other Chartist leaders such as William Lovett and John Cleave, but also to a greater extent than leaders of concurrent reform movements. Unlike Robert Owen or Joseph Livesey of the teetotallers, O'Connor escalated to a level of public consciousness not unlike Henry Hunt and William Cobbett, with whom he was often compared. This is most clear

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[87] *Ibid* [25th May 1841].
[88] Hinckley, 'William Hill' (2016), p. 30.
[89] 'James Barraclough', *NS,* 07/11/1840, p. 5.
[90] Pickering, *Feargus O'Connor: A Political Life (*Monmouth: Merlin Press, 2008), p. 77.

when considering the souvenir portraits of leaders issued by the *Star:* O'Connor's was issued first, and he was almost unique in appearing twice in the series – only Richard Oastler was awarded a similar accolade.'[91] Even excluding his imprisonment and the scandal over his conditions in York Gaol, updates regarding O'Connor's health are given in the column. In addition to his health being toasted in meetings, it was the subject of discussion. O'Connor became defined by his physically gruelling lecture tours: his non-appearance at events due to ill health were well publicised. One response from 1839, 'IN ANSWER TO SEVERAL *kind letters of enquiry after Mr O'Connor's health'* details the length and severity of the illness, before noting that he hopes to return to his 'duties.'[92] Not only was O'Connor's health reported in this column of the *Star*, it is explicitly stated that this is a response to multiple 'kind letters' sent to the *Star* on the subject, justifying its relevance within the column. The *Star* concludes that 'he hopes shortly to resume his public duties,' both ensuring he is not absent from the public eye for long, while the use of 'duties' infers a degree of responsibility he feels as leader, that this is his job. Just as he used the column as a loophole in his publication ban in York Gaol, he also used it for competitions and endorsements. Following his imprisonment, O'Connor exploited his return to the public platform by advertising his tour as a competition, of which he is the grand prize:

> MERTHYR TYDVIL.—Mr. O'Connor will cheerfully accept the invitation of his Welsh friends as soon as possible after his liberation; but he is resolved that his next tour shall be one of mere 'useless display;' and has, therefore, resolved not to incur the fatigue and heavy expence of travelling, without further remuneration than the great pleasure of being wearied. He will not accept of an invitation from any town or to act until the people therein are prepared to present him with petition sheets, for the Charter, and Restoration of Frost, Williams, and Jones, signed according to a scale of census to be hereafter laid down. Suppose 10,000 for Merthyr Tydvil. […] [W]here this cannot be accomplished, Mr. O'Connor's presence will not be required, as Chartism will not have found itself to be in a sound state; and his visits would be too short for immediate practical use for the purpose of initiation.[93]

Exploiting his fans' concern for his shaky health, O'Connor notes that following his release from prison, he does not wish to waste his time on 'useless display' (contrary to his liberation celebrations), needing 'further remuneration than the great pleasure of being wearied'; not

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[91] Malcolm Chase, 'Building Identity, Building Circulation: Engraved Portraiture and the *Northern Star*', in *Papers For The People: a Study of the Chartist Press,* ed. By Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2009), pp. 25-53, p. 31.
[92] 'In answer', *NS,* 09/03/1839, p. 4.
[93] 'Methyr Tydvil', *NS,* 17/07/1841, p.4.

financial remuneration, of course, but placing the value of his physical presence on around 10,000 signatories for the Charter and restoration of his fellow political martyrs. The movement has progressed so far that mere 'initiation' is not worth a personal visit from him, where 'his presence will not be required,' transforming his omnipresence from the *Star*'s pages to transforming himself into a limited-edition commodity.

Such was O'Connor's celebrity that his absence and conditions in prison even earned him sympathy from his competitor Edward Baines, in the *Leeds Mercury,* reminding the more genteel readership of Leeds that,

> this is a tale of suffering and degradation that must revolt the feelings of every man. Mr. O'CONNOR has had the education of a gentleman, and is a gentleman in his manners and habits; for such a man to be ranked with the lowest and vilest felons is insufferable humiliation. The nature of his offence is not one either calling for or justifying such treatment.[94]

Baines' comparison of O'Connor's conditions with those of 'vilest felons' is strikingly similar to O'Connor's own words conveyed to his M. P. friends, suggesting that O'Connor's private correspondence did become part of wider discussion, even outside the readership community of the *Star*. Baines' description of O'Connor as a 'gentleman in his manners and habits' is calculated to justify the discussion to his Tory readership community, that although O'Connor is their political enemy, they are united by social-class ties. That someone with 'the education of a gentleman' can experience such 'suffering and degradation' betrays the class-based allegiance of Tory politics, and is presented as a threat to Baines himself, and of his middle-class, 'gentleman' readership. Baines' class-based allegiance to O'Connor, through repeated emphasis of O'Connor's 'gentlemanly' status, performs the opposite function to O'Connor donning a suit of fustian for his release from Gaol. Through his status as a 'gentleman leader ' of the movement, O'Connor enjoys the best of both classes, able to literally dress down in the iconography (of his own making) of working-class protest, enjoying celebrity status, while defended in prison by the very people he fought against in his political views. His public persona, wearing the fustian suit like a costume, suggests a parallel between his own private and public images. By being acclaimed in papers such as Baines', with whom O'Connor had a well-known feud in 1839 over circulation figures, O'Connor tries to justify the use of his presence as a prize to the readers of the *Star,* reminding them of the 'insufferable humiliation'

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[94] 'Mr. Feargus O'Connor', *LM,* 30/05/1840, p. 4.

and 'degradation' that he has endured while in prison, and thus calling upon his readers to not waste his time.

O'Connor's personal life was not exempt from public discussion, and he was the subject of several personal questions sent to the public column. As a public figure, O'Connor's political views became well known, and consequently questions about the man behind the views became a subject of discussion, a blurring of his public and private persona. A reply to the 'NUNEATON RADICALS,' for example, informs them that 'We don't know Mr. O'Connor's birth-day.'[95] More provocative personal questions appear during O'Connor's imprisonment from 'JOSEPH ROWELL,' who asks, '*is the brave O'Connor a single or a married man? We decline answering. Has he any lands in Ireland? Yes…*'[96] The *Star*'s office becomes his spokesmen for handling these sensitive questions, with no direct answer from O'Connor as we have seen in previous examples of his correspondence. Consequently the *Star* provides some mediation between O'Connor and his more inquisitive readers, providing some distance from his fans and creating a shield of privacy: whether 'the brave O'Connor [is] a single or married man' makes no change to him as a leader, and does not change that he is imprisoned. While it is possible that this particular question was asked with a view to establishing a support fund for any wife or children left destitute by O'Connor's imprisonment, as was done for the wives and children of 'Exiled Patriots' including John Frost and William Ellis, there is no guarantee that it was not asked for more sordid reasons, the vague answer given to shut down any possibility of such plans, and to save O'Connor's partner any stigma from their being unmarried. While O'Connor's personal life is the subject of public conversation, we see boundaries being drawn in the pages of the *Star*: his health is a subject for discussion; being an obstacle to his 'public duties,' his personal and romantic life is not.

Conclusion

The 'Readers & Correspondents' column of the *Northern Star* was an unusual space, with varied uses by its contributors. The letters responded to, and these responses themselves, covered a range of subject matter. Discussion is the imperative term here: we see on these pages readers engaging with editorial staff, with the content of the *Star*, as well as with other readers, feeding back into Martin's discussion of the oral and print symbiosis through the inevitable

[95] 'Nuneaton Radicals', *NS,* 28/11/1840, p. 5.
[96] 'Joseph Rowell', *NS,* 02/01/1841, p. 5.

physical discussions with readers off the page through practices of communal reading, discussions on the page returning to the pub, the workroom, green, or kitchen. The *Star* operated at the intersection of public and private, local and national, and working- and middle-class. Although it was a stamped paper, its staff and style followed in the traditions of the unstamped press, its broadsheet format unusual for a working-class paper. Consequently, it was through the Readers & Correspondents column that the editors could negotiate these liminal spaces and boundaries with readers, while developing an authority that ensured they would be taken seriously as the 'national organ' of the movement. The *Star's* editors were unique in the Leeds newspaper marketplace for producing a newspaper that directly addressed their readers in the column, using a more forceful tone than their more established contemporaries did for the same 'rules for correspondence.' They used imagery and language that emphasised the administrative, intellectual, and physical labour involved in the production of the paper as a way to engage with and relate to their working-class readership; while also developing an intimacy with the same readership. As direct and forceful as they were in the column when issuing instructions, they were critical yet welcoming of material, acknowledging the extent of support, both financial remuneration and in donations of copy, given by their readers. They did develop the professionalism of the paper, significantly in the recruitment of reporters from their own ranks in the column, as signified by the advertisement in the column that invited their 'readers' and correspondents' to apply for the post. They maintained a distinct working-class identity when they did so; however, it should be noted they were not above digs at Tories, Whigs, and poison pens.

The public nature of the column, under the critical eye of the *Star* office, was negotiated with and by readers as *their* column. Suggestions for organisation, amongst praise for signatories of the Temperance pledge, and public shaming of injustices such as Richard Edwards' villainous landlord, indicate the column was used as a means to an end for working class readers to shine in the spotlight, provided their writing was relevant to the paper's cause and raising awareness of the Charter. That said, we see evidence of the editors' screening process in play, from calls for authentication of newspapers to their publication of errata messages, while promising privacy for those correspondents who needed it. Most illuminating when considering how the *Star* was used as a tool for the creation and maintenance of a Chartist community network is the exploitation of the publicity of the column to connect different branches of the country, such as the Greenock Young Men's Chartist Association with likeminded groups, or to request donations of *Stars* to Ireland. Perhaps the best evidence of the

community generated by the *Star* is the help network it established, with readers able to circumvent advertisement charges by placing appeals for help in the Readers & Correspondents column, from advertising a lost purse to heartbreaking notices of missing persons. What these personal insertions furthermore highlight is the use of the column as a noticeboard: we can infer by the public addresses of these letters published in the *Star* that every column of it was read by its subscribers, else these notices would appear on the front page of the paper. The flexible nature of the column was furthermore exploited by its proprietor, Feargus O'Connor, himself. Although his regular column, 'Feargus' Letter' addressed the public, he uses this section to integrate with the readership community, using the publicity of the column to publicise his engagements without taking out an advertisement or special notice elsewhere in the paper, while creating a sense of intimacy with personal pronouns and typographical emphasis to mimic the emphasis of an oral conversation with an audience. Furthermore, like his readers, it is here that he negotiates publicity and privacy in the paper for his celebrity status. He was also able to manipulate the editorial voice to put distance between himself and his readers to negotiate boundaries between his professional and personal life, be it by reporting on his health, or as best evidenced by their 'declining to answer' Joseph Rowell's question about O'Connor's marital status. In doing so, this column of the paper operates as a symbol in the same way as his 'Fustian jacket' donned upon his release from prison: he too, was a 'Reader and Correspondent.'

In this chapter I have begun to demonstrate the ways in which the *Star* was unique as a periodical during the early Victorian period, and the way that it operated as a tool within the Chartist community not only as a space for dialogue between other readers, but between these same readers and their celebrity leader. While critics such as Gregory and Hutchins have argued that 'the letters to the editor page is not an open channel of communication between individuals […] but a complex social space mediated by the routine practices of editorial staff,' because of the limitations of the *Star* as a 'national organ of Chartism,' we must work backwards to see the various ways in which it was mediated.[97] The column is unique within the paper for *showcasing* and facilitating a two-way dialogue between reader and newspaper, consumer and producer. We are given an insight into the more symbiotic nature of this relationship, with working-class readers sending tip offs, ideas, and copy to the paper while furthermore using its

[97] Luke Gregory and Brett Hutchins, 'Everyday Editorial Practices and the Public Sphere: Analysing the Letters of the Editor Page of a Regional Newspaper,' *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy,* 112: 1 (2004), pp. 186-200, p. 187-188.

wide circulation for their own gain, effectively creating a free noticeboard for the community, allowing them to advertise their needs for help or for correspondence within the network that is suited to their lower incomes. ‘To Readers and Correspondents’ is a standard heading, yet the wording inclusive of all members of the *Star’s* Chartist readership community.

Chapter Two: Identity and Public Image in the *Northern Star's* 'Readers and Correspondents'[1]

Introduction

> CHARTIST MEETING AT DERBY.—DERBY, Jan 28.—
> To-day we expected a great Chartist meeting, in consequence of handbills being publicly circulated that Mr. Feargus O'Connor and Mr. Stephens would attend it, and it was generally supposed that some confusion would take place; but in consequence of the mayor and county magistrates being prepared for these gentry, the intended meeting was a complete failure. At noon about 200 of the unwashed people assembled in the Market place. In the present instance these poor deluded men, who call themselves Chartists, have shown great discretion… The *Times,* 1839.[2]

> A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER suggests that "Chartists throughout the length and breadth of the land, who can do it without inconvenience, grow and wear his moustaches : thus will the Charter be ever prominently before the eyes of all. Moustaches are becoming more and more fashionable every day and when the Chartists can adopt the fashion without expense they ought by all means to do so, particularly as they will be paying a high compliment to their superiors, who, if they continue to rear their moustaches must be considered converts to the Charter." *Northern Star,* 1843.[3]

The *Northern Star* was the public, typed face of the Chartist movement. The movement's platform culture was huge, and, thanks to reporting of the *Star,* undeniable, distributing speeches on a mass scale and leaving the attendees and readers with tangible, material reminders. What the *Star* also captured was a community of active readers, all stating their aims for and contributions to this area of activism about the Charter, and, more generally, structural improvements to working-class lives. The above use of 'Chartist' by the *Times* is one of the earliest such mentions in newsprint: the *Times* claims in its report of the Derby meeting that it is 'the unwashed people,' and 'these poor deluded men, who call themselves Chartists.' The *Times* disparages the Chartists as 'unwashed people,' yet ascribes them agency, with the crowd *self*-identifying as 'Chartist'. If the *Times* suggests that the act of calling oneself a Chartist is an act of 'delusion', we can, in this context, understand the *Northern Star* as a tool for management of public image, to reclaim the term from its new definition as an 'unwashed'

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[1]Revised sections of this chapter have been published in Ian Cawood and Lisa Peters (ed.) *Print, Politics, and the Provincial Press in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019), pp. 179-200, and 'Time, Space, Gender, and the Victorian Periodical, *Victorian Periodicals Review* (Winter 2020), pp. 479-495.

[2] 'Chartist Meeting at Derby', The *Times*, 30/01/1839, issue 16592, p. 3.

[3] 'A Constant Subscriber', *NS,* 01/04/1843, p. 5.

and 'deluded' person. Four years on, we see the *Star*, in an article published on April Fools' Day, 'A Constant Subscriber,' loyal to the paper, suggesting an even larger Public Relations stunt: the reclamation of the moustache as the fashion of Chartism. This is not only a jab at Prince Albert, as figurehead of the establishment state, but plays with this notion of symbolism and self-identification printed previously by the *Times*. This time it is the 'superiors', whose moustaches would then be unwittingly symbolizing their 'conversion to the Charter,' which is reconfigured from a 'delusion' of the 'unwashed' to a 'high compliment'. This suggestion paints a picture of a typical Chartist and reader of the *Star*, as working class, taking into account the 'expence' of shaving equipment, and, moreover, a man. It is unclear how many men (or women) actually followed through and grew moustaches as a consequence of this letter, but it does give us a great insight into the way that the Chartist demographic was perceived by the *Northern Star*, and how the Chartists saw the potential of print culture for the manipulation of identity and public image.

Consequently, both the attitudes and the image of the *Star* were reflexively defined through the movement and its readers. As we have already begun to explore in the previous chapter, the 'Readers and Correspondents' column demonstrates to us the ways in which the *Star*'s practices were shaped through a two-way dialogue with its readers. In this chapter I will explore the ways in which a specifically Chartist identity was negotiated between the *Star*'*s* pages and the public platform, as part of the 'counter-public sphere'.[4] The first section will explore various identity markers applied to and by individual correspondents, before moving on to consider how collective identities were negotiated and presented in the *Star*. The final section will explore the *Star*'*s* definitions of Chartism, both in terms of authentic self-identity as well as branding and material culture. The fact that the *Star* was the movement's main public outlet cannot be understated: it is this publicity that is so important to the discussion of identity within the movement. This framework is essential to understanding the perception of readers' selves and each other as specifically Chartist activists. These negotiations of identity, not only in terms of individuals, but of those communities demonstrate what it meant to be a Chartist, and a 'worthy' Chartist at that. This negotiation between reading communities, the *Northern Star*, and the wider movement fashions each individual's self-image both as readers of the *Star* and as Chartists. Whether signified by identification of occupation, gender, or ideas for activism, these identities were portrayed through the pages of the *Star* for the world to see,

[4] Gilmartin, 'Popular Radicalism and the Public Sphere,' (1994), p. 551.

creating a new identity through a specific kind of vocabulary, creating not only a Chartist community, but a cultural and linguistic register.

1. Individual Self-Identities in the *Star*

If we return to the *Star*'*s* ever popular 'Readers and Correspondents,' column we can catch a glimpse of the individuals that comprised the readership of the *Star* throughout the peak period of the impact of the Chartist movement. While many individuals wrote to the *Star* under their own name, (and were sometimes rebuked by William Hill for the "childish anxiety […] to see his name in print") and were able to proclaim that they had been published, full transparency was not an option for all due to prejudiced employers.[5] While many correspondents addressed avoided revealing their names, through use of initials, a great many chose instead to write under a pen name, creating their print identity specifically for the pages of the *Star*, for all readers to see. Anonymous authorship was standard journalistic practice in this period, with signed letters becoming more common towards the end of the nineteenth century, but pseudonyms, as argued by Hobbs, become a 'rhetorical resource',[6] which becomes even more important when we consider the limited financial resources of the *Star*'*s* working-class readership, who may be sacked for participation in political dissent.

Identifying this important mark requires some detective work - we can infer that these were not pseudonyms assigned to particular letters by the Editor in response partly because of the brevity of so many answers. The following rather abrupt example was not uncommon at particularly busy points of the year, including parliamentary sessions:

> A CONSTANT READER, MANCHESTER, J. W. Clarke, A Chartist of the Old School, Richard Workman, Barraclough—No room.[7]

Here we see a variety of the names adopted by correspondents, and we can understand the need for them to be able to, as readers, clearly identify themselves as addressees in the paper; thus 'A Chartist of the Old School' need not be confused with 'An Old Chartist,' or similar. By choosing their pseudonyms, correspondents demonstrate agency in their active engagement with the paper, but this also allows them agency in how to present themselves not only to the editorial team, but to other readers across the nation. In this section I will look at pseudonyms

[5] 'The Ramsbottom Subscription for Mr. M'Douall,' *NS,* 08/08/1840, p. 4.
[6] Hobbs, 'Readers' Letters' (2019), p. 142.
[7] 'A Constant Reader, Manchester' *NS,* 30/07/1842, p. 5.

used by correspondents to explore how readers of the *Star* saw themselves, and considered what was important to them, in the construction of their individual identities.

Gender

Quantifying gender within the Chartist movement is particularly difficult. It is generally accepted that women's public involvement in mass meetings and mass organisation, such as through Female Radical or Chartist Societies, declined after 1842, although there were revivals following the General Election of 1847.[8] While the *Star* may have offered women the opportunity to participate in Chartist debates from the domestic space, through letter writing, the emphasis on pseudonyms makes this difficult to judge. I have looked at those who have explicitly identified their gender by pseudonym or given name (if not published), and were responded to by the Editors. As was common practice at the time, all three editors of the *Star* use 'he' as a gender-normative, all-encompassing pronoun in their replies to those correspondents who sign their initials, or a genderless pseudonym. I have created a small sample of the gendered makeup of the paper, which is by no means exhaustive, in searching for replies that use gendered title pronouns - Lord, Mr., Lady, Mrs., Miss. I also included Rev. and Dr. as masculine title pronouns so as not to skew the sample, both being at the time exclusively used by men.

Figure 15: Instances of gendered title pronouns within 'Readers & Correspondents' column, per year.

Year	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846	1847
Avg. words per R&C column per issue	173.5	481.5	624.7	799.2	1547.47	1730.6	1730.6	1009.6	1901.8	1025.51	1901.0
Total male titles	6	34	374	376	701	759	690	517	832	581	735
Total female titles	0	2	16	87	35	30	40	43	46	18	46
Distinct women from titles	0	2	13	24	13	11	15	15	18	14	36

[8] Dorothy Thompson argues that temperance culture, as part of the increasing divide in 'acceptable' spaces for women to occupy towards the 1850s and onward, 'may well have accentuated, although it could not have caused, the move of women away from politics.' *Outsiders: Class, Gender, Nation* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 99. David Jones, 'Women and Chartism,' *History* 68: 222 (1983), pp. 1-21, p. 14. Jutta Schwartzkopf and Malcolm Chase have argued that women's involvement in the Chartist movement in the late 1840s was more domestic, including involvement in the Chartist land plan. Schwartzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (1991), p. 123, Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 43.

Sure enough, my findings concur with those assumptions outlined: a peak of female presence in the column around 1840-41, and again in 1845 and 1847, and an enormous disparity in the gender balance of the column. This is, however, those men and women who self-identified as such: given the amount of female names that appear in legal questions, subscription lists, or indeed as the recipients of charitable appeals; as well as those who purchased shares (be it with their husbands or independently) in the Land Plan, it is unlikely that there were so few women actually writing to the *Star*. Initials, or genderless pseudonyms, may have been used to protect their anonymity, though there are rare examples of these combined with female pronouns. Dorothy Thompson calls attention to a letter from 'A Real Democrat' addressed to her 'Fellow Countrywomen,' arguing for the 'right of every woman to have a vote in the legislation of her country,' and citing Queen Victoria, as 'head of government', as her justification.[9] A 'Democrat' is not a gendered identifier, while the use of the intensifier 'real' suggests that Democracy, including a Chartist Democracy, is not truly such unless it includes women. Where women do identify themselves, responses range from condescension to chivalrous flattery.

An outrageously sexist response to a Miss Joselyn, shown below, removes the promise of the title 'poetess' from her – not uncommon in responses to poor poetry. The gendered title, however, is used against her, as the reply urges her to focus on the more 'ladylike' task of making pudding if she wishes to marry. From this, we can infer that she signed off her poem as 'Miss,' using her title against her to shame her for being an unmarried woman.

> MARTHA GIBSON JOSELYN is no poetess. If the specimen she has sent is the best she can do, it would be time mis-spent for her to try again. We dare wager a trifle that she will make a pudding better than poetry. At all events she ought to do if she is unyoked and hopes to obtain a mate.[10]

The use of Joselyn's full name, furthermore, contributes to a public shaming of her attempts at poetry, where a simple 'Miss Joselyn' may have sufficed. Value and capital are brought into question here too, engaging with the idea of women and domestic labour. Her 'time mis-spent' on creative labour, as opposed to domestic labour, is emphasized, this time of extreme value to working class women who often shouldered the double burden of paid work outside the home and unpaid domestic labour within it.[11] While it was not uncommon for Radical journals, including the *Star*, to discuss literary value in terms of food and nutrition (see chapters one and

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[9] 'To The Women of Scotland, *NS,* 23/06/1838, p. 3*,* in Thompson, *Outsiders* (1995), p. 87.
[10] 'Martha Gibson Joselyn', *NS,* 21/12/1844, p. 4.
[11] For more detail, see Emma Griffin, *Breadwinner: An Intimate History of the Family Economy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020).

four), the use of puns of 'trifle', 'pudding' (from which the proof comes), and 'unyoked' seem pointed and sexist. However, attitudes to self-identified women can be representative not just of the *Star*, but specific editors. Roberts suggests that William Hill, as a married man, 'did all he could to encourage [female poets],' in contrast to Joshua Hobson, who became editor in 1843, and who would have replied to Joselyn. While I argue that it was not a necessity to be married to perceive women as people, the difference between Hobson's sexist response to Joslyn, above, is markedly different from George Julian Harney's response to another self-identified female correspondent.[12]

By comparison, Harney's later reply to 'A Tiverton Lady' praises her 'lady-like' needlecraft, gratuitously thanking her for the kind donation of 'fashionable knitted lace collars' to be sold to benefit the library. By contrast to the 'mis-spent' time that Miss Joselyn could use on improving her poetry, 'A Tiverton lady' is fulfilling her duty as a good Chartist woman (and 'popular authoress!') by using her 'ladylike' skills to fundraise for the Working Men's Library.

> A TIVERTON LADY, celebrated for her skill in the lady-like craft of Knitting and Netting, and well-known as a popular authoress, having seen Mr Julian Harney's appeal in behalf of the Tiverton Working Men's Library, has volunteered to present Mr J. H. with some fashionable knitted lace collars for the benefit of the Library. The prices to be 1s or 2s according to the fineness of the article. Any of our fair friends, therefore, wishing to aid the good work, may obtain specimens of our kind friend's labour by forwarding thirteen or twenty-five postage stamps, to Mr Julian Harney, 16, Great Windmill-street, Haymarket London.[13]

This example is significant for several reasons. First of all, Tiverton, in Devon, was the constituency for which Harney stood in the 1847 General Election as part of the National Charter Association, along with O'Connor for Nottingham, and other prominent Chartist men.[14] Harney's name would have therefore been recognizable in the area, and perhaps what induced 'A Tiverton Lady' to get involved and notice Harney's plea. The emphasis on her as a 'Lady', furthermore, suggests that she is middle-class, as opposed to a working-class 'woman.' By engaging her 'lady-like' skill in needlecraft she is not selling her wares to support herself, but for charity; the 'fine' articles, especially made through netting, required excellent lighting and a delicate touch. The *Star* acknowledges her manufacture as 'labour', recognizing the skill involved, which is another reminder of the material culture of Chartism. Just as the April Fool's subscriber recommends the adoption of 'fashionable' moustaches for men, 'A

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[12] Roberts, 'Who Wrote to the *Northern Star*' (1995), p. 61.
[13] 'A Tiverton Lady', *NS,* 04/09/1847, p. 4.
[14] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 158-159.

Tiverton Lady', 'celebrated' for her skill, sells 'fashionable' collars associated with the movement. Finally, by addressing the notice to 'our fair friends,' the editor targets the *Star*'*s* female readers, rather than perhaps a husband, sweetheart, or father looking to treat a female companion. The *Star* frames the notice as a conversation between women and cements the association between the Charter and the domestic economy, participating, as Eileen Yeo has observed, in exclusive dealing, which made 'more articulate the family justification for their [political] militancy.'[15]

Figure 16: Singular female nouns appearing in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, 1837-1847.

Total	**woman**	**lady**	**sister**	**widow**	**female**	**poetess**
236	68	34	2	57	72	3

Likewise, the few self-identified female correspondents, in comparison with male correspondents, get to share the variety of matter that the genderless anonymous or male correspondents indulge in. For the total corpus of female words generated over this decade of the *Star*'*s* run, 'widow' accounts for 30% of the total of female pronouns - 'widower' appears not once. This demonstrates a tendency to see women within the movement as contingent on men. This usage of 'widow' peaks in 1842 and 1845, as popular campaigns to fundraise for the widows of imprisoned Chartist men were heavily publicised in the column. 'Widow' is employed by the *Star* not only to describe women whose husbands are dead, but who are absent from the home due to either imprisonment or transportation as a result of their political activity. Although the men are *alive,* because they are unable to be active as either Chartists or husbands, they are rhetorically killed off, the blame being ascribed to the Whigs or the Law. One poignant example is the 'Distressing case of Mrs. Ellis,' from 1845:

> We state with regret, that this law-made-widow and eight bereaved orphans are in great distress. Perhaps, it would have more weight if Mrs. Ellis's situation was depicted by herself. On the 7th ult., she writes thus, without any idea of its being printed:—"To night (Saturday), I am almost broken-hearted, having scarce anything in my shop. […] I was obliged to pledge some bed clothes, as all my wearing apparel is gone, I have no hope, unless my Chartist friends think of my situation." Since that period Mrs. Ellis has lost a beloved daughter—her who was the darling of Ellis, the expatriated patriot. Such is the present position of Mrs. Ellis; forlorn; almost friendless; naked; her remaining children often without food ; her heavy bereavement weighing on her mind, and the reflection that

[15] Eileen Janes Yeo, 'The creation of 'motherhood' and Women's responses in Britain and France, 1750–1914,' *Women's History Review,* 8:2 (1999), pp. 201-218, p. 211.

> her husband, the father of her little ones, is in bondage, unable to follow the remains of his beloved one to the grave, or be a partner in her sorrows. Her condition is indeed deplorable! [16]

Emma Ellis, although she does write to the paper to publicly thank her 'Chartist friends' for their donations to support her and her children, is very rarely heard from herself ; indeed, even this charity appeal is configured through the people's respect for her recently transported husband. As a 'law-made widow' with 'eight orphans', the *Star* rhetorically kills Ellis off: although some definitions of 'orphan' include children who have lost one parent, instead of both, this tends to be rare. By 'orphaning' Mrs. Ellis' existing eight children, the *Star* suggests that it is the absence of a male breadwinner and family patriarch that is most distressing. This is perhaps most evident in the addition of the death of their daughter, 'her who was the darling of Ellis,' configuring the loss in terms of the readers' attachment to 'patriot' Ellis, rather than focusing on the death of the child more generally: it is *this* child that matters. Marriage and family structure are situated within the framework of working-class suffering, Ellis is unable to 'be a partner in [Mrs. Ellis's] sorrows,' emphasizing that a husband and father is not only an economic provider, but provides emotional support to the family, too. A husband and father who is absent is not a husband or father at all, his family widowed and orphaned. It is his presence, both in the home and as an active member of the Chartist community, that is important. Ellis' lack of agency due to his 'bondage' as a transported convict is utilized to make the appeal more pathetic, in stark contrast with the appeal made for the 'veteran' Thomas Preston that I will discuss shortly.

Men, too, are not safe from implicit (or explicit) sexism, and are reminded often enough of 'manly' conduct or spirit by that which is deemed to be lacking in the *Star*'s political opponents, the Anti-Corn Law League. That said, the 'manly' conduct the editors (and indeed, the correspondents) speak so highly of is assumed to be the norm within their community. Searching the corpus for the noun 'man' yields plenty of results, but is difficult to sift much real meaning from, and seems as futile as searching for 'tree' in a forest. However, results for the adjective or adverb form, 'manly' or 'manfully,' provide an insight into how the *Star* and its correspondents saw masculinity within the movement, as shown in Fig. 7.

[16] 'Distressing Case of Mrs. Ellis', *NS,* 11/01/1845, p. 4.

Figure 17: Instances of specifically masculine descriptors in the *Star's* 'Readers & Correspondents' column, 1837-1847.

Man	Manly	Manliness	Manful	Manfully	Unmanly	Unmanned
749	14	3	0	6	3	1

These descriptors highlight behaviour or conduct not just in terms of masculinity, but Chartist masculinity. Sean Brady has explored how public institutions and discourses, including the newspaper, were a central point for men to police others' masculinity, to 'preserve and bolster' their own, including 'domesticated' Chartist men.[17] Previous scholarship has highlighted how barriers to participation in the franchise were taken as emasculating by Chartist men, and in this column, we see how 'manly' is a positive attribute, recognizing patriarchal power and privilege over women even when oppressed by social class.[18] Cluster tokens for 'manly' lead with 'manly conduct' and 'manly sports,' followed by 'manly independence' and 'manly bearing'. These tokens have positive connotations, praising specifically gendered male behavior, compared with cluster tokens for 'unmanly,' which are linked to 'attack,' 'brutality,' and 'trickery.' The *Star*'s corresponding community represents Chartist masculinity as brave, honourable, and peaceful. These terms reassert traditional ideas of masculinity for a Chartist readership. John Tosh notes that the historiography of masculinity involves repeated revisits to ideas around chivalry, referring to men's relationships with the women around them, which are certainly present here.[19] The public nature of 'Readers & Correspondents' suggests that Chartist masculinity was about comparison between and with other men, in order to make ideological points that furthered the progress of the Charter. 'The Victorian code of manliness,' Tosh argues, 'with its emphasis on self-control, hard work and independence, was that of the professional and business classes, and manly behaviour was what (among other things) established a man's class credentials vis-à-vis his peers and subordinates.'[20]

I argue that Chartist definitions of masculinity and manliness, rather than 'establishing' a man's class credentials in terms of his subordinates, reinterprets the notion of class subordinate, to position the working-class Chartist movement as being morally superior to

[17] Dean Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain 1861-1913* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 25-26.
[18] Sonya O. Rose, 'Gender Antagonism and Class Conflict: Exclusionary Strategies of Male Trade Unionists in Nineteenth Century Britain,' *Social History*, 13: 2 (1988), pp. 191-208.
[19] John Tosh, 'What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections in Nineteenth-Century Britain,' *History Workshop,* 38 (1994), pp. 179-202, p. 180.
[20] Tosh, *Ibid,* p. 183.

middle- or upper-class status. The example of 'unmanly trickery' is applied to the relevant party, as opposed to being self-identified, and is introduced in the heading, 'BEWARE OF A SCOUNDREL!' to warn London readers against a known robber.[21] 'Unmanned' may initially seem to be a gender-neutral term, but upon closer inspection, reveals more about Chartist ideals of masculinity, especially with regards to independence and agency. A recurring appeal in 1847 for 'The O'Connorville Tea Tray,' a lottery which sought to fundraise for the Veteran Patriots' and Exiles' Widows' and Children's Funds, is punctuated by a long reminder a week prior to the ballot, appealing to readers to donate. 'Should the exile[s'] […] families imprisoned in a "Union Bastile," or the recipients of parish relief—they will be unmanned! their energies will be depressed! their courage will fail them, and we shall be disgraced!'[22] This is not a typical usage of 'unmanned' for the period, which not only likens the Chartist movement to a kind of machine, requiring the presence of people within to operate it, steering the course to the franchise (to borrow a nautical metaphor). This appeal calls to the *Star*'s readership to not allow the exiled men to become emasculated, their position as family patriarch taken from them again by state, replaced by the 'union bastile' or 'parish relief'. These are instruments of the state, it is implied, for cuckolding. The appeal further suggests that this activism and energy for campaigning are masculine, confirming the ideal of Chartist masculinity as having courage. The inferences is that readers should meet this ideal. In failing to raise the money to prevent such horrors for the exiles' families, the (male) readership risks being emasculated as well, falling into 'disgrace' by failing to support the families of their Chartist brethren. While the exiles, including William Ellis, have already lost their agency and independence by being transported for Chartist activity, they cannot lose their families to the state too. In financially supporting the families of exiled Chartists when their 'exiled' brethren cannot, the *Star* suggests that it is better, and more manly, for their Chartist readership to become stand-in patriarchs for the family, as opposed to the parish or poor law bastille.

Jutta Schwartzkopf outlines these gendered divisions of labour as a 'politics of rationality,' placing the Chartist ideal as a moral high ground, again, subverting ideas of class subordination.[23] As with the Chartist women, family and domesticity are positioned as part of the *Star*'s readers' Chartist identities, taking 'manly feelings' of courage and honour as

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[21] 'Beware of a Scoundrel', *NS,* 30/07/1847, p. 4.

[22] 'The O'Connorville Tea Tray', *NS,* 26/6/1847, p. 4.

[23] Jutta Schwarzkopf, 'Rational and Respectable Beings: The Chartist Conception of the Citizen as Masculine,' in *A Man's World? Political Masculinities in Literature and Culture,* ed. by Kathleen Starck and Birgit Sauer (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), pp.27-38. p. 31-32.

specifically Chartist attributes, inferring that those men who are not Chartists lack these masculine qualities. Whether this behaviour was accelerated by a lack of self-identified female correspondents, it seems that both in quantitative and qualitative examination the *Star*'s office, at least, saw women as the other within the movement.

Literacy

The *Star* being a literary document, we see several correspondents explicitly self-identify using literary markers - a 'poet,' a 'writer,' a 'correspondent' demonstrates clear identification with the act of literacy in writing to the paper, a concrete assimilation of authorship as their identity. What is particularly interesting in the *Star*'s Correspondence column, as opposed to the poetry column, is the use of Latin and Greek pseudonyms: Calvinus, Gracchus, Philantropus, Pharisee, Medicus, Viscimus, Animus, Hericus, Publius, Fidus, Junius Rusticus, Democratious, Clericus, Brutus, Charteraus, and Misticus Secretus[24] are just a selection of pseudonyms used in the column. These take a specifically Latin [or Greek] name form, indicating a knowledge of Classical history and indeed, an ability to read Latin, only formally taught to middle-class grammar schools and above.[25] What we see is a clear example of autodidact pride, as encouraged by the *Star*, in actively co-opting knowledge and skill usually restricted to and by the middle classes into working-class reading practices.

We furthermore see direct engagement with these topics: 'Calvinus,' and 'Brutus' clearly borrow their names from the Ancient Roman generals, indicating not only an alignment with the values of autodidactic education in learning Latin but assuming oneself to be a powerful figure - another example of 'rank' in the Chartist 'army' more commonly demonstrated by proclamations of age and experience.[26] Likewise, 'Gracchus' borrows from the two brothers, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, populist politicians in Ancient Rome, and repeatedly evoked by Feargus O'Connor in his editorials, engaging with the political teachings of the Classics and re-imagining themselves as part of it, a contribution to what Robert Hall refers to as the 'Myth' of 'People's History.'[27] 'Junius Rusticus,' named for the Roman teacher

[24] I am grateful for the help of my supervisor Malcolm Chase for these Latin translations.
[25] For more on autodidactic classical education, see Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 60-67.
[26] 'Calvinus', *NS*, 19/11/1842, p. 5. 'Brutus', *NS,* 27/06/1840, p. 4.
[27] 'Gracchus', *NS,* 20/03/1841, p. 3. Sarah Butler, 'Heroes or Villains: The Gracchi, Reform, and the Nineteenth-Century Press,' in *Classics in the Modern World: A Democratic Turn?* ed. by Lorna Hardwick, Stephen Harrison, and S. J. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 301-318. Robert G. Hall,

and politician, was found to be the controversial Chartist playwright John Watkins.[28] By co-opting these names, we see the writers' alignment of their contemporary political values with classical expressions. 'Democritus' was modelling themself on the Ancient Greek philosopher and scientist.[29] Alternatively, it could have been a pun, an adjectival form of the more commonly used label 'Democrat' to demonstrate their support and identification with the Chartist ideal of democracy, making this public to the editors and their fellow readers. 'Amicus' creates a given name for themselves from a synonym for 'purpose' or 'courage,' but is furthermore a direct translation from the English 'heart,' evoking principles of kindness, love, and strength, and furthermore a technical term in law for an impartial advisor.[30] We furthermore find examples of writers whose pseudonyms related to the topic of their letters: as Hobbs notes, 'carefully chosen as a rhetorical device, enabling writers to continue their argument into the signature, and end on a pithy high note.'[31] These become performative, although disguising their real identities in the publication of the paper, and are used to signify an authentic commitment to Chartist ideals. In 1846 'Agricola' writes to the *Star* to request information about the Chartist Land Plan, either modelling themselves on the Roman general Gnaeus Julius Agricola, who was responsible for much of the Roman conquest of Britain and Ireland, or Latin for 'farmer.'[32] Given that the Land Plan was occasionally referred to as 'Home Colonisation,' it is entirely possible that the correspondent intentionally evoked both meanings. Other 'classical' writers have fun with the Latin form and generate their own pseudonym based on ideas they have: while 'Medicus,' which translates into English as 'physician,' simply warns their fellow readers against quack medicines on sale in publications, others make up their own words.[33] 'Philantropus' would indicate something to do with goodwill or philanthropy, while 'Charteraus' takes the Latin form to incorporate the People's Charter, demonstrating a more specific engagement with politics old and new.[34] These practices of co-opting Classical history and literature in imaginative ways continued through the century; as Hobbs notes, one

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Voices of the People: Democracy and Chartist Political Identity, 1830-1870 (London: Merlin Press, 2007), chapters one and two.

[28] 'Junius Rusticus', *NS,* 05/12/1840, p. 5. Malcolm Chase, 'John Watkins', *Dictionary of Labour Biography,* Vol. X (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp. 297-306, p. 299.

[29] 'Democritus', *NS*, 19/06/1841, p. 5.

[30] 'Philo – Amicus – Verax – W. W. K. and Peter' *NS,* 25/08/1838, p. 4.

[31] Andrew Hobbs, 'Readers' Letters to Victorian Newspapers as Journalistic Genre', in *Letters to the Editor: Comparative and Historical Perspectives,* ed. by Alison Cavanaugh and John Steel (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 129-146, p. 142.

[32] 'Agricola', *NS*, 29/08/1846, p. 5.

[33] 'Quack Almanacks', *NS,* 04/11/1843, p. 4.

[34] 'Philatropus', *NS*, 19/06/1841, p. 5. 'Charteraus', *NS*, 12/03/1842, p. 5.

Blackburn correspondent signing off a letter to his local paper as 'Cottonicus,' linking himself to the regional textile trade.[35] 'Mysticus Secretus,' on the other hand, seems to just be having fun with the form of having a pseudonym, obscuring their real name.[36] These examples, although not nearly as common as English language pseudonyms or even initials, are still prevalent throughout the *Star*'s print run. By actively engaging and co-opting Classical language and ideals, these writers introduce themselves as not only literate but learned readers, creating their own identities based on their own ideas and engagement with a long history of philosophy and political thought.

Readership

We know that there were individual 'constant readers' and 'subscribers,' as they are differentiated by location in the editors' replies to them, again, suggesting that these labels of loyalty to the *Star* are indeed chosen by the correspondent and not the editor. In addition to these demonstrations of literary engagement, many correspondents aim to showcase their loyalty to the paper. Just as some correspondents are 'young' (i.e. fresh, inexperienced) Chartists, 'constant' subscribers demonstrate their participation in the movement. Many a 'Constant Reader' and 'Subscriber' write in to share their feedback or comment on matter of previous weeks, both buttering up the editorial team and demonstrating their experience with the paper and its ethos. Throughout the ten years covered by my study, there are no fewer than 40 self-identified 'Subscribers' from locations all over the country - from Ashton to Wellingborough - and even as far abroad as Copenhagen, Denmark.[37] In many cases these, as those aged Radicals who boast of their years of service, show off their years of loyalty to the *Star*: for example, one correspondent, writing in 1842, signs themself 'A Subscriber from the Commencement'.[38] Others who proclaim their subscription can have this loyalty used against them, as could the 'Old Radical' seen previously:

> A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER, AND LOVER OF "*STAR*"- LIGHT, TYLDSLEY, is informed, and ought to have known, that no notice of a forthcoming meeting is inserted in the *Star* unless it bears the signature of the sub-Secretary of the locality where it purports to come from, or is sent by one of our own appointed Correspondents, who is

[35] Hobbs, 'Readers' Letters' (2019), p. 142.
[36] 'Mysticus Secretus', *NS*, 14/01/1843, p. 4.
[37] 'A Subscriber, Ashton', *NS,* 15/02/1845, p. 5. 'A Subscriber, Wellingboro'', *NS,* 26/06/1847, p. 5. 'The Portraits', *NS,* 06/05/1843, p. 5.
[38] 'A Subscriber from the Commencement', *NS,* 08/10/1842, p. 4.

> expected to make himself acquainted that "all is right" before he transmits it. We know of no "General Lee" of Ashton-under-Lyne; and think his notice a very suspicious one.[39]

This 'Constant Subscriber' perhaps oversteps the mark, not only advertising their loyalty in subscribing to the paper, but additionally proclaiming to be a 'lover of *Star*-light,' using the *Star*'s own joke about its importance in an attempt to engage them. Perhaps this was too flattering a pseudonym to be trusted, as the editor voices suspicions about having 'ought' to have had authority from the area's branch officials when sending notices meetings. The *Star* at this point had already faced legal difficulty resulting in O'Connor's imprisonment for publishing seditious libel, so in order to avoid such legal problems, as well as remain in good standing with the readership community, the editorial team cannot afford to risk publishing inaccurate or untrustworthy material. Their response, referencing their own 'appointed' correspondent who 'is expected to make himself acquainted' suggests a long-standing relationship between such individuals and the *Star*'s editors, building a deeper level of trust within the community of production for the paper. This use of flattery in the pseudonym seems more likely designed to encourage the editors to comply with their request and print their notice. Likewise, 'A Six Years' Subscriber' is one of several examples of '*X* Years Subscribers' who write with questions and requests that are complied with, as their legal question receives a detailed answer.[40] Similarly, a recurring correspondence is maintained between Ernest Jones and 'A Member of the Land Plan, Plymouth' in his Legal Questions subsection in 1847, perhaps an editorial choice to answer a sneaky advertisement for the contested scheme.[41] Meanwhile, several 'Constant Reader's' more unusual or impractical requests become the subject of mockery, questioning the validity of the assertion of 'constant' readership, as in one example from 1844:

> CONSTANT READER, BOWLING, must surely have mistaken the nature of our avocation. Our business is to make newspapers; not to ferret out genealogies, or make out titles to property.[42]

The *Star*'s role within the Chartist community as a trusted source of information seems to have misled this reader. We have seen previously how the column was used as a tool to mitigate

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[39] 'A Constant Subscriber, and Lover…', *NS,* 29/07/1843, p. 4.
[40] 'A Six Years' Subscriber', *NS,* 01/02/1845, p. 5. Interestingly, this person has written to the paper for advice about infidelity in their marriage.
[41] 'A Member of the Land Plan, Plymouth', *NS,* 02/10/1847, p. 5.
[42] 'A Constant Reader, Bowling', *NS,* 10/08/1844, p. 5.

probing enquiries into O'Connor's personal life, as well as a point of contact for potential members of the Land Plan, but this response challenges readers over their place. They are, above all, a newspaper. The 'Constant Reader' is suggested to have made a mistake in their interpretation, *misreading* the paper. These humorous responses challenge the writers to defend their claim of 'Constant' readership, and test those other readers of their close engagement with the paper. Like those who assert their status as 'writers', 'poets,' and autodidacts, 'constant readers' assert themselves as loyal to the *Star*, and should realise their need to be prepared for this to be challenged.

Values

The final category I have identified for individual self-identification in the column is that of value alignment. Unlike the biological definitions of sex and age, or the demonstrations of literacy and readership, many correspondents use their pseudonyms to align themselves with what they, and the *Star*, value. Similarly to the Latin, or Latinate pseudonyms, this enables correspondents to add rhetorical flair to their letters. While the Classical names create a shared understanding between readers who will get the joke, value declarations written in English are plain and clear to all readers of the paper, regardless of educational background or interest. The five quantifiers: 'Lover,' 'admirer,' 'hater' of such and such a quality, or 'friend' and 'enemy' to whatever detestable quality, makes an ideological statement from the first. They are introduced to the *Star* and its readers not as a reader, man or woman, veteran or youth, member of a trade, but as a holder of specific principles.

A simple search of the corpus for 'a lover' yields around thirty results, with correspondents proclaiming to be lovers of Truth, Justice, Fair-Play, Freedom, among others. In the majority of cases, these principled pseudonyms were used to introduce a suggestion for agitation, or support of a case previously discussed by the *Star*. For the following examples, we can infer the nature of their letters:

> A LOVER OF TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND EQUALITY—We have no room for his "Letter to the aristocracy of all Nations."[43]

> A LOVER OF GOD AND ALL MANKIND.— An operative in Wakefield—We have read his letter carefully and admire the spirit in which it is written. We perfectly agree with all its positions, but cannot find room for his letter.[44]

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[43] 'A Lover of Truth, Justice, and Equality', *NS*, 23/10/1841, p. 4.

[44] 'A Lover of God and All Mankind', *NS,* 29/06/1839, p. 4.

These pseudonyms have optimistic connotations, as do the replies to their (unpublished) letters. The long responses explaining want of space maintain positive relationships with the correspondents, acknowledging receipt and even 'admiration', as opposed to ignoring the letters physically and rhetorically though the column. When we consider the role of readers and correspondents specifically in the Chartist press, this was even more imperative than newspapers in general, in which Aled Jones saw readers and correspondents' columns as "a form of political representation."[45] The letters furthermore give a snapshot of the kind of musings of the *Star*'s general readers, similar to the *Star*'*s* resounding editorials that call readers to actions. 'Truth, Justice, and Equality,' as well as 'God and All Mankind' are allusions to the United States constitution. Idealist American revolutionary rhetoric is a commonly used tool in Radical publications, especially in the Chartist period. Other Chartist periodicals, including Bronterre O'Brien's *Southern Star* and John Cleave's *English Chartist Circular,* use American iconography and rhetorical flourish to suggest what the British Chartist movement might become; as Michael J. Turner states, 'wide suffrage in America was regarded as a security against tyranny and corruption.'[46] This was also manifested in the use of militaristic language. The *Star,* as well as other Chartist or Radical periodicals, also tend to mimic American periodical fashions before their British contemporaries. It is no surprise that this filtered through to the *Star*'s correspondents. By contrast, the more negative names, including the 'Enemies' of 'Tyranny,' and 'Oppression', tend to be associated more with direct action within the movement, and particularly to do with labour rights and practices, as the following examples indicate:

> A HATER OF TYRANNY.—It depends on the "rates" of the mill. The millowner has the power if any such rules are hung up in the working room, stating that such are the terms on which those whom he employs must be content to labour.[47]

> AN ENEMY TO WHIG AND TORY TYRANNY sends us the following:—

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[45] Aled Gryffd Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power, and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), p. 187.

[46] Michael J. Turner, 'Chartism, Bronterre O'Brien, and the "Luminous Political Example of America,"' *History* (2012), pp. 43-69, p. 45. O'Brien edited the *Southern Star and London and Brighton Patriot* (January – June 1840). Published in London by George Cowie, it was a short-lived Chartist weekly intended to mirror the *Northern Star*. Although it was half the page size of the *Northern Star*, it contained 16 pages and cost 6*d* per issue. John Cleave was an experienced radical publisher based just off Fleet Street, London, and his *English Chartist Circular and Temperance Record* was a broadsheet-sized *½d* weekly of eight pages, edited by James Harris.

[47] 'A Hater of Tyranny', *NS,* 02/12/1843, p. 4.

> Some of the men employed in the Glasgow Pottery are in the habit of reading the *Star*; and the articles which appear therein necessarily give rise to some remarks from those who read them. Some way or other, the master received information of this, and he immediately gave orders to the effect—that all who were known to be Chartists, or readers of that pernicious journal, (the *Star*,) would be turned off from their employment. Now, Sir, I think all must admit that this is downright tyranny.
>
> To the workmen I would say, cease not to read those newspapers which you think will give you the most information, and advocate those principles which will prove most beneficial to you.[48]

These particular adages, specifically opposing oneself to the Whigs and Tories, framing oneself as 'lover' or 'hater', use a binary system to candidly align the reader with specific values defined both by themselves, as readers, and within the *Star*. Published in 1843, both of these notices relate to injustice within employment practices. There is enough information provided in the responses to make sense to all readers of the paper, without betraying any specific details that may be used to identify the correspondents. Because these letters are regarding employment practice, this was all the more important, especially if, as the 'Enemy to Whig and Tory Tyranny' suggests, readership of the *Star* is being used (unlawfully) as reason for dismissal. This particular notice, in quoting the Master of the Mill's description of the *Star* as 'pernicious' enables the *Star* to publicly defend itself; in publishing the letter by the 'Enemy', it questions the use of 'pernicious' as an accurate definition. If allowing working-class readers, especially an 'Enemy' of 'Tyranny' is pernicious, they place the onus of wrongdoing on the part of the Glasgow Mill Master, not themselves. Similarly, their letter to the 'Hater of Tyranny' clearly states the rules in a politically neutral tone. These correspondents both take 'Tyranny' as a keyword within the *Star*'*s* political and revolutionary register, but engage with them in different ways. The 'Enemy' outlines specific political differences, as the country's laws are all made either by Whigs or Tories, while the 'Hater' seems to use 'Tyranny' as the enemy of 'Freedom', in terms of the conditions, or rules, of employment. The correspondents, in identifying themselves as 'lovers of truth' and 'haters of tyranny' also specifically align these values with the *Star*, as the content of their notices matches the *Star*'s values. Particularly in periods of strife and scandal for the paper and the movement, these strong-willed pseudonyms make a statement to other readers and invite further engagement with the philosophy and practice of the paper and the movement.

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[48] 'A Hater of Whig and Tory Tyranny', *NS,* 21/10/1843, p. 5.

What we see in these varied uses of individual names in the *Star* is an exploration of different components of individual identity. Limited space and anonymisation require the correspondents to make their introductions clear and concise. They must decide what they want to be known for, to the *Star* and to other readers, and lead with this. This is all the more difficult knowing that unpopular opinions in the Chartist readership will not be welcomed. Adjectives and multiple categories are used to differentiate between individual correspondents and build identities. 'An Old Radical,' for example, signifies not only old age and their political views, but demonstrates a level of maturity to it, built over time. 'Two Ultra Radical Ladies' do not share their names but make their politics and gender clear, perhaps the novelty of female poets giving them an edge over other correspondents, allowing these two facets of their identities to overlap.[49] They are Radical 'Ladies', each informing the other; while 'A Brother Democrat, Rochdale' aligns his masculinity as part of a group, using fraternity to forge extra links with his fellow 'democrats' in the readership.[50] These furthermore allow them to stand out as individuals, rather than being assumed to assimilate into a union, as in the group headings I will discuss shortly. Correspondents choose generic terms, in keeping with the *Star*'*s* political linguistic register, in combinations that appeal to them to create specific effects, while maintaining their participation in the shared values and language of the community. In this way correspondents defined themselves in relation to the *Star* and to the movement, allowing us to see what was important to individual readers, and get a glimpse into their own self-perceptions.

2. Collective Identities

In addition to the varied individual names or pseudonyms that formed the 'Readers and Correspondents' of the *Northern Star*, there were groups. These self-proclaimed collective identities build on the format of individual identities and serve a linked, but very different function: unifying several distinct individuals. Throughout the years of the *Star*, the frequency of appearances of these groups ebb and flow, but reflect the unifying point of the collective, falling into three broad categories: labour or occupational groups, regional groups, or interest groups. These groups, unlike some of the fixed identity markers such as gender and age that we have seen thus far, have an element of choice in them. It is the trade, the locality, or their dedication to a cause such as teetotalism that is the unifying and defining feature of these

[49] 'Two Ultra-Radical Ladies', *NS,* 06/07/1939, p. 4.
[50] 'A Brother Democrat, Rochdale', *NS,* 23/01/1847, p. 5.

groups. In this section I will explore the motives behind these collective identities and analyse the ways in which these small communities represent themselves to the wider audience of the *Star* and, indeed, the nation. The Chartist movement, as has been very well established in the last fifty years of scholarship, was a grassroots movement that relied on many smaller collectives. I aim to examine the public, performative nature of such collective self-identities and the ways that they communicated with each other.

Given the *Star*'s readership of working-class men, it is no surprise that occupation is taken as a label for many correspondents. While we do see the use of occupation or trade as a distinguishing feature of individual correspondents' pseudonyms, many letters from trade unions and associations appeared in the paper to campaign for labour rights. It is here that we see a hierarchy of working-class trades: those who are 'operatives' or 'labourers' versus 'makers' and 'artisans'. Following the *Star*'s relocation to London in 1844, it rebranded as the *Northern Star and National Trades' Journal*, demonstrating the intersectional relationship between class, trade, and Chartism.[51] These occupational labels are significant: to do a job for ten hours a day, six days a week would naturally have become part of an individual's (masculine) identity.[52] Chartism was, at least in part, born out of Trade Union movements: as Chase argued, '[m]any trade societies supported the movement *en bloc*' rather than individuals joining as individuals.[53] More than that, many trades carried traditions and were part of a region's heritage. It is this intrinsic identifying factor which scholars including David R. Green and Sonya Rose attribute the 'rage against the machine' of the Luddite revolutions to, that by mechanizing many of these trades the society suffered the loss of an inherently masculine skillset, thus the agency, identity, and status of the workmen.[54] A search through the corpus of the column shows no fewer than 27 types of self-identified 'maker,' confirming that most worked within the manufacturing industries. More specific job titles appear too, including 'woolcombers', 'flax-dressers,' 'cloth-dressers,' as well as skilled titles including 'carpenter,' 'milliner,' and 'tailor.'

The act of manufacture reproduces the work of previous 'noble artisans,' entrenching manufacture within a history of skilled men whose work forms the backbone of British

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[51] See chapter five of this thesis for a thorough exploration of this move and rebrand.
[52] See also: chapter two of Emma Griffin, *Bread Winner* (2020).
[53] Malcolm Chase, *Early Trade Unionism: Fraternity, Skill, and the Politics of Labour* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 187.
[54] Sonya O. Rose, 'Gender Antagonism and Class Conflict' (1988), p. 193. David R. Green, *From Artisans to Paupers: Economic Change and Poverty in London, 1790-1870* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), p. 89-92.

capitalism and on whom everyone relies; just as the 'noble' agricultural labourers fed the country, the weavers, spinners, and tailors clothed the country. Indeed, as Schwarzkopf, Chase, and others have identified, the working classes were conscious that they were the "producers of wealth" of Britain and the world, that the emerging materialism of the newly-minted middle classes relied on the labour of the working classes in manufacture.[55] In self-identifying with their work, the writers of letters in the *Northern Star* act as representatives of the trade. These vary greatly, between singular workers and collectives, as this example from 1844 demonstrates:

> LONDON JOURNEYMEN SHOEMAKERS.—We are sorry that we cannot find room for their excellent petition.
>
> A FACTORY WORKER.—The subject of his letter to Lord Brougham has already been disposed of in the speeches of Mr. Oastler and Mr. Harney, reported in the *Star* of last week.[56]

The above examples appear side by side (or one atop the other) in the same column of the same issue of the *Star* from April 1844, and we can glean an idea of the content of their unpublished letters - the group of Shoemakers sharing a petition most likely to do with a labour dispute, while the singular 'Factory Worker' uses this as their distinguishing feature for a separate letter, albeit to do with factories, but subsumed by another feature. The London Journeymen Shoemakers, having a petition for their specific cause, get a personal apology for want of room rather than a gentle ticking off by the editors. The individual's letter is personal: although they publicly self-identify with their job, it is one voice subsumed by others; as opposed to the many represented by the group voice of the London Journeymen Shoemakers. The Shoemakers' self-identification as such furthermore allows them to be seen by other trade groups, opening the potential for solidarity and correspondence between branches of trades. Perhaps the best illustration of this trade groups approach to fundraising is the tagline addressing the recipients of such funds below:

> THE INDOMITABLE MINERS—We are glad to learn that the "West End Men's Men" shoemakers have determined to send £20 to the heroic and brave men of the north. Let every Trade, and every section of a Trade follow the generous example, and the cause of Labour will soon be triumphant.[57]

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[55] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism* (2000), p. 184-5. Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (1991), p. 94.
[56] 'London Journeymen Shoemakers', 'A Factory Worker', *NS,* 20/04/1844, p. 5.
[57] 'The Indomitable Miners', *NS,* 10/08/1844, p. 5.

This notice, addressed to a group of miners, appears at the time of unrest for the miners of Northumberland, a topic of national significance, and whose strike action and public letters appear frequently in the *Star* in 1844.[58] What makes this notice significant, however, is that not only are the West End Men's Men shoemakers fundraising to support the miners (a totally unrelated and geographically distant trade group to themselves), but have praise heaped upon them in the form of editorial commentary. The 'generous example' is printed for all to read, while the Miners, in their struggle for labour rights, are 'indomitable,' 'heroic and brave men'. The "West End Men's Men" shoemakers are an established trade group, but also have some fun with their pen name, as noted by the quotation marks around them: 'men's men' not only sounds similar to 'West End,' but specifies that they are male artisans who make shoes for male customers. Furthermore, the 'men's men' suggests the idea of brotherhood, exemplified in their support for the miners.

The emphasis on manufacturing trades within the pages of the *Star* illustrates not only the makeup and demographic of the newspaper's readership: it is significant that these examples, representative of the *Star*'*s* treatment of labour and labourers in general, date from the period shortly before its rebranding to 'National Trades' Journal' at the end of 1844. There is a move to more closely integrate the *Star*'*s* brand of Chartism with the Trade Union movement: as Chase notes, the 'protection of working people's interests could only be ensured through the creation of a participative democracy. Chartism continued [in the mid-1840s] to generate a climate which nurtured the further development of working-class culture and associational forms.'[59]

Alongside occupational and trade groups' identities, we see examples of regional identity come to play in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column. For the letters of individuals, locations are given in order to differentiate similar writers, as was (and indeed, remains) standard editorial practice in this context. Again, for collectives, locality and regional identities are used specifically to differentiate groups as well as unify those members of a region, and, in the case of trade disputes, give context. Local and regional trades groups who write to the paper to air disputes are enabled to gain cross-country support from their fellow tradespeople. Tailors and shoemakers make up an enormous proportion of occupational mentions, and claim a unique place within radical politics. In practical terms, tailoring and shoemaking, prior to the advent

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[58] Shortly before the above article appeared in the *Star*, the *Times* reprinted an item from a '*Newcastle Journal'* informing readers that Welsh strikebreakers had been brought in to work at some of the collieries. 'The Colliers' Strike', *The Times*, 08/08/1844, p. 8.
[59] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism* (2000), p. 203.

of the sewing machine, is a more social working environment: not only is shop work public-facing, but facilitates the space and quiet to chat (unlike the factory, mill, mine, or metalshop, where noise and heat renders conversation impossible). Because of this, shoemaking had a unique tradition of radical activity. E. J. Hobsbawm and Joan Wallach Scott, in their history of 'Political Shoemakers,' write that it is practically proverbial. They report Robert Peel, during the Chartist period, confronting a group of Shoemakers in a labour dispute, asking in exasperation "how is it …that you people are foremost in every movement? … If there is a conspiracy or political movement, I always find one of you is in it."[60] For a trades group to advertise in the *Northern Star* or make an appeal, they are able to count on others of their ilk all over the country, as per the following example:

> THE MANCHESTER TAILORS are informed that we have received a letter from the Burslem and Tunstall Tailors' Protection Society (Potteries), signed by John Billington, Dale Hall, near Longport, Potteries, wishing to know whether the Manchester Tailors are still on strike. A sum of money was sent from the above Society to Manchester, and which was acknowledged by Mr. Francis McNamara, but not to the satisfaction of the above Society. A second letter met with no answer. The above Society would be willing to contribute their aid to the Manchester Tailors, if still on strike; they therefore desire information on the subject.[61]

This example is one of several from various trades appearing in the *Star*, from Tailors to Sailors to Miners. While trade papers such as the *Tailors' Advocate* were in existence, the decision to air labour disputes in the *Northern Star* speaks to the ethos of the *Star* and the Chartist movement: a movement of working-class men.[62] This demonstrates the success of O'Connor's aims for the newspaper to facilitate national discussion and the ways it was used in addition to private correspondence between groups - by publishing this notice, the Manchester Tailors' can be held accountable and manage their aid and relationship with the Tailors of the Potteries. While the Tailors are an example of cross-regional dialogue in the *Star*, and acts of solidarity between localities, we also see that regionalism is integral to self-identity and the *Northern Star*'s portrayal of people's history. Just as the People's Charter, in name, was in reference to the Magna Carta, regional history is intrinsically linked to regional identities.[63] Manchester and

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[60] E. J. Hobsbawm and Joan Wallach Scott, 'Political Shoemakers,' *Past and Present,* 89 (1980), pp. 86-114, p. 93.

[61] 'The Manchester Tailors', *NS,* 24/08/1844, p. 4.

[62] See 'The Tailors Strike at Manchester', referenced in *NS* 11/04/1846, p. 5.

[63] Chartist references to the Magna Carta were usually spelled 'Magna Charta' to further align the two documents. See also Joshua Gibson, *The Political Thought of the Chartist Movement* (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2017), p. 93.

Lancashire had cotton-spinning, Yorkshire had the woollen industry, and Northumberland and the North East had mining. Mechanisation of some trades led to a loss of masculine status and identity for the tradesmen during the Industrial Revolution, altering the regional identity of these areas and the rural/urban makeup of a place.[64] These local identities and affiliation with trades remained strong and were infused with a type of revolutionary masculinity, the opposite of the mainstream propaganda in praise of the British Empire overseas. Questions of local and national pride are configured in these letters in terms of their activism and devotion to the Charter. David Powell writes that the creation of the British state as a national identity was, at least partly, an establishment move to quell any radical ideas inspired by the French Revolution from the end of the eighteenth century.[65] In actual terms, many everyday people felt more patriotic towards being Welsh, or Scottish or English, in terms of region such as Cornish identity, and to their hometown. Previous scholarship of the movement has elucidated that Chartism had particular strongholds in parts of Wales, Scotland, and industrial regions of England such as Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Leicestershire. We can see how localities are called upon to demonstrate their devotion and display a kind of regional patriotism: just as women Chartists redefined 'abroad' as outside the local vicinity, 'outside the domestic' rather than 'overseas', 'patriotic' was defined by the anti-establishment Chartists as their home region, as below.[66]

> STARS TO IRELAND.—What are the Sheffield friends about? We know that the circulation of the *Star* is rapidly increasing in their town, why not give their Irish brethren the benefit of it? Let them use the list sent them by the Irish Universal Suffrage Association. The little trouble of so doing will be amply repaid by the great and lasting good that will be effected.
>
> THE COVENTRY CHARTISTS appeal to their townsmen to come forward and join the new organisation: especially the avowed Chartists, who will prove their sincerity by responding to the appeal. We hope they will do so. "England expects every man to do his duty."[67]

In '*Star*s to Ireland' the Sheffield Chartists and readers are appealed to as 'friends' before having their devotion to the cause questioned and encouraging the development of, in this case, cross-national community. The 'Irish brethren' have specifically fraternal, familial ties drawn

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[64] Mining was not yet mechanised at this time, nor many 'artisan trades' including tailoring, tanning, or shoemaking. Robert G. Hall, *Voices of the People* (2007), p. 52.
[65] David Powell, *Nationhood and Identity: The British State Since 1800* (London: IB Taurus, 2002), p. 12.
[66] Schwartzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (1991), p. 103.
[67] 'Stars to Ireland', 'The Coventry Chartists' *NS,* 04/11/1843, p. 4.

between themselves and the Sheffield 'friends', and it is this familial framework that is used to unite the two communities, and call upon the Sheffield residents about their local pride. Likewise the Coventry Chartists used as an example to 'their townsmen,' with personalisation of 'England' and its expectations. This particular kind of patriotism is defined by activism as demonstrated through the joining of a Chartist collective, mutually publicised and defined through the Coventry Chartists and the *Northern Star*. The correspondents' collective identities draw upon shared qualities with their townsmen to create a kind of performance through literal 'in' and 'out' groups.

Self-identification of unions, societies, and associations are drawn up for a variety of causes, from local party fundraising to small trades groups, temperance societies, co-operatives, and, of course, Feargus O'Connor's great land scheme. 'Membership' of such groups is a term that appears frequently in the column, and it is through examining this turn of phrase that we can examine how collective identities were created and used for propaganda in the *Northern Star*. Examples of the use of the term 'membership' indicate that participants in these groups literally became card-carrying members of the group, with these cards and ephemera, such as medals, acting as proof of participation. Given the *Star*'s ethos of democracy and inclusivity, it is interesting that group membership was cemented by awarding exclusive tokens. The following example demonstrates the ceremony and materiality of such membership:

> Mr. O'Connor has the honour to acknowledge his card of admission to the Leeds Working Men's Association, conferring all the privileges of membership ; Mr. O'Connor feels honoured by the compliment, and begs, in return, to assure his brother members, that no exertion upon his part shall be wanting to make the Association a rallying point for the industrious, a terror to tyrants, and a credit to the town of Leeds.[68]

> EDWARD BEEDLE must write to Mr. Heywood privately. There is no other expence in joining the National Charter Association than that of the card of membership.[69]

O'Connor's flattery at receiving his 'card of admission' to the Leeds Working Men's Association [WMA] seems like puffery, but shows the value and symbolism of such a card: to have the card is to have the 'privileges of membership.' Given that many of the Leeds WMA didn't see themselves having much social privilege, the 'privilege' of membership gives an air of exclusivity, some material ownership infused with ceremonial meaning. The material culture

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[68] 'Mr. O'Connor and the Working Men's Associations' *NS,* 10/03/1838, p. 4.
[69] 'Edward Beedle', *NS,* 19/03/1842, p. 5.

of the movement, from small membership cards to the Land Plan, engages with trades' identities as producers of the nation's material wealth, returning it in small doses to the labouring manufacturers. O'Connor's 'honour' in joining the Association, and publishing this notice in the paper, acts as advertising for the group, building their brand. Leeds Working Men's Association, in its name, joins together in social class a group of self-identified working men, and Leeds; to which O'Connor builds on the sense of regional patriotism to state that it will be 'a credit to the town of Leeds,' and a 'rallying point for the industrious,' foregrounding the 'working' identity marker and identifying the group as something to unite like-minded people. Likewise, we see in collective self-identities that in order to name oneself as a member there would be a joining fee - however small. For the National Charter Association, this was a small fee to cover the cost of stationery; compared with the larger contributions necessary to join the Land Plan scheme. Even to become a recognised member of a trade union you would be demonstrating your membership firstly by your labour, and secondly by a subscription: something had to act as proof of membership. This joining fee signifies a commitment to the cause of the organisation, and by self-identifying as part of such in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, the writer becomes propagandist. Not only is the group making connections across the country for support of labour disputes or discussion, but demonstrating that a united group have made individual sacrifices for the unity of all.

These unions, whether trade, regional groups, or associated activist networks such as temperance societies, become the backbone not only of the *Northern Star*'s readership, as evidenced by their presence in the columns, but of the movement to support the Charter. Such groups could, and did, have their contentions and rivalries, but their existence within the wider movement across the country shows them to be part of something bigger. These smaller groups combine to form a far wider one, with demographics of various kinds uniting based on these qualities, values, and lifestyles. While an individual is one voice, the united voice of many in a group has more influence, as it evidences the validation of others.

It is this strategy that was the essence of many Chartist groups including the Northern Union, the Executive, and the National Charter Association; as well as many smaller 'subsects' of the movement, including the Land Plan members and pro/anti physical force groups, as the following notice exemplifies:

> ANTI-MILITIA ASSOCIATION—All the late members who have not received their quota in accordance with a resolution passed at the last meeting of the managers, previous to the appearance of this notice, are requested to apply to Mr. E. Stallwood, 2, Little Vale

> Place, Hammersmith Road, stating the amount paid, the time of payment, and to whom. All such applications will meet with immediate attention.[70]

Just as the *Star* is used as a noticeboard by individuals wishing to connect, or for advertisement of group membership, so its wide circulation is used on a practical level to keep on top of administrative tasks of the above association, one of many. Indeed, of the 356 mentions of 'society' in the column over this ten-year period of heightened activism, no fewer than 59 distinct, self-identified 'societies' can be counted, in addition to the 80 individual self-identified 'associations.' Many examples of these groups can be counted not only in the letters to 'Readers & Correspondents', but within printed subscription lists for charity appeals, such as the 'Universal Suffrage Teetotal Association' of Leeds, which clearly united over a combination of lifestyle choices.[71] These various clubs include many 'working-men's' clubs, an alternative to the 'gentleman's clubs' of the higher echelons of society, and acknowledged as such through a particular commitment to 'virtual' and 'improvement' activities as opposed to leisure. Inclusion and exclusion serve a performative function to uphold standards of activism and behaviour within a group, while seeming aloof and desirable to those in the 'out' group. To be a member of the self-identified collectives in the *Northern Star* was to adhere to a particular lifestyle, be it working class activism, education and self-improvement, abstention from alcohol and tobacco, or support of O'Connor's land plan.

The communities of correspondents to the *Northern Star* are not only recognizable from the mixing and matching of keywords used by individual correspondents. Groups here have specific purposes to represent common interests of trade, of locality, and of political or lifestyle group membership. These collectives are clearly identified as separate from individual distinctions, and bring the idea of a relational position in their letters. Self-identified collectives write to voice a shared opinion within their group, and build links with other groups: they seek not to distinguish themselves as individuals, but to connect with others. While Hobbs correctly identifies that 'publication was seen as something to be earned or granted, a privilege not a right,' the assertion of collective pseudonymous identity works around this, providing multiple correspondents the privilege of publication, provided that this unity is for the common good of the movement.[72] The use of group identity furthermore emphasises a unity of opinion, and the many groups which form the community of the 'Readers & Correspondents' column create a

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[70] 'Anti-Militia Association', *NS,* 03/10/1846, p. 5.
[71] 'Frost's Defence Fund', *NS,* 28/12/1839, p. 8.
[72] Hobbs, 'Readers' Letters' (2019), p. 142.

more structural foundation to the paper's readership. It furthermore demonstrates the communal reading practices of the paper and the times, truly highlighting the community of contributors for and to the paper.

3. Authenticity and 'Chartist' Branding

The Chartist, as introduced in the 1839 tract 'What is a Chartist?' produced by the Finsbury Tract Society as an accompaniment to the Charter, is a rational and logical man, whose devotion to the rights of his compatriots is presented clearly as a matter of fact. He is knowledgeable, hardworking, devoted to his family and to his country. Above all he is full of conviction and confidence in his identity as a Chartist: his opponent in the tract is Mr. Doubtful.[73] Having explored how the readers and correspondents of the *Northern Star* self-identified in its pages, I now turn to how this identity was defined. To identify as a Chartist meant, on the one hand, support of the six principles of the Charter; on the other, unwritten qualities of nobility, honesty, and strength of character. Robert Hall, examining this tract, notes that 'the dialogue that ensued was significant for its omissions as well as its emphases,' 'ignoring the movement's 'reliance on the mass platform and its identification of 'the people' with 'the working classes,' that defined the meaning of the term 'Chartism' for many of its leaders and activists.'[74] It is these aspects of Chartism that the leaders of the movement relied on as part of their own self-identification as such, their qualifications for lecture tours or humble trade origins. Within the corpus of the Readers & Correspondents column of the *Star*, a cluster search for 'Chartist' as a noun shows its association with the idea of truth and morality: 'sincere,' 'good,' 'true.'[75] These labels are the most common in the top 30 except for regional, age, and subgroup (e.g. teetotal, Christian) identifiers. This is what it meant to *be* a Chartist, as negotiated within the community. On the other hand, we know that Chartist was also applied as a label: a search for 'Chartist' as an adjective or adverb yields 'blacking' (shoe polish) as the third most popular use, above 'public,' 'friends,' and 'cause.'[76] We can therefore identify Chartist qualities as a potential sales and merchandising tool within the community, already a fraught question within an explicitly 'Chartist' newspaper. The policing of others who identify as Chartists is rife through the paper; 'A Young Chartist' can be gently mocked for 'youthful'

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[73] Finsbury Tract Society, 'The Question 'What is a Chartist?' Answered,' in *The Early Chartists,* ed. by Dorothy Thompson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1971), pp. 89-93.
[74] Hall, *Voices of the People* (2007), p. 31-32.
[75] See Appendix A. at end of this chapter.
[76] See Appendix B. at the end of this chapter.

ignorance, while debates ran through the movement as to the best and most authentic mode of adopting the Charter. In this section I will explore the question 'what is a Chartist?' through the mediation of identity by others in the column, the application of 'Chartist' as a brand, and how authenticity was used to define and question Chartist motives, according to the community of the *Northern Star.*

A cluster search for 'Chartist' as an identifier yields 390 results for 'Chartist [noun]': the top four are Chartist 'body', 'Chartist association', 'Chartist co-[operative]', and 'Chartist blacking.' The fourth most popular use of Chartist is for shoe polish, which highlights the use of the term for branding within the community. Lucy Brown notes that in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, 'advertising [occupied] about half the space, and [brought] in about half the revenue of the Victorian newspaper,' though the figures given refer to large dailies including the *Morning Post* and *Daily Telegraph*.[77] What is significant about 'Chartist' branded products, including blacking, is the discussion of them in 'Readers & Correspondents'. Radical merchandise was nothing new in the 1840s, although, given the movement's makeup of mainly working-class people with little disposable income, the idea of Chartist merchandise seems unusual. During the early 1840s a sustained campaign of Chartist merchandise appeared. The advertisements page of the *Northern Star*, at a glance, is a wonderful display of what this specifically Chartist economy looked like: ads for Chartist Blacking, Breakfast Powder, Joshua Hobson's newsagent and printing shop, a Bristol radical bookshop (agent for the *Star*), and an advert for O'Dell's latest book on shorthand for any budding *Star* reporters.[78] These adverts didn't make up the 50% of the paper suggested by Brown's study, although the amount varied throughout the *Star*'*s* print run. Paul Pickering configures it as part of the Chartist community economy. He notes that radical hero Henry Hunt was originally a manufacturer, 'his first appearance in public life was as the brewer of 'Hunt's Genuine Beer' in 1807,' and as his name grew in radical circles, he expanded his range of products to include 'Hunt's Breakfast Powder,' 'Hunt's never-fading Writing Ink,' and 'Hunt's Matchless Blacking.'[79] Similarly, the Peterloo massacre of 1819 was commemorated through the sale of objects including handkerchiefs and jugs, printed with maps of St. Peter's Fields and recognizable Manchester

[77] Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 17.
[78] 'Chartist Blacking', *NS*, 25/06/1842, p. 8.
[79] Paul Pickering, 'Chartism and the "Trade of Agitation" in Early Victorian Britain,' *History* 76: 247 (1991), pp. 221-237. p. 223.

buildings.[80] John Wilkes was commemorated in the 1780s through a variety of ceramics with his face printed on.[81] As Pickering writes, the anti-slavery movement of the early nineteenth century pioneered these strategies: consumer action proved powerful, 'some of them ("slave-free" sugar and cloth manufactured with "slave-free" cotton) were directly related to its crusade, and others, such as Wedgwood crockery, were made so by being inscribed with the anti-slavery motto, "Am I not a man and a brother?"'[82] Likewise, Chartist merchandise needed to promote the cause in some way, as the competition in Chartist blacking shows. Both Roger Pinder (Leeds) and J. T. Smith (Plymouth) are listed as Chartist blacking manufacturers given in a list of Chartist addresses in 1842,[83] with William Auty listed as an agent for Pinder.[84] Indeed, Pinder's enterprise marks him as a 'patriotic Chartist [sic] doing some good,' alongside:

> Mr. Robert Lundy, newsvendor, &c., of Mytongate, Hull, [authorising] us to say that he has opened a retail agency for Pinder's blacking, and that out of the four pence in the shilling afforded as the retail vendor's profit he has determined to give threepence to the Executive, reserving only one penny for the trouble and expence of conducting the sale.[85]

Pinder and Lundy both fit the *Star*'s definition of 'patriotism' as funding the Chartist executive through the sale of blacking, with the product meeting 'approval' as Chartist merchandise through donations of profits to the Chartist cause. Lundy demonstrates that Chartist value of 'honesty' in transparently stating the usual margin of profit he, as retailer, would gain, and giving 75% of it to the Chartist Executive. The narrative framing of the notice passes through different speakers before finally getting to the *Star*'s readers: Lundy does not insert the notice into the column (as a reader and correspondent of the paper himself, or even as an agent of the paper), but 'authorises' the editors to share the notice in the column, disrupting the usually direct notices, and mediating the message through the authority of the editors of the *Star.* The declaration of the retail profit margins and his digression from the norm suggests that his does not belong within the advertising column, but is information for the readership community,

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[80] Katy Layton-Jones, *Beyond the Metropolis: The Changing Image of Urban Britain, 1780-1880* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 159.
Chris Burgess, 'The Objects of Peterloo,' in *Manchester Region History Review: Return to Peterloo,* ed. by Robert Poole, vol. 23 (2012), pp. 151-159. p. 156-157.
[81] Simon Morgan, 'Material Culture and the Politics of Personality in Early Victorian England,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17: 2 (2012), pp. 127-66, p. 33.
[82] Pickering, 'Chartism and the "Trade of Agitation"' (1991), p. 224.
[83] 'Chartist Addresses', *NS,* 09/04/1842, p. 4.
[84] 'Mr. Wm. Auty', *NS,* 30/04/1842, p. 4.
[85] 'Pinder's Chartist Blacking', *NS* 01/01/1842, p. 5.

participating in the community's definitions of Chartist activity. It is not enough to brand something as Chartist, it must be directly helping the cause. Pinder's entrepreneurial spirit is not only endorsed by the *Star*'s editors in their advertising, but encourages it as a widespread strategy for activism, stating that,

> [t]his is an example worth following: we recommend it to the notice of the friends in every other town ; there must surely be some good Chartist found in every town who will have enough of patriotism to sell this blacking, and let the profits of it go to the support of the cause[,] and prevent the necessity for the continual appeals which we are now compelled to make for direct subscriptions. Do let it be done.[86]

By emphasising that Pinder is a 'good Chartist,' loyal to the cause and thus to his country, the *Star* effectively popularises this method of activism and spreads the idea among its more business-savvy readers. The continual appeals alluded to include those for the 'Veteran Patriots' and Exiles' Widows' and Children's Funds,' raising money for those including 'Old Daddy' Richards and Emma Ellis previously discussed. The notion of patriotism is reconfigured away from nationhood and the state, instead reminding the community that it is their moral duty to support those who have been imprisoned for their political activity. The public appeals for those in need ought to be 'prevented', not only risking embarrassing those who require the help but ensuring that, through a Chartist economy, working-class wages support each other, rather than going to the state through taxed products. Just a week later in January 1842, the *Star* notes under the heading 'MORE CHARTIST BLACKING' that Pinder's 'patriotic effort,'

> has aroused a spirit of competition among blacking manufacturers which may be turned to good account if the people require it. Mr. Wm. Brelsford, of Burnley now offers to give three-halfpence out of every shilling of his receipts to the Convention funds and to pay carriage to any part of Lancashire on orders of 10s value, accompanied by cash.[87]

What is significant here not only is the further emphasis on the radical definition of patriotism, but the transparency with which the money is spent: it is not a vague description of the portion of the profits that go to the Executive and Convention respectively, but the exact proportion. For a working-class audience, transparency in where their funds go is important, as part of the honesty advocated as part of the movement's self-identity, but furthermore demonstrates that their consumption as a market can have real impact. They may not be able to join a rolling

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[86] *NS,* 01/01/1842, p. 5.
[87] 'More Chartist Blacking', *NS,* 08/01/1842, p. 4.

subscription but can help the cause when buying shoe polish as needed anyway, and furthermore contribute to the Chartist family economy. The appearance of Chartist Blacking in the 'Readers & Correspondents' section in particular demonstrates discussion of the product, in addition to the advertising of it. Other products, such as Breakfast Powder, further inspired competition among retailers, but little discussion by readers and correspondents. In May 1842, apparently the year of Chartist merchandise, Jackson's (fig. 5) of Leicestershire cleverly co-opt the language of the *Star*'*s* news and editorial reports in order to flog their 'FAMILY BEVERAGE, or unrivalled Breakfast Powder.' Addressing the group readership of the *Star*, they target 'any Chartist or Teetotal Association,' 'engaging to sell One Cwt.' of product, 'will be presented with a Donation of TWENTY-SIX SHILLINGS, Five Shillings of which to be given to the Executive, and the remainder to the persons who sell the Article.'[88] By engaging local groups, in addition to professional shopkeepers and newsagents, in the sale of their products, Jackson is able to reach a wider audience while also promising to help local subsects of the Chartist movement as well as the general Executive. Meanwhile, individual readers are targeted through their multifaceted activist and regional identities, part of the 'shop local' movement. In November 1842 we see an advert for 'THE YORKSHIRE CHARTIST BEVERAGE, or Breakfast Powder, the best and cheapest extant, Sixpence per Pound, made by Thompson Brothers, Wholesale Tea Dealers, Halifax, Yorkshire.'[89] They, like Pinder and his fellow Blacking manufacturers, market their wares to Chartist readers by offering support for the movement. 'This very superior Beverage,' Thompson Brothers state, 'claims the custom of the Consumers on several grounds, viz:-- Its first rate Quality and Price, and that a Tenth of the Proceeds of the Sale goes to the Chartist Council.' They further state that, as a Yorkshire based manufacturer, 'every Penny in Ten is given in at the *Star* office.' In branding their product as 'Chartist,' they draw in readers with the offer of a cheap breakfast, and a direct tie with the Chartist movement through their relationship with the *Northern Star;* in order to donate proceeds to the Chartist Convention, they go straight to the leaders of the movement, and use the main medium of the movement to build their business. Perhaps the most popular manufacturers of Breakfast Powder, Messrs. Crow & Tyrrell, use their success to further their sales of 'an article that has no equal in the Market.' They state that 'From its sale hitherto a good round sum has accrued to the Executive Committee of the National Charter Association,

[88] 'The New Tariff', *NS,* 28/05/1842, p. 5.
[89] 'The Yorkshire Chartist Beverage', *NS*, 19/11/1842, 262, p.8.

to be applied to the furtherance of the great principles of liberty.'[90] By purchasing such products, the Chartist family get a breakfast that is 'nutritious and healthful' to ready them for the long day ahead, but put the money back into the Chartist economy, rather than into the pockets of the Exchequer through taxation. Like Jackson, Crow and Tyrrell tap into the Chartist consumer eager to not pay taxes which empower the already wealthy and the enemy state, who wants to provide for their family, and who wants to do their part for the National Chartier Association [NCA]. All these manufacturers turn to the advertisements page of the *Northern Star* to flog their wares to a working-class, Chartist audience, each announcing their product to be 'unrivalled,' most likely to the amusement of the reader staring at a page of several different Breakfast Powders. Like the manufacturers of Chartist blacking, these advertisers identify the Chartist economy as a strong one, one in which ideal domestic bliss and ease are aligned with activist politics. Everyday life, including the family food shop, can be an overtly political act.

We can also see the paper itself as a product of the Chartist economy. Not only was the *Star* the longest-running and best-selling paper of the movement, but it rewarded its loyal

Figure 18: 'The New Tariff', advertisement for Jackson's Family Beverage. *Northern Star*, 28th May 1842, p. 5.

THE NEW TARIFF.

WITHOUT THE SANCTION OF THE PEERS OR CONSENT OF THE QUEEN.

IMPORTANT TO CHARTIST AND TEE-TOTAL ASSOCIATIONS.

A GENEROUS OFFER!

ANY Chartist or Teetotal Association, or Individual, engaging to sell One Cwt. of Jackson's FAMILY BEVERAGE, or unrivalled Breakfast Powder, will be presented with a Donation of TWENTY-SIX SHILLINGS, Five Shillings of which to be given to the Executive, and the remainder to the persons who sell the Article. This offer not to extend to those places where the Proprietor has Agents, without the consent of such Agents.

Prepared and Sold by the Propietor, T. Jackson, author of "Triumph of Principle," "Religious Equality," &c.

Address :—Redcross-Street, Leicester.

Sold by Webb and Co., 93, Briggate, Leeds; T. Brooke, Dewsbury; J. Diggles, Ivegate, Bradford.

FOOD FOR THE MIND.

Just Published, Price 1s., 4th Edition in Cloth,

HILL'S RATIONAL SCHOOL GRAMMAR, Revised, Corrected, and Amended by the Author.

[90] 'Peel's Tariff Outdone!', *NS*, 06/08/1843, p. 5.

readers and subscribers with free gifts. Chase writes that the *Star* 'was a pioneering force in the manipulation of circulation through offering additional inducements to purchasers,' and its portrait giveaways were only available to customers who subscribed for at least six issues before the publication of portraits.[91] Not only did this drum up anticipation for the portraits themselves, but for the paper in general. To have one of these portraits in one's home not only marked the domestic space as a radical space, but they also became collectors' items in themselves, foreshadowing the giveaway and contest schemes of the 'New Journalism' of the 1870s. These paper portraits were limited-edition prints particular to that moment of the movement. Furthermore, the collection of these by various branch groups allowed for decoration of specifically purpose-built Chartist spaces. In response to restrictions on public meetings and the demand for spaces for branch meetings and activism, Chartist Halls were erected in several localities. Where, in the radical movement fifty years before, pubs were used as meeting spaces and sometimes named for radical leaders, the Chartist Hall was devoted explicitly to Chartist activity and furthermore inclusive of all demographics of the movement, including teetotallers, women, and children.[92] Not only were these spaces branding the towns as hotbeds of Chartist activity, but the creation of them legitimised the demands of the movement. Further to this, these Chartist spaces were decorated to their tastes with 'galleries' of portraits issued with the *Star*.

What this tells us about the *Star*, its readers, and the Chartist movement as a whole is the sense of security and pride in owning a 'Chartist' identity: for Chartist branding to be effective, it had to contribute directly to the movement. Pinder and his peers' sale of 'Chartist' blacking, as well as the literal fuel offered by the many Chartist Breakfast Powders, was not only merchandise but a strategy of fundraising for the Executive and Convention of 1842, which would become an important year in the movement. The collectors of the *Star*'*s* portraits not only then had works of art on display in their homes, but contributed to the circulation of the paper and thus funded the discussion forum of the movement. The erection of Chartist halls provided purpose-built spaces in which activism could be done and communities could come together regardless of weather conditions or attitude to alcohol. Through these, we can begin to define the 'Chartist' identity or label as directly driving the fulfillment of the six points as well as qualities such as honesty, patriotism, and transparency.

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[91] Malcolm Chase, 'Building Identity, Building Circulation' (2005), p. 28.
[92] Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1994), p. 60.

As seen through the subscription-only giveaway scheme that the *Star* employed, we can identify loyalty as an important characteristic of a Chartist, as defined by the *Star*. 'Loyal' and 'Constant' readers and subscribers are commonplace identities within newspaper readers and correspondence columns at the time, but this term can also be applied to radical activism. Several individuals are outlined by the *Star* as 'veterans' to denote their high esteem and great level of experience within the radical movement and into Chartism: they are loyal, consistent, and as such afforded a high status among this community. We can, therefore, see the use of age or experience as a test of one's authenticity in claiming a 'Chartist' identity. For example, 'AN OLD CHARTIST AND A LOVER OF JUSTICE' is informed that they 'ought to have been aware that we cannot insert his charges on anonymous authority,' joking that the experience derived from 'old' age reprimands them for not obeying the rules.[93] A truly 'old' Chartist would know better. Interestingly, this use of 'old Chartist' seems odd given the fairly recent establishment of the Chartist movement as the successor from regency era radical politics. He is more likely an 'old' radical but a fairly 'young' Chartist.

In other cases, the use of old age is used to positively reinforce their communication and indicate sage qualities of individual 'veterans': Thomas Preston, writing in 1847, subtitles himself 'a Radical Reformer of Fifty Years,' and his notice is summarised, 'urging the people to embrace all "constitutional means" at the forthcoming election to secure a representation of public opinion at the hustings, and; where possible, also in the House of Commons.'[94] Preston uses his status as a long-term radical, and the *Star* shows reverence to him, in encouraging readers to participate in the several Chartist campaigns of the 1847 election, including *Star* proprietor Feargus O'Connor's own contest in Nottingham. Having faced imprisonment for illegal activism during his fifty years, his suggestion to use 'constitutional means' makes sense: within his own lifetime, we can identify a generational shift from radicalism to Chartism, in terms of the language adopted by the press and the people within it. Indeed, within the corpus we can identify a point at which 'Chartist' begins to supersede 'Radical' as an adjective; while the specifically radical traditions of the Huntite generation are continued, they are inherited and reframed as 'Chartist' by the *Star*, its editorial team, and its readers following the 1834 Reform Act. As we can see from the table below, by the time Preston's appeal appears in the

[93] 'An Old Chartist and a Lover of Justice', *NS,* 21/01/1843, p. 5.
[94] 'Thomas Preston', *NS,* 26/06/1847, p. 4.

Star, 'Chartist' has well and truly superseded 'Radical' as the term for working-class, universal suffrage political activists.

Figure 19: A table of all radical labels and usages in the 'R&C' column, per year. [95]

Year	Chartist	Chartists	Patriot	Patriots	Radical	Radicals	Charterist/s
1837	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
1838	0	0	0	0	16	12	0
1839	9	11	1	3	58	33	0
1840	82	92	4	9	39	41	0
1841	188	144	13	3	14	14	0
1842	205	202	14	2	2	1	0
1843	130	234	6	2	11	2	0
1844	58	83	2	1	2	0	0
1845	86	47	5	15	1	0	0
1846	122	71	4	42	0	0	0
1847	96	42	1	9	2	4	0

Thomas Preston was an extraordinary figure, and a truly lifelong radical, as the *Star* makes very clear. It was not uncommon, in the Readers and Correspondents' column and elsewhere in the *Star* to co-opt military language, and it is with engagement with correspondents 'old' and 'young' that we see this most clearly. Several correspondents are accorded the label 'veteran' for their years of 'service' to the movement, including a charity appeal for the same Thomas Preston in a previous issue. In 1843 a lengthy appeal was made for him, outlining biographical details in the form of a resumé:

> [He] has now been for upwards of fifty years a Radical Reformer, having been admitted a member of the famous "Corresponding Society," in the month of March, 1792. That in consequence of his patriotic exertions in the cause of freedom he has been not only exposed to the malignant persecution of all opposed to democratic principles ; but has also had his life placed in imminent danger by the hostility of the corrupt government who ruled the country in the earlier days of the "Reform."[96]

[95] 'Charterist' was the first term from the coining of the Charter, but this fell out of use by the time the *Star* had been established. Please also note that only two issues of 1837 survive.

[96] 'Case of Thomas Preston', *NS,* 30/12/1843, p. 5.

The notice further describes his having fought charges of 'High Treason' in 1817 and 1820, before requesting donations to be made to him and his wife, 'known to be a clever and well educated woman, [...] to enable her to provide for the comforts of her husband during the few years that probably remain for him.' This notice to correspondents places Preston as an ideal case for the Chartists' support, a 'veteran' who has served his time, been acquitted of treason 'in the cause of freedom,' to have the hero's support in his last years of life that his wife may comfort him. Preston's case, as well as fellow veteran 'Old 'Daddy' Richards' later on, demonstrates the co-opting of military ideals seen outside of the context of 'physical force,' but epitomizing the idea of an ageing war hero. Just as those 'patriots' such as Roger Pinder are publicly praised for their Chartist-branded enterprise and held up as examples to the community, so Thomas Preston is revered for his sacrifices to the cause, while Mrs. Preston is specified to not only be, but to be *known widely* as, 'clever and well educated,' and thus an excellent authority to be trusted with Preston's care and the trust of the Chartist community when it comes to spending their donations. Again, with regards to financial matters, transparency is key in the fundraising of the movement. By having earned their stripes, Preston and Richards are shown to be worthy causes for support within the movement, and 'veterans' in the battle for the Charter.

Just as transparency proved to be integral to Chartist merchandising and fundraising, and the loyalty of 'veteran' Chartists revered and rewarded, so we can identify 'truth' as a defining quality of 'Chartist'. To be a 'Chartist', one must be authentically Chartist, and prepared to have one's behaviour scrutinised. The *Star*, after all, was not just a public forum for Chartist debates but the bridge between the platform and other provinces. As the authoritative public forum, therefore, the need for figureheads of the movement to be represented as authentically Chartist in the *Star* was all the more pressing, much to the downfall of several. The term itself had been reclaimed from *The Times,* whose collection of daily news from various local papers published reports of local Chartist meetings. The first traceable use of 'Chartist' here dates from January 1839, featuring comment from a Mr. Jellinger Symons, who refers to Chartist leaders as 'men whose doctrines would disgrace the political economy of savages, and pollute the morals of Botany Bay.'[97] Symons not only suggests that the Chartists are anti-establishment, but anti-British. 'The morals of Botany Bay,' one of the

[97] 'Mr. Jellinger Symons…'*The Times*, 7/1/1839, p. 6. The *Times*, as a national daily paper, contains the first instance of the Chartists as we refer to them. In 1837 political unrest in Portugal also had a 'Chartist' party, whose developments are sometimes reported in the English press.

Australian penal colonies, whose neighbor Van Dieman's Land would go on to welcome some Chartists following their sentences to transportation for their political activity. By positing Chartists as 'savages' or convicts, Symons seeks to rhetorically distance the British state from Chartist 'doctrines', 'othering' them from British and imperial statehood. It is in this context that 'Chartist' uses of patriotism must be understood. It is no wonder that the Chartists of the *Star* so keenly felt the need to correct this assumption.

Through the use of the 'Readers & Correspondents' column, 'bickerings,' as they became known, did not need to spill over into news pages. The column provided space to define and identify 'Chartist' principles which leaders of the movement needed to meet. As a case study, we can take September of 1841, a month rife with disagreement in the column. The editors tell Richard Spurr, who writes complaining of accusations of favouritism within the Chartist movement in an 'insolent letter,' that they 'refuse to allow him the use of [the *Star*'s] columns to create a faction.'[98] One week later, they clarify their position in another response, lamenting that:

> None can regret more than we do the "bickerings," and contentions which occasionally rise among individuals of the Chartist body. And what we regret most is, that persons professing Chartist principles, and avowing an anxiety to see those principles practically recognised in the State, should act inconsistently with their own principles by taking any steps to weaken the force of these united energies which are all necessary to our cause. It is a loosening of the [???] bond wherein our strength lies, and must, therefore, produce the most painful excitement in the minds of all such honest Chartists.[99]

The *Star* identify inconsistency, hypocrisy, and a failure to co-operate as the antithesis of 'Chartist principles,' that these qualities are what the movement aims to outlaw within the State, and that 'weaken' 'united energies'. The key word that reappears here is 'honesty', as that quality which internal disputes weaken further. If the *Star* identifies 'honesty,' consistency, and 'united energies' as 'Chartist principles,' we can see how individuals of the Chartist movement saw themselves, as part of a moral high ground against the state. Longer feuds between Chartists, including O'Connor, Hill, Hobson, Harney, and Ardill, the supposed proponents of a 'faction'-free *Star*, are aired in the pages of the *Star* up to a point. Where an accusation is made, both parties are able to dispute it until such a time that it is ruled to be too lengthy, or old news. The feud between John Watkins and James Watson, for example, played out through the middle of 1841 and occupied several issues before being abruptly stopped by the notice below:

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[98] 'Richard Spurr', *NS,* 04/09/1841, p. 5.
[99] 'We regret very much…', *NS,* 11/09/1841, p. 4.

> THE WATSON AND WATKINS DISCUSSION.— We have no desire to see these discussions prolonged: we think it impossible that any good to the cause can result from them. If there be in their "new move" men that wanton spirit of mischief which is attributed to them by some this eternal stirring of the porridge pot is the very thing to gratify it; if there be not, it is unfair and cruel to keep them constantly before the public in a false position. […] Satisfied that the exhibition of these fierce bickerings does us much harm, we cannot consent to encourage them; while we are at the same time, determined that no opponent shall have cause to complain of injustice.[100]

It is worth noting that Watkins and Watson had some personal issues that inform the context of this feud: Watson, a successful radical publisher, had refused to publish an edition of Watkins' literary Chartist drama, 'John Frost,' based on the life of the leader of the Newport Rising before his transportation to Australia.[101] Consequently, as Vargo notes, Watkins 'was forced to self-publish.'[102] Although the *Star* publishes the last word on the dispute, it notes that it is up to the London Chartists to make up their own minds, having actually been present for the point of contention. John Watkins defined 'Chartist' as an identity on par with 'Christianity' ('Christians must be Charterists),' defining this identity as comprised of 'honesty, industry, knowledge, frugality, and temperance.'[103] Interestingly, 'co-operation' is nowhere in Watkins' own definition of a Chartist identity, as a particularly feisty writer. He continued to rustle up trouble later in 1843 and 1845 against O'Connor, Peter M'Douall, William Carpenter, and Bronterre O'Brien, among others. The *Star*'s attempt to curtail these feuds is done out of concern for the greater good, the Chartist cause. 'We think it impossible that any good to the cause' can result from such feuds demonstrates the necessity for co-operation and unity within the Chartist movement, and thus to the Chartist identity of the reading community of the *Star* itself. The correspondents are furthermore reminded of the publicity of the column, with the *Star* noting that is not necessarily the 'bickerings' themselves that do 'harm,' but 'the exhibition' of them. The 'wanton spirit of mischief' of the bickerings contrasts with the self-proclaimed 'honest' and 'judicious' cause and character of the movement and its 'united' community. In order to create a public reputation with these identity markers, the readers and correspondents of the *Star* must authentically live up to them.

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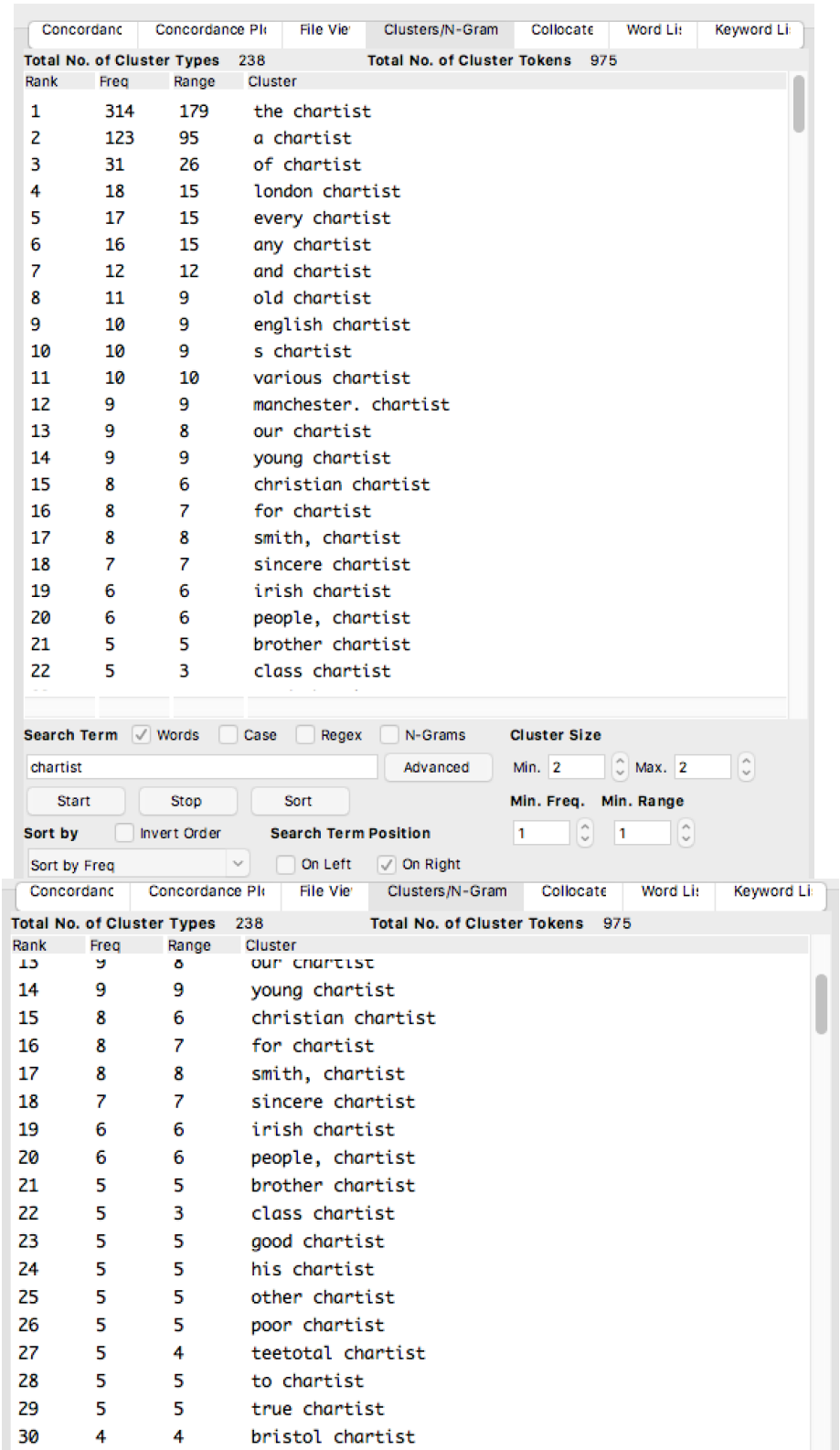
[100] 'The Watson and Watkins Discussion', *NS,* 18/9/1841, p. 4.
[101] Chase, 'John Watkins' *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (2000), p. 301.
[102] Gregory Vargo, 'Introduction', *Chartist Drama,* ed. Gregory Vargo (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 24.
[103] John Watkins, 'Five Cardinal Points of the People's Charter' (1839). P. 30, p. 35.

Conclusion

If we take the 1839 definition of a 'Chartist' as one who supported the six points of the People's Charter, we have only half the story. Self-identification, through pseudonyms, collective trade or locale identities, enabled the *Star*'s readership community to collectively and reflexively define the movement's values. While the 'Readers & Correspondents' column was mediated by the editorial process, it allows insight into how qualities and behaviours such as masculinity or femininity, patriotism, constant readership, or devotion to teetotalism, education, or the Chartist land plan were seen within the community of readers, not only the editorial team. Furthermore, the column is a snapshot into the relationship between trade union action and the Chartist movement, allowing us to see the intersections between labour practices and political alignment. This chapter has furthermore elucidated what 'Chartist' meant for the *Northern Star*, a self-identified Chartist newspaper read by self-identified Chartists, and demonstrates how this term was not only used but policed. The material culture of the *Star*, including merchandise and products, from blacking to breakfast powder, relied on this policing. Products and their vendors needed to be authentically Chartist: manufactured by supporters of the movement and more importantly, directly benefitting it. Proceeds from products needed to further the cause under which they were marketed, or risk being boycotted. Purpose-built and branded Chartist halls, likewise, needed to explicitly help the movement by housing it, enabling supporters to safely and warmly discuss matters by being inclusive of the different subsects of the movements, where people of different faiths need not worry about attending meetings in a particular church denomination or teetotallers having to go to the pub. The hall could be decorated with a portrait gallery obtained through long-running subscriptions to the *Northern Star*, a reward for one's brand loyalty further promoted through discussion in the paper itself. In all of these products, it is not only important to consider what is written by their self-identified 'Chartist' correspondents, but what is implied through the absence of what is not written: Pinder's Chartist Blacking is 'honest' and 'good' in his donation of proceeds to the Executive, the Chartist hall uniting different branches of the movement, the *Star* rewarding long-term loyalty through 'splendid' giveaways. To truly adhere to 'Chartist' principles is to give one's money, effort, and time to furthering the movement and to be upstanding, just as 'Veteran' Chartists like Thomas Preston and William Ellis exemplified for all readers to see. The system of community policing suggested that those who detracted from the cause of the six points be vilified for creating discord through 'bickerings,' would be denounced as un-Chartist or 'unmanly'. To agree with and campaign for the six points of the Charter, as defined

through the community of the *Star*'s readers and correspondents then, is to support the Chartist cause. However, for the *Star* and their readership, being 'honest,' 'good,' 'loyal,' 'true,' and amicable, at least in public, was to be a Chartist.

Appendix A. Screenshots of 'Chartist' as noun in cluster search.



Concordanc | Concordance Pl | File Vie | Clusters/N-Gram | Collocate | Word Li | Keyword Li

Total No. of Cluster Types 238 **Total No. of Cluster Tokens** 975

Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster
1	314	179	the chartist
2	123	95	a chartist
3	31	26	of chartist
4	18	15	london chartist
5	17	15	every chartist
6	16	15	any chartist
7	12	12	and chartist
8	11	9	old chartist
9	10	9	english chartist
10	10	9	s chartist
11	10	10	various chartist
12	9	9	manchester. chartist
13	9	8	our chartist
14	9	9	young chartist
15	8	6	christian chartist
16	8	7	for chartist
17	8	8	smith, chartist
18	7	7	sincere chartist
19	6	6	irish chartist
20	6	6	people, chartist
21	5	5	brother chartist
22	5	3	class chartist

Search Term ☑ Words ☐ Case ☐ Regex ☐ N-Grams **Cluster Size**

chartist Advanced Min. 2 Max. 2

Start Stop Sort **Min. Freq.** **Min. Range**

Sort by ☐ Invert Order **Search Term Position** 1 1

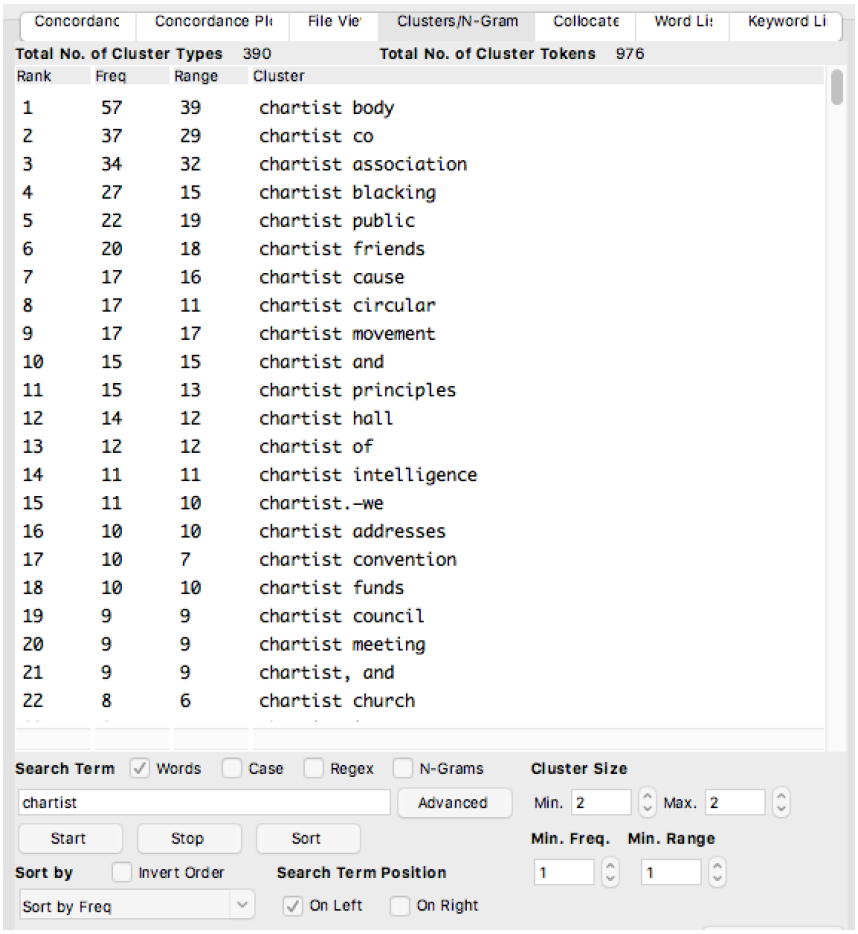
Sort by Freq ☐ On Left ☑ On Right

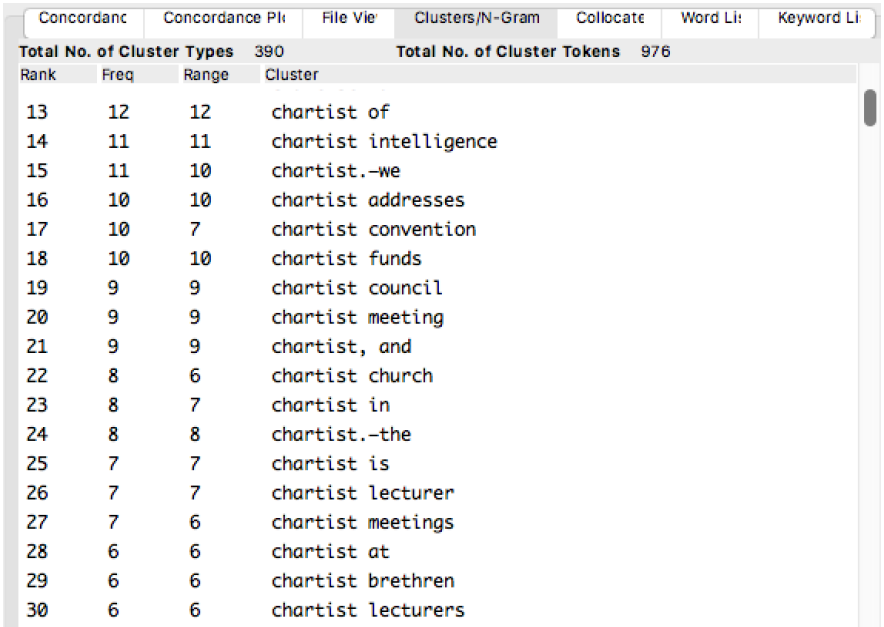
Concordanc | Concordance Pl | File Vie | Clusters/N-Gram | Collocate | Word Li | Keyword Li

Total No. of Cluster Types 238 **Total No. of Cluster Tokens** 975

Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster
13	9	8	our chartist
14	9	9	young chartist
15	8	6	christian chartist
16	8	7	for chartist
17	8	8	smith, chartist
18	7	7	sincere chartist
19	6	6	irish chartist
20	6	6	people, chartist
21	5	5	brother chartist
22	5	3	class chartist
23	5	5	good chartist
24	5	5	his chartist
25	5	5	other chartist
26	5	5	poor chartist
27	5	4	teetotal chartist
28	5	5	to chartist
29	5	5	true chartist
30	4	4	bristol chartist

Appendix B. Screenshots of 'Chartist' as adjective/adverb in cluster search.





Chapter Three: The *Northern Star* and 'Chartist Intelligence' as a Curated Community Space

Introduction: Agitation Before and Since the Reform Bill

> In no features does the present system of agitation differ from all former struggles more, than in the wide line of demarcation drawn by the leaders of the day, between elective-power and non-elective influence.
>
> Where formerly the *agreement* upon a single point produced something like a treaty between the rulers and the ruled, now the *difference* of a point severs all connexion, the universal note being, "He who is not for us is against us.[1]

The *Star* was established within a context of wider reform: the Charter was not born out of thin air, but the six points established through decades of discussion, disruption, and deliberation. The passing of the first Reform Act of 1832 demonstrated that agitation was effective, narrowing the 'line', as the *Star* states above, between those who had the franchise and those who did not. The 'present system of agitation' is part of a longer radical tradition. The subsequent passing of the New Poor Law of 1834 proved to mobilised working-class activists even more to demand political agency and independence, in stark contrast to the Malthusian control of labour and family life that to the Poor Law would subject families to.[2] Calls for Suffrage, for both men and women, as well as teetotalism, co-operation, sanitary reform, educational initiatives, fair working hours or short-time, and slavery abolition were by no means new but inherited from previous radical papers and communities.[3] The breadth of reform movements explored within the pages of the *Northern Star*, gives us an indication of the wider context in which the Charter was created. These were, in effect, a myriad of community-driven initiatives, and the *Northern Star* their organ. The *Star*, as we have seen in chapter two, was not necessarily completely representative: O'Connor and his team had their own agenda and, I argue, created their own community of reform in their readership. Indeed, 'the universal note' that, 'He who is not for us is against us' can certainly be applied to the specific agitation of the *Northern Star*. Community is the crux of the issue.

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[1] 'Agitation Before and Since the Reform Bill', *NS,* 13/10/1838, p. 4. Emphasis original.

[2] Anna Clark, 'The New Poor Law and the Breadwinner Wage: Contrasting Assumptions,' *Journal of Social History*, 34:2 (2000), pp. 261-281, p. 264.

[3] Epstein, 'Some Organisational and Cultural Aspects of the Chartist Movement in Nottingham,' *The Chartist Experience: Studies in Working Class Radicalism and Culture, 1830-60* ed. James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982), p. 223.

If we can see community as being defined by the politics of inclusion and exclusion, it is important to note that the Chartist movement was itself a community founded on exclusion from participation in the franchise. It was a specifically working-class movement, though, as Epstein and Belchem have argued, legitimised thanks to its 'gentleman leaders' including O'Connor, Richard Oastler, and Ernest Jones.[4] The movement was built up of several different, smaller communities: Malcolm Chase and Jutta Schwartzkopf have argued that this can be broken down as far as individual family units, thanks to the inclusion of children in agitation, and the role of the domestic sphere in the creation of the 'Chartist home.'[5] Likewise Eileen Yeo has explored the varying ways in which activists were able to participate in the movement, and within Chartist historiography we operate on a foundation of the Chartist movement established on regional groups, the well-known radical hotspots including Ashton and Stalybridge; and national groups, including the Scottish and Welsh Chartisms, as explored in detail by Alex Wilson, Asa Briggs, E. P. and Dorothy Thompson.[6]

It is accepted that there are links and relationships between different early Victorian reform agitations, including temperance, co-operation, anti-corn law, and slavery abolition. In this chapter I explore these movements in tandem with Chartism, arguing for an intersectional outlook. I argue further that the *Northern Star* espoused its own particular brand of Chartism, with acceptable and unacceptable intersections of activism to create its own methodology of agitation for the Charter. In section one I will explore the *Star's* use of the term 'Chartist Intelligence' in curating and defining a specific ideal of reform activity. John Collins' 1839 pamphlet, 'The Question, "What Is A Chartist?" Answered' takes the form of a political dialogue between two speakers, 'Mr. Doubtful' and 'Radical,' making it quite clear to radical readers whose perspective is the right one.[7] This format for political discussion follows a radical tradition dating back to the early modern period, and, importantly, outlines the debate for the reader as a way of engaging in political debate from afar.[8] The *Northern Star*, as we

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[4] Epstein and Belchem, 'The Nineteenth-Century Gentleman Leader Revisited,' *Social History*, 22: 2 (1997), pp. 174-193, p. 182.
[5] Chase (2007), Chapter 8, 'Chartist Lives: Ann Dawson', Schwartzkopf (1991), Chapter 5, 'Chartist Women in the Family.'
[6] Eileen Yeo, 'Some Practices and Problems of Chartist Democracy,' in *The Chartist Experience*, ed. by James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 345-380. Alex Wilson, *The Chartist Movement in Scotland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970). Asa Briggs, *Chartist Studies* (London: Macmillan, 1959).
[7] Finsbury Tract Society. (1839). *The Question "What is a Chartist?" answered (by the Finsbury Tract Society).*
[8] Cathy Shrank, 'All Talk and No Action? Early Modern Political Dialogue,' *The Oxford Handbook of English Prose, 1540-1600*, Ed. Andrew Hatfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 27-42.

have seen, defines Chartist identities through participation. I argue that, through the creation of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column, the *Star* defines not only 'what is a Chartist' but how one can be a Chartist, exemplified by opinionated reports of Chartist meetings and activities. In section two I will explore how this definition of 'Chartist Intelligence' can be applied to concurrent reform movements, and how aspects of temperance and co-operation become 'sub-Chartisms' in terms of practical, hands-on agitation for the Charter. My final section examines the Anti-Corn Law League and Slavery Abolition as reform movements the *Star* was more antagonistic towards, prescribing what a Chartist should and should not do.

1. Chartist Intelligence

The introduction of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column, appearing in the *Northern Star* of 22nd August 1840, is not so much a column as the whole front page. Previously home to Feargus O'Connor's weekly editorial, 'The Northern Star,' as well as advertisements for medicines, the wealth of specifically 'Chartist' news is staggering. The column items range in breadth and depth from a meticulously transcribed extract of Mr. Bairstow's lecture on 'Universal vs. Household Suffrage' spanning the length of a one page column; the Christening of a 'Young John Frost' in Warrington, named for 'the memory of that unfortunate man, Frost' in the words of the Curate; a brief report that 'Preston is still alive' and noting the conclusions of a recent meeting in that place; and a notice that 'the Radicals of [Oldham] have determined to have a tea for Dr. McDouall,' with 300 tickets available, priced at 1s for men and 9d for women, thoughtfully taking into account the lower wages of female workers.[9] This is just a flavour of the contents.

At first glance, there seems a disparity between the term 'intelligence' and the large number of social events, tea parties, dinners, soirees, festivals, and lectures that were reported in the column. The OED states that at this point of the nineteenth century one definition of Intelligence, secondary to 'faculty for mental understanding' was 'knowledge concerning events communicated by or obtained from another; information, news; spec. information of military value.'[10] Indeed, one of the *Northern Star's* local newspaper rivals was the Tory *Leeds Intelligencer*, founded in 1754, adopting 'Intelligencer' as 'news.' The usage of 'Chartist

[9] 'Chartist Intelligence', *NS,* 22/08/1840, pp. 1-2.
[10] 'Intelligence, *n.*', *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford University Press, 2020) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/97396?rskey=4M5XK4&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [Accessed 26/01/2021.]

Intelligence,' then, in addition to the other columns of 'Parliamentary,' 'Local,' and 'General' Intelligence, would otherwise suggest another aspect of the *Star's* news reporting. However, the usage of the term by the military suggests a co-opting of this nuanced definition by the *Star*. As we have seen in chapter two, militant language was part of the Chartist agenda, and the debates surrounding the use of 'physical force' and weaponry at this time certainly add to this idea of the Chartist movement as a kind of battle. We furthermore have to interrogate the idea of 'Chartist' intelligence, for as they specify the type of 'intelligence' contained within the column, we must also be wary of the kind of Chartism it embodied. The *Northern Star* was by no means the only voice of the Chartist movement. Feargus O'Connor famously disliked William Lovett and John Collins, of the London Working Men's Association, in spite of his devotion to their six-point Charter. His newspaper's form of Chartism, therefore, was one negotiated by himself and his colleagues along with his readers. I will now trace the development of 'Chartist Intelligence,' from a random assortment of Radical events intermingled with regional news, to the creation of a distinct column, which moved about the paper from the front page to final page to various middling sections. Through this, we can see the *Northern Star's* definition of specifically 'Chartist' intelligence and how this can be used to glean more information about the methodology of activism within the movement, and how this informs present historiography.

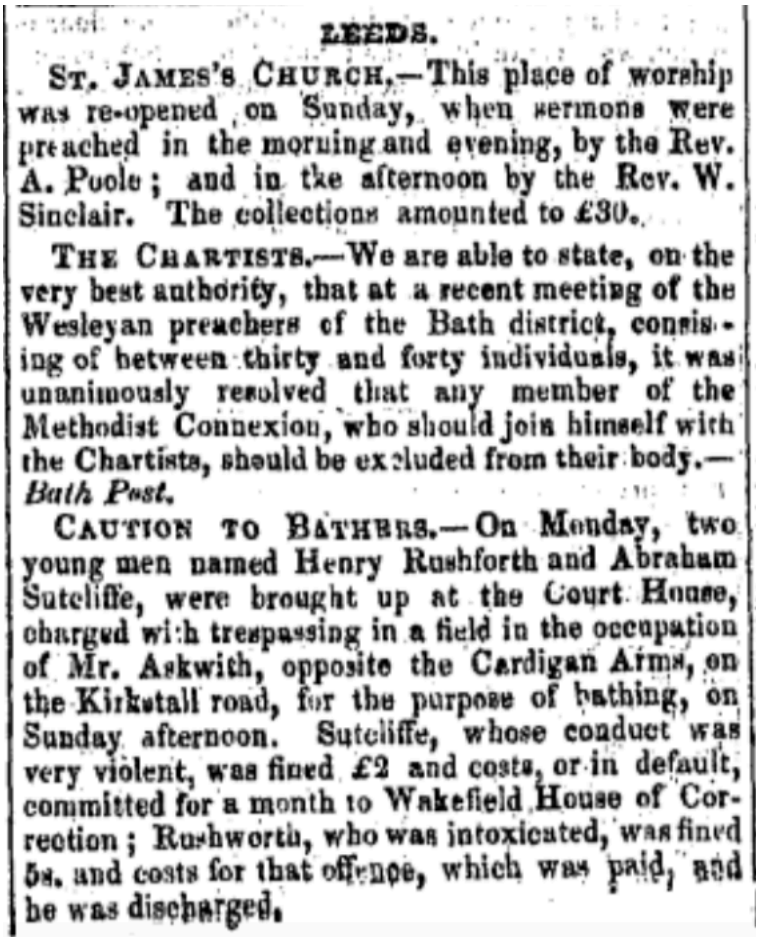
Local and Miscellaneous Intelligence, 1837-1840

'Chartist Intelligence' does not appear as a distinct section of the *Star* until mid-1840: from the paper's inception in 1837 through to this point, what we understand to be Chartist intelligence is woven in with general news, organised by locality. While large meetings are given their own sections, such as the 'Great West Riding Meeting,' an extremely detailed account of which takes up almost the whole front page of its issue, for everyday meetings this is certainly not the norm.[11] Page three of this same issue demonstrates the delightful intermingling of 'Chartist' and 'Local' news, with records of Chartist and Radical meetings and tea parties alongside

[11] 'Great West Riding Meeting', *NS,* 25/5/1839, p. 1.

Friendly Society anniversary dinners, accounts of robberies, and murders. Furthermore, even these 'locality' news sections do not stick to this strict definition (see fig. 10).

Figure 20: 'Leeds', *NS* 'Intelligence' column (25/5/1839, p. 4).



LEEDS.

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.—This place of worship was re-opened on Sunday, when sermons were preached in the morning and evening, by the Rev. A. Poole; and in the afternoon by the Rev. W. Sinclair. The collections amounted to £30.

THE CHARTISTS.—We are able to state, on the very best authority, that at a recent meeting of the Wesleyan preachers of the Bath district, consisting of between thirty and forty individuals, it was unanimously resolved that any member of the Methodist Connexion, who should join himself with the Chartists, should be excluded from their body.—*Bath Post.*

CAUTION TO BATHERS.—On Monday, two young men named Henry Rushforth and Abraham Sutcliffe, were brought up at the Court House, charged with trespassing in a field in the occupation of Mr. Askwith, opposite the Cardigan Arms, on the Kirkstall road, for the purpose of bathing, on Sunday afternoon. Sutcliffe, whose conduct was very violent, was fined £2 and costs, or in default, committed for a month to Wakefield House of Correction; Rushworth, who was intoxicated, was fined 5s. and costs for that offence, which was paid, and he was discharged.

The notice to 'The Chartists' is a resolution published in the *Bath Post* and reprinted in the *Star*, presumably chosen by O'Connor and Hill to serve as a warning to the Chartists of Leeds to, in turn, shun the Methodists, given the lack of commentary accompanying it. This reprint from the *Bath Post*, most likely communicated to the *Star* via Bath Chartists, is suggestive of wider issues between Methodist and Chartist organisation nationally, not only in Leeds or Bath. 1839 saw tensions rise between Chartists and religious institutions, with Eileen Yeo noting that from thenceforth 'within the movement, abuse was continually hurled at the state church in Chartist lectures and religious services,' in spite of support between early Chartist organisation borrowing from Methodist (dissenting) practices.[12] However, this notice is sandwiched between instances of ostensibly local news: a brief report of the first service of the re-opened

[12] Eileen Janes Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle, 1838-42,' *Past & Present,* 91 (1981), pp. 109-139. P. 137.

St. James' church, and a 'Caution to Bathers' describing an intoxicated man and his friend trespassing in the fields opposite the Cardigan Arms pub with the intention of bathing [in the river Aire]. The 'caution' suggests that the use of this private land was a common practice, perhaps published as a warning to other local residents who cross the field. However, the perpetrators are also described as 'very violent' and 'intoxicated,' demonstrating their undesirability and suggesting that their arrests were deserved. The 'Caution' may well be sarcastic, infusing humour into otherwise serious or emotionally neutral news. The rest of the page is taken up with similar content, with slightly longer reports of the 'Demonstration at Nottingham' and 'Chartist Meeting in Hull' interspersed with a report of the Leeds Union Sunday School children's choir concert. Bronterre O'Brien, who sent the report of the Nottingham Demonstration as a letter to the *Star*, writes that, 'the speeches were fervid and decided, but at the same time discreet and constitutional,' praising the 'brave lads of Nottingham [who] conducted themselves with the same determined spirit as though there had been no armed force within a hundred miles of them.'[13] The sense from O'Brien's report, as well as that from the Sunday School choir, is the feeling of being present at the events rather than a description of what happened. The use of sensory, evocative language as 'determined spirit' and 'fervid' speech tells us what it *felt* like to be there, as well as what happened. This evocation, in addition to the intermingling of local news, suggests more local community-building. The *Star* at this point is very much still the 'Leeds General Advertiser,' and the mix of Chartist and local news suggests that this was simply a part of life in Leeds at the time. The *Star's* readers can be inferred to be Yorkshire residents with an interest in Chartism, rather than Chartists with an interest in Yorkshire affairs.

Many reports of these meetings tend to be discussion based. Larger meetings and demonstrations contain long and detailed reports of lectures and speeches given by big names in the movement, such as O'Connor, Hill, and Oastler, while smaller meetings tend also to contain discussion as opposed to resolutions and strategies. This suggests more of an emphasis on social activities as a form of activism, which, as scholars including David Jones have argued, were organised by and facilitated the participation of women in the movement, events from 'tea parties and female festivals to theatrical and musical entertainment and boat and rail excursions.'[14] While there was no doubt organising to be done, there was also a great deal of conviviality reported; with a discussion and party held in Aberdeen in early August 1840 in

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[13] 'Nottingham Demonstration', *NS,* 25/5/1839, p. 4.
[14] David Jones, 'Women and Chartism,' *History*, 68: 222 (1983), pp. 1-21, p. 18.

order to celebrate the release of William Lovett and John Collins from prison. It was noted that on procession from the newspaper office to the meeting place in town that 'the carpet weavers' band, together with another band of sterling democrats, did much, by their presence, to contribute to the enthusiasm of the people.'[15] Speeches were made by the Chairman of the local Working Men's Association, as well as future *Star* editor George Julian Harney. Just below this article is an accompanying report of a social event held in honour of Harney, who was, 'entertained by a number of his friends to a soiree on Friday evening last, Mr. McDonald in the chair. Mr. Harney addressed those present for upwards of two hours, in a most eloquent strain, and he was enthusiastically cheered.' Significantly, the content of Harney's speech is not reported, whether he 'addressed' his audience on aspects of Chartism, ideas for agitation, or any subject is unclear. What is suggested in the absence of this detail is that it is not what was said that was important, but the act of saying it: the group of people coming together, inviting Harney to their meeting, and occupying public spaces as a specifically Chartist group. It is even noted that, 'the entertainment was provided by Mr. Faquhar, of the Confectionary Teetotal Coffee House, and it did him great credit,' effectively advertising the venue as a high quality, Radical-friendly space to the readership community of the *Star*, in addition to a public thanks to the host.

This friendly environment described in the report contributes to a greater sense of community-building within local areas, combining activism with fun, social activities; a constructive and enjoyable use of precious leisure time. Indeed, this is in no way specific to the Aberdeen group: James Epstein, in his case study of Nottingham Chartists' organisation, writes that "Chartist activities at Nottingham were usually scheduled for the weekend or the early part of the week, rarely on Thursday or Friday evenings when stockingers often worked late into the night," that these activities were a regular part of working class life and as such, were organised around their working patterns and lifestyles.[16] Chase, furthermore, notes that the social activities of Chartism allowed for full family participation,[17] with the Aberdeen celebration of Lovett and Collins' liberty stated to have had 'up to twelve thousand *persons* present,' [emphasis mine] not singling out men, women, or children, but using an inclusive group pronoun. Whether there actually were twelve thousand is another debate, but a large

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[15] 'Aberdeen,' *NS*, 01/08/1840, p. 5.

[16] James Epstein, 'Some Organisational and Cultural Aspects of the Chartist Movement in Nottingham,' in *The Chartist Experience*, ed. by James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1982), p. 236.

[17] Malcolm Chase, *The Chartists: Perspectives and Legacies* (London: Merlin Press, 2015), p. 6.

public procession is significant nonetheless. For activities that are openly critical of the establishment, the occupation of public space is in itself a political act. Just like the 'determined spirit' of the Nottingham demonstration described by O'Brien, the Aberdeen celebration and 'soiree' capture the feeling of camaraderie and community of Chartist activity. The use of this time and space for discussion and celebration allows for the building of a foundation of values and relationships upon which formal organisation can then be developed. The act of community building around these ideas, as well as the inclusion of all 'persons,' often, as Chase writes, including children and youths, begins to create a culture of Chartism that we see flourish and strengthen throughout the movement. We have seen that the *Northern Star,* in its interaction with and between readers, allows for the creation of a nationwide community and culture of radicalism, but it is through these early events, reported in the *Star*, that these seeds were sown.

Chartist Intelligence, 1840-1844

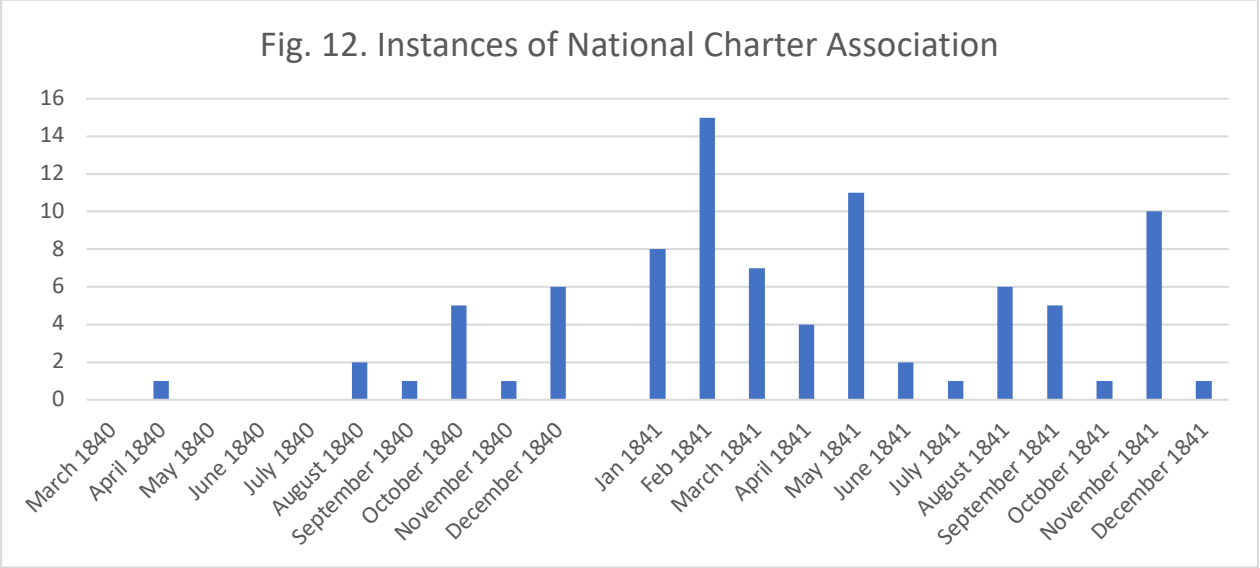
The creation of a specific column for 'Chartist Intelligence,' then, indicates a marked shift in the *Northern Star's* priorities, coinciding with the formation of the National Charter Association in August 1840. The periodical format lends itself to a practice of selective reading, because, Margaret Beetham argues, 'unlike other literary forms, the periodical does not demand to be read from front to back in order. […] The average readers will also select and read only a fraction of the whole.'[18] While this likely was the case for most readers of the *Star*, in this case the editors have manipulated this form to reassert the importance of specifically Chartist news. Whereas previously readers would find regional news including points relevant to the Chartist movement, they could now get straight to Chartist news without sifting through murders, robberies, and news of localised interest. This specific separation from general news marked the busiest period for the organisation of the movement. While local and general news continued to fill the pages of the *Star*, now specifically Chartist Intelligence became front and centre, quite literally in the layout of the paper. Throughout this especially active period the column would occupy several spaces of the paper within the same issue, often appearing as a column on the front page, preceding 'forthcoming meetings', with additional columns continued on page two, throughout the middle of the paper, and the end. November 14th 1840, for example, features 'Chartist Intelligence' on pages one, two, and five.[19] We know that the

[18] Beetham, 'Towards a Theory of the Periodical' (1990), p. 26.
[19] 'Chartist Intelligence' *NS* 14/11/1840, p. 1, 2, 5.

printing of the *Star* was done over the course of a week, and so we can see these different placements of Chartist Intelligence as instalments, with the newest intelligence appearing later on in the paper as it is received throughout the week.

From the introduction of Chartist Intelligence we can see a huge range of activity and new trends, specific to the *Northern Star's* brand of Chartism that is reported by them. Following the introduction of the column in late August 1840, mentions of the National Charter Association [NCA] balloon from the period of September 1840 to December 1841.

Figure 11: Data taken from a sample of the first issue of each month of the *NS* from the first mention of the NCA in March 1840 through to December 1841.



Superseding the Great Northern Union, the NCA was partly an attempt to unite Chartist groups from all over Britain, making smaller Chartist groups more official and ensuring an active plan for strategy nationwide. Chase writes that with the imprisonment of Chartist leaders, including O'Connor, John Frost, and Henry Vincent, formalised meetings linked to a national framework proved invaluable, with, 'a formal constitution with explicit aims and criteria for membership,' making it 'the first national political party in history.'[20] Whereas those meetings reported with local news tended to be largely social, we here see an emergence of formal planning and organisation in the reporting of meetings. Going back to November 14th 1840, for example, the NCA of Bradford report where they met, that Irish Union Repeal was the focus of the meeting, and after a quick overview of their concerns publish a resolve that 'the Chartists of this town would not oppose, but rather, co-operate, with the promoters of any meeting having

[20] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 163.

really for its object such repeal.' The *Star* notes that they do not have room to publish the whole issues, suggesting that in the report or minutes they received that the issue of Irish Union Repeal was chosen to be the focal point of the meeting, and it is this resolution that is most important to them and the *Star's* readership. The tone of the report is determined and particularly formal, seemingly to legitimise the expression of their opinion in the *Star*. R. G. Gammage, a former Chartist and the first historian of the movement, recalled that in the Chartist Intelligence column, 'men of very mediocre abilities appeared to people at a distance to be oracles of political wisdom' in the way that the *Star* 'dressed up' reports of meetings, lectures, and speeches.[21] Given that the attendees of these meetings were most likely working men, the use of formal language in such a report suggests the performative nature of Chartist Intelligence: in order to have their demands taken seriously, as they had failed to in the 1839 petition, they needed to appear serious. Janette Martin has noted that this 'dressing up' included translating dialect into standard English, 'perhaps as dialect suggested a lack of education and learning.'[22] The Charter and the first petition demonstrated the literacy and organisation of the movement; but this was not enough. We can therefore see Chartist 'intelligence' and subsequent ambitious plans, including the Chartist Land and Labour Bank, as both reactive and performative responses to this official rejection of Chartist principles. Just beneath this snippet of Chartist Intelligence are several smaller official notices, each only a few lines long, informing readers of new NCA groups in the Bradford region which had been established or had new members enrolled.

Further to the establishment and promotion of the NCA, a strategy encouraged by the *Star*, we see further national Chartist initiatives, including the national Victim Fund. Following pleas for assistance for imprisoned Chartists, their wives, and children, several communities establish their own collections for victims, while over the course of Chartist Intelligence we see this grow into an official strategy that is not only nationwide but long term: in February 1841, for example, a small report from Manchester outlines how 'Mr. ABEL HEYWOOD exhibited a number of figures of the phantasmagoria [...]. The charge of admission was one penny -- the receipts to be devoted to the Victim Fund.'[23] We see the Victim Fund still going strong in October 1842, when a meeting at Little Horton, near Bradford at which, 'a lecture was announced, but did not take place. The *Northern Star* was

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[21] R. G. Gammage, *History of the Chartist Movement* (Truslove & Hanson: London, 1894), p. 17.
[22] Martin, 'Popular Political Oratory,' (2010), p. 138.
[23] 'Manchester', *NS,* 06/02/1841, p. 1.

read instead, and a collection made on behalf of the Victim Fund, which amounted, with the Sunday previous, to five shillings and tenpence halfpenny.'[24] Meanwhile, in 1843 Chartists of Bristol report a list of donors for the 'Quarterly subscriptions collected by Miss M. Williams on behalf of the Victims' Fund...'[25] As evident in the latter credit given to Miss Williams, the Victim Fund was, like the NCA, divided into localities each managed by a regional treasurer before being passed onto the National Fund, which had a chairman and treasurer to whom those in need of assistance could apply. Whereas prior to the establishment of Chartist Intelligence individual communities did their own fundraising for their own localities, the streamlined strategies evident in Chartist Intelligence suggest a feed from communities to the national body, which is then re-invested into all local communities; creating a larger scale of co-operation. These specific strands of organisation suggest the implementation of a specific agenda within Chartist organisation at this point. Even when plans change, such as the cancellation of the lecture at Little Horton, an alternative Chartist activity is substituted: the reading of the *Northern Star* at a meeting not only suggests that the Little Horton methodology of protest is one endorsed by the *Star*, but demonstrates evidence of communal reading practices outside of the home, pub, or coffee shop. It is no longer a personal leisure activity but an act of protest. The *Northern Star,* as we know, has its own agenda for Chartist organisation, and the *Star's* particular brand of 'Chartist' intelligence is clearest in the public declarations against 'New Move' Chartism in the column in May 1841. The 1st May issue contains no fewer than twenty-one assertions, splashed across the front page, from different local Chartist groups as well as NCA branches that they disagreed with the 'new move.' Out of a total of forty-nine sections of the front page, almost half use the phrase 'new move,' to disagree with it, while others use more coded references to 'the plan by Lovett, Collins, O'Connell and co.' to state their disagreement. Lovett and Collins, leaders of the London Working Men's Association [LWMA], and O'Connor's parliamentary rival Irish MP Daniel O'Connell become, in the words of the Daisy Hill Chartists (near Bolton), 'traitors to the cause of Chartism, and the censure of every honest Chartist.'[26] These Chartist groups and readers of the *Star* not only publicly align themselves with the *Star's* strategy for the movement, but specifically 'place implicit confidence' in O'Connor and his vision for the movement going forward.[27] From a

[24] 'Little Horton', *NS,* 1/10/1842, p. 1.
[25] 'Bristol', *NS,* 10/6/1843, p. 8.
[26] 'Daisy Hill', *NS,* 01/05/1841, p. 1.
[27] 'Woodhouse, Leeds', *NS,* 1/05/1841, p. 1.

national community working toward the Charter, we see through the *Star* specific factions emerging. Not only this, but this debate is literally front-page news of the *Star*, making this issue as public as possible.

Through the emergence of national bodies, even with their internal factions, these busy years of the *Star* demonstrate a commitment to organisation and activism: the content of speeches is not glazed over but reported, even in small meetings, while the documentation and formalisation of the National Charter Association makes the activism of the movement a kind of official business, complete with sub groups such as the Victim Fund, where methods of activity and activism become streamlined across Britain. As we move into the late forties, however, this community continues to change from a national Chartist community to a community interested in and devoted to the *Star* and O'Connor specifically. The creation of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column suggests not only a change of focus for the *Star* but an increase in the volume of specifically Chartist news, thus changing the paper's interaction with readers. Readers can now go straight to Chartist news and head straight to their locality, or one that they are interested in, to get the latest news on the movement, making the experience of Chartist news consumption more efficient for readers pressed for time and money.

Chartist Quiet, 1844-1848

In the late forties the *Northern Star's* makeup changes once again, markedly in their move from Leeds to London in mid 1844. Not only is there less 'Chartist Intelligence' but less news in general, as well as far less detail to the reports. It is no wonder that historians such as Kate Tiller and Malcolm Chase have dubbed this period 'the doldrums years.'[28] While the establishment of Chartist Intelligence as a dedicated column in the early- to mid-forties allowed for a wealth of more specific, targeted Chartist strategy, we see this energy begin to wane and attention focused on increasingly particular issues.

The National Charter Association, Irish Union Repeal, the Land Plan, and the Victim Fund are no longer nationwide agitations but mainstays and regular features of the *Northern Star* in this period. The column itself physically shrinks, moves from the front page of the newspaper towards the back. By January 1845 the column appears as late as page seven. While it is possible that the column was not compiled until the printing of the last pages of the paper

[28] Kate Tiller, 'Late Chartism: Halifax 1847-58,' in *The Chartist Experience,* ed. by James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982), pp. 311-344. Chase, *Chartism: A New History* (2007) has an entire chapter devoted to the 'doldrums years' of '43-'46.

in order to allow time for the latest reports to arrive at the *Star's* office, it nonetheless is smaller than in previous periods of activity. 'Chartist Intelligence' for January 25th 1845, when traditionally meetings were held to reflect upon agitation for the new year, spans only one and a half columns on page seven, the rest of the paper being occupied by reviews, general news, and editorials. Furthermore, the reports are generally shorter, only an inch or two long apiece. While it is not necessarily indicative of the activity of the whole country, it does suggest a lack of activity. This continues throughout the year. For example, the Chartist Intelligence reported from Scotland suggests a lack thereof: a longer than usual article entitled 'Maynoothism in Dumfries' disparagingly states that 'there is nothing in the political way stirring about this locality,' describing a want of activity, and that the only agitation that had been some weeks ago was 'anti-Maynooth meeting on the No Popery principle,' recalling that 'scarcely an intellectual phiz was visible, and a great portion [of the audience] were of the fairer and more gullible sex.'[29] We can assume by the informal, highly opinionated, sexist tone of the piece that this was sent by a resident rather than one of the *Star's* paid correspondents, but the attention paid to this article is the same length of a report of a discussion about Feargus O'Connor and long term agitation in the same region, and three times the length of a report on the same page of the founding of the Stratford-upon-Avon branch of the Co-operative Land Society. Much of the column at this period is devoted to reporting new branches of the Land Society, following Feargus O'Connor's vision for the movement at the time, and this issue seems unusual compared to its contemporaries. Indeed, the report of O'Connor's lecture directly contradicts the 'Dumfries' correspondent's complaint that 'there is nothing in the political way' about the area, perhaps inserted as a challenge to the residents to revive activism in the area, particularly in their criticism of the 'gullible sex' attending the meeting. The meeting about O'Connor, by contrast, is far more optimistic, stating that in their 'ordinary weekly meeting' that they 'find no reason for the withdrawal of that hearty confidence which they have hitherto reposed in him' in response to the recent criticism of O'Connor in the *National Reformer*. They furthermore continue a list of resolutions, including their own decision to discard the *National Reformer*.[30] The meeting reads a little like a report of a Feargus O'Connor fan club, and perhaps it is this that the other Dumfries resident is dissatisfied with. Much of the other 'Chartist Intelligence' on the page consists of Land Plan updates and minutes of discussions, and perhaps

[29] 'Maynoothism in Dumfries,' *NS,* 7/6/1845, p. 7. 'Maynoothism' or 'No Popery' referred to debates around Catholic Emancipation.
[30] 'Dumfries,' *NS,* 07/06/1845, p. 7.

this new uniformity of Chartist activity is at issue. The strength of the Land Plan is such that it even reaches Rouen and Boulogne, France, from whence reports of the Land Plan appear in December 1845.[31] In each report, the groups have elected a Chartist in England to represent them at the forthcoming Chartist Land Convention, with the Boulogne branch publishing suggestions to update the rules to include 'twelve directors to be chosen from the several districts, with each district possessing the power to nominate one,' much like the point of the Charter aiming for equal constituencies, before finally expressing 'their confidence and thanks to Mr. Feargus O'Connor, for his unwearied exertions on their behalf.'[32] The specific direction towards the Land Plan, even from British textile workers relocated to France, demonstrates the channelling of efforts towards a few mainstream strategies for activism as opposed to the wealth of activities seen earlier in the movement. The strategies have turned from local to nationwide to global.

Even in this period of quiet but pointed strategic activism, 'Chartist Intelligence' is adopted as a title fairly loosely. While it has a usual meaning of Chartist news, particularly to identify updates from branches of the NCA to support progress towards the goal of the Charter and the Land, this definition does become flexible from time to time. At the beginning of this period an extended letter, under the title, 'The Martyr Ellis,' from the transported Chartist William Ellis, addressed to his wife Emma, is reprinted in the column and used as part of a lengthy appeal as part of the nationwide Victim Fund.[33] The letter tells Mrs. Ellis of the difficulties of married couples re-uniting in the penal colony of Van Dieman's Land, that 'none could feel the separation more acutely than myself; but affection will not allow me to suffer you to plunge yourself into difficulty and danger without apprising you of it.' It seems odd to equate a love letter from a prisoner to his wife as any kind of news or intelligence, but the publication of the letter serves a higher function. 'The martyr Ellis' signs himself 'your ever loving husband, but poor exile,' reminding readers of his unfortunate fate as a Chartist agitator, the emotive language not only calling on the *Star's* readership to support the Victim Fund, including poor Mrs. Ellis and her now-fatherless children, but as an encouragement for responsible agitation. The letter from Ellis furthermore mentions that he has, 'repeatedly seen Frost, Williams, and Jones,' now in Hobart Town, thus updating the *Star's* readership on the wellbeing and existence of their other martyrs to the cause. Later on in this period we also see

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[31] 'Rouen (France)', 'Boulogne (France)' *NS,* 06/12/1845, p. 5.
[32] See Fabrice Bensimon, 'British Workers in France, 1815-1848', *Past and Present,* 213 (2011), pp. 145-189, p. 173-4.
[33] Now named Tasmania. 'The Martyr Ellis,' *NS,* 03/08/1844, p. 7.

the 'Chartist Intelligence' used flexibly as a means of sharing obituaries of deceased activists. In September 1847 within the column, sandwiched between reports of meetings and resolutions organised by locality we find the entry for Rochdale, subtitled 'The end of an old persecuted patriot,' as a short obituary for Betty Scott, 79, whose 'life was one of singular perseverance against persecution and oppression, exiled from her native land, Ireland, during the troublesome days of '98.' The obituary describes not her family, as in most obituaries at the time, but her Radical credentials, including her suffering at the hands of the 'Peterloo butchers' in 1819, noting that 'she was one of the first to enrol her name [on the Chartist petition], and remained to the last true to the good cause.'[34] While in a general and activist newspaper like the *Star* we would expect Scott's obituary to appear under 'births, deaths, and marriages,' her activist credentials ensure that her death is reported as an aspect of Chartist news, noting that her loyalty continues from beyond the grave, with 'her last request was that she might be carried to the grave by Chartists.' The publication of obituaries as 'intelligence' furthermore enables the deceased to occupy space in the newspaper, and thus the movement, from beyond the grave. Manon Nouvian has argued that public funeral processions copied the same form as Chartist marches, only 'the coffin replaced the National Petition and the graveside turned into a platform from which radical orators addressed the crowd.'[35] I argue that the publication of such notices in the *Star* continues this onto the page, reaching a wider community of participants as readers, matching the emotional charge captured in reports of meetings elsewhere. The reflective nature of these notices, fixated on the triumphs of the past and difficulties of the present, suggests an overall feeling of pessimism within the movement, indicated even further by the downturn in participation and news within the column.

This study of Chartist Intelligence from 1837-1848 should give a flavour of the changing activity of the Chartist movement, a toolkit to being an activist in the 1840s. We see a huge shift in the volume and variety of Chartist activity over the ten-year period, as well as changing focus. From grassroots community organisation and social events we see an evolution of aims into formal, national strategies for organisation, complete with literal card-carrying individuals elected to be leaders of wider regional and national bodies, to much more streamlined and official plans and national fundraising for a national Victim Funds and the

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[34] 'Rochdale', *NS,* 04/09/1847, p. 8. Previously the death of respected Chartists would be reported in its own column with a thick black border around, both Scott's and William Harris' ('**Died, on Thursday morning, 24th December… William Harris…', *NS*, 02/01/1847, p. 5.) are unusual for this stylistic absence.

[35] Manon Nouvian, 'Defiant Mourning: Public Funerals as Funeral Demonstrations in the Chartist Movement,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 24: 2 (2019), pp. 208-226, p. 215.

Chartist Land Plan. With that said, this specific 'Chartist Intelligence' relied on a strong foundation of Radical history and practice built up over generations, as most clearly evidenced by the praiseworthy obituary for Betty Scott. Furthermore, we learn from the creation and evolution of this column what 'intelligence' and 'news' meant to the editors and readers of the *Northern Star*. Not only does this tell us about what an activism-oriented newspaper wished to report to its readers, but what they wanted to see, what made activism newsworthy. As we have seen, this definition of 'newsworthiness' changes throughout the column's run, especially in terms of the narrowing of protest strategies. It is significant to bear in mind that the *Star* was O'Connor's organ: although it is clear that many readers did see him as the ultimate leader of the Chartist movement, nonetheless he was not the *only* leader of the movement and we must exercise caution in combing through this column for strategies, values, and aims of the movement. The absence of any praise for the 'New Move' championed by Lovett and Collins in 'Chartist Intelligence' in 1841, as well as the public dismissal of it, suggests that O'Connor had some input into the makeup and direction of the *Star's* reporting. 'Newsworthiness' is a judgement made about information, and the academic and critical connotations of 'Intelligence' suggest not only a judgement about what is 'newsworthy' content but 'high quality' newsworthy content.

2. The *Northern Star* and Community Activism[36]

> Ever since the year 1810 the Yorkshire and Lancashire people have been peacefully struggling for Universal Suffrage. You have no idea of the intensity of radical opinions here - you have an index from the numerous public house signs - full length portraits of [Henry] Hunt - holding in his hand scrawls containing the words Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliament, and the ballot. Paine and Cobbett also figure occasionally.[37]
>
> LWMA leader and Temperance advocate Henry Vincent, in Huddersfield.

As we have seen in the overview to Chartist Intelligence, the *Northern Star* shifts focus throughout its print run from local to national organisations. Within these smaller groups we see a pattern of two particular interests emerge as particularly popular adjuncts to Chartism: temperance and co-operative or joint stock movements. These, too, change with the ebb and

[36] Some material on temperance agitation in this chapter has been adapted from my unpublished MA thesis awarded by the University of Leeds (2016).

[37] Henry Vincent, to Henry Minikin, 'Dear Brother' (Manchester, 26th August 1838), LP/VIN, Correspondence between Henry Vincent and John Miniken, 1837-1842. Labour History Archive, Manchester.

flow of participation and strategy change of the Chartist Intelligence column as auxiliaries to the main agitation for the Charter. Like the six points of the Charter, established long before the 1832 Reform Act and the publication of 'The People's Charter,' Temperance and Co-operation had longer, and more complex histories. Like the six points, Temperance (including variations such as Teetotalism and Total Abstinence), Co-operation, and Joint Stock Provisions occupied the hearts and minds of both working- and middle-class reformers over the early nineteenth century, had a tradition of anti-establishment propaganda, and experienced a revival in the late 1830s. The Temperance movement has its roots in the Methodist church, although this expanded during the early 1820s and advocated either the moderation of or (tee)total abstention from 'intoxicating liquor,' usually hard alcoholic spirits and wines, but often beer, and sometimes tobacco or taxed caffeinated goods. Temperance agitation not only disrupted casual British drinking culture, but, its critics complained, disrupted Radical tradition. Vincent, quoted above in correspondence with his cousin, notes the radicalisation of pubs in the North of England as indicative of a tradition of housing Radical politics, literally a liminal space between the public and the private.[38] Temperance advocates, including *Star* editor William Hill, represented an offshoot of radical agitators dissenting from their own tradition of political dissent.

Likewise Co-operation has its own interesting and related history, originally, as described by Robin Thornes, appearing in the doctrines of early Socialist Robert Owen, 'the act of working together to a common end,' as 'an alternative form of social organisation' to the existing system of early industrialised capitalism.[39] This was, however, interpreted by working-class people in the late 1830s and early 1840s as a means of taking action into their own hands in terms of purchase power: 'they saw Co-operation as a means of creating communities and as the principle upon which communities would be conducted.'[40] It is no wonder, then, that the pages of the *Northern Star* repeatedly call for 'co-operation' between different agitating groups in this way. While both Temperance and Co-operative organisations spread nationally, most obviously as Feargus O'Connor's Chartist Co-operative Land Society, they were in effect a

[38] Vincent, *Ibid*.
[39] Robin Thornes, 'Change and Continuity in the Development of Co-Operation, 1827-1844,' in *New Views of Co-Operation,* ed. by Stephen Yeo (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 29-30. See also Ben Maw, 'Robert Owen's Unintended Legacy: Class Conflict', in *Robert Owen and his Legacy,* ed. by Chris Williams and Noel Thompson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 155-174, p. 159-160.
[40] Thornes, *Ibid*, p. 30.

patchwork made up of smaller local and community groups, and used as strategies to help the progress of attaining the Charter, rather than an alternative methodology of protest.

As has been asserted by Katrina Navickas, public space in the early 1830s was a contentious issue. Incidents in which public space had been violently contested, including the Peterloo massacre of 1819, were still fresh in the memories of Radical communities. The problem of finding or of creating spaces in which to freely discuss dissent remained problematic following sedition laws of the early nineteenth century which prohibited groups of twelve or more persons from holding meetings in public spaces.[41] The pub had remained a standard meeting place for political chatter up until this period, although this was not supported by all. The first mention of Temperance or Co-Operation in the *Northern Star* dates back to the 6th January 1838 in a report on the Huddersfield Co-operative Festival, celebrating the achievements of the society, toasting – among others – Richard Oastler, Feargus O'Connor, John Fielden, and hoping 'that Temperance and Sobriety may increase till all the people become Intelligent,' with speeches on a variety of subjects being made. 'The society contain,' reported the *Star*, 'about 200 members; if every 200 of the working class had as much capital as these have, what could hinder them from […] buying up all the land in the country,' foreshadowing Feargus O'Connor's land plan by some years.[42] The appearance of the 'Socialist room' in which the festival is held is both 'tasteful' and 'imposing,' suggesting a level of importance and reverence for occasion. 'Imposing' indicates not only the assertion and occupation of space for radical means, but carries connotations of intimidation, maintaining the militaristic language which accompanied physical force advocacy at this time. The level of grandeur afforded to this small local festival is not uncommon for meetings, be they overtly Radical in tone or more moderate.

The *Northern Star's* next issue in January 1838 includes an objection to a meeting, 'on the Canada question, held by the Working Men's Association of Hull.'[43] Noting the significance of the proposed debate, the editors, 'are sorry to see them holding a public meeting on so important a subject, in a paltry public-house room.' The writer continues to berate the association for failing to 'infuse a little more spirit into the working men of Hull,' in 'the grand line of democratic Veterans.' Furthermore, the very next month, great pride is taken in announcing the opening of the Bradford Temperance Hall, 'a spacious and elegant structure,

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[41] Katrina Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place* (2014), p. 97.
[42] 'Co-operative Festival', *NS*, 06/01/1838, p. 5.
[43] 'Events of the Week', *NS*, 13/01/1838, p. 1.

the first of its kind in the world,' observing the 'elegance' of the building, an opposition to a small and common pub, and 'distinction' of the proposed speakers, while noting the novelty of the endeavour as a positive innovation.[44] The writer goes on to comment that,

> they will inevitably effect an astonishing change in the opinions and habits of the community, and a delightful amelioration in the circumstances of the lower classes, who are the greatest sufferers of from the effects of intemperance.[45]

The association of spiritual language suggests the Temperance movement to be something of a higher calling, both elevating the Chartist movement in general, as well as an active way to better oneself, engaging with the Victorian tradition of self-help. The separation of the 'effects' of intemperance from the process of drinking itself furthermore displaces agency, suggesting that drinking, whether in moderation or more seriously, is something that happens to the 'lower classes' rather than something they do themselves, cementing temperance as a class issue. The spiritual language furthermore evokes the Methodist roots of the movement, while legitimising the plan. The Bradford Temperance hall, with its grand and 'elegant' structure infuses a sense of nobility and moral duty into the 'battle' for the Charter, creating a dedicated space for agitation and continuing to evoke military connotations. By contrast with the Working Men's Association of Hull, the Bradford Chartists and the *Star* are giving their political agitation not only the public attention, but the reverence it deserves. These early attentions to Temperance Chartism enable a space just for the betterment of the working classes, through avoidance of drink and for discussion, but ensuring it is a space for just that, a serious space separate from the distractions and noise of the local pub. Susan Zieger has convincingly argued that it is this community aspect of temperance culture that combatted the more 'mourgeois narrative' of the pledge, but 'by enacting it as a mass phenomenon, it also enabled unforeseen connections between individuals and political groups.'[46] These spaces are created by and for the community, and thus suggests the potential for purposeful activities and rules: be it prohibition of consumption of alcohol, the purchase of specific goods, or for specifically Chartist activities.

Tom Scriven argues that these agitations were not small sub-groups of Chartists, but an attempt at the 'complete reform of everyday life [which] sought to put the mental cultivation

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[44] 'Bradford Temperance Hall', *NS*, 24/02/1838, p. 5.
[45] *Ibid,* p. 5.
[46] Susan Zieger, *The Mediated Mind: Affect, Ephemera, and Consumerism in the Nineteenth-Century* (New York City: Fordham Press, 2018), p. 46.

and health of Chartists at the centre of the struggle for political emancipation.'[47] An 1840 report of the 'Hulme and Chorlton Joint Stock Provision Company' notes firstly that they, 'have met with that success they little anticipated,' in their financial goings on in terms of produce sales.[48] However, the *Star* further writes that the shop provides other necessary resources for political agitation: space and information:

> Any persons who feel desirous of spending a few hours on a Sunday afternoon in reading, or hearing read, the public news, are informed that the Committee Room is open for that purpose, free of expense, from two to nine o'clock. Those who wish to take the *Northern Star* can be supplied by their shopman.[49]

This Joint Stock shop not only replaces the pub as that liminal space between a public and private room, but takes into account the needs and working patterns of its anticipated consumers, opening the private, Committee only room into a public space for a long Sunday afternoon. The caveat that it is "free of expense" not only emphasises that the space is for the working class agitators, but suggests that access to news information should not come at a price, embodying those 'Chartist' principles of accessibility and reform. While this piece, published in the *Star*, does work on one level as a kind of reciprocal advertisement - both the Hulme and Chorlton store and the *Star* effectively market the other to their respective consumer bases - the mention of the *Star* adds to the cumulative idea suggested by the working class demographic that this co-operative is indeed a sort of Chartism-adjacent activism in the creation and occupation of public space in the town.

These early representations of what I define as 'Chartist-adjacent' agitation suggest the creation of spaces as an alternative option to those already on offer: following the first petition of 1839, we see some of these spaces being created out of necessity rather than choice. Chartist and Chartist-adjacent activism was furthermore not always tolerated, even within other progressive political circles, whereby even overlap with Chartism was not tolerated. A report from March 1841 from Bermondsey states that 'the Chartists have been turned out of their place of meeting, Wootten's Temperance Coffee House, at the insistence of the Rechabites and Teetotallers. They now meet weekly, however, at the Star Coffee House.'[50] By naming and shaming Wootten's and their more desirable clientele in the *Northern Star*, the Bermondsey

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[47] Tom Scriven, *Popular Virtue: Continuity and Change in Radical Moral Politics, 1820-70 (*Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), p. 94.
[48] 'Manchester, Co-Operation', *NS,* 30/05/1840, p. 4.
[49] 'Manchester, Co-operation', *Ibid*.
[50] 'Bermondsey', *NS,* 6/3/1841, p. 5 It is tempting to speculate that this was a specifically Chartist coffee house making homage to the *Northern Star*, but difficult to verify.

readers are not only able to keep up their guard but lose no time in changing their plans to meet at the new location, ever adapting to obstacles of space as the builders of the Bradford hall had done. Coffee Houses had facilitated a rich tradition of 'criticism – literary at first, then also political,' across Britain and Europe dating back to the seventeenth century.[51] These spaces were, however, originally spaces for bourgeois intellectuals. The possibility of a Coffee House being a place for not only Chartism but other campaigns is not unusual, but is laden with class tensions. A 'Temperance' Coffee House, might then be seen as 'counter-public space' to acknowledge its working-class or anti-establishment potential.[52] An 1841 report from Arnold, Nottinghamshire, writes that 'we have established a library […], and in connection with the co-operative store, we have commenced a sick society' of approximately 40 members. Furthermore, 'one sick club, that was held at a public house, has left the ale bench and the glass […] The working classes of this village are in a distressed condition; but, notwithstanding our distresses, we are for the Charter…'[53] The Arnold Chartists state that they do not support other agitations, but through their examples are overwhelmingly in support of any means by which the 'distress' of working-class life can be relieved, through adherence to Chartist principles rather than other movements. In this community, it is evident that Co-Operation and Temperance are not incompatible with Chartist protest and culture, in contrast to the Bermondsey Teetotallers and Rechabites who feel these issues are separate. Displacement and replacement of protest was not too uncommon: like the Bermondsey Chartists, the Chartists of Leith report in 1842 that the Anti-Corn Law League 'have managed to turn us out of our usual place of meeting,' 'but we trust that, ere long, we shall see a Co-operative Store and a Trades' Hall here worthy of the men of Leith.'[54] This long article repeatedly emphasises that 'Leith is a bantling of O'Connor's' and consequently, enemies of the ACLL whom O'Connor so dislikes. The suggestion of a Co-operative and Trades' building as antagonistic to the ACLL emphasises the class differences between these groups, with the Leith Chartists firmly positioning themselves as working class. Later in 1842 we see that their wish did indeed come true: 'the Co-operation store that opened in this town on the 1st June 1842 […] has been going

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[51] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Enquiry into the Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), p. 32. See also Markman Ellis, *A Cultural History of the Coffee House* (London: Phoenix, 2004).

[52] See Kevin Gilmartin, Popular Radicalism and the Public Sphere,' *Studies in Romanticism*, 33.4 (Winter 1994), pp. 549-557.

[53] 'Arnold, Nottinghamshire', *NS,* 24/4/1841, p. 1

[54] 'Leith', *NS*, 12/02/1842, p. 1.

on prosperously, beyond the most sanguine expectation.'[55] Confirming their adherence to class conflict, the Leith report states that the store was 'got up exclusively by working men, in shares of 5 shillings each,' not only advertising the store itself but serving as inspiration for future members. Like the Arnold sick club, traditionally middle-class benefits could be established on a working-class budget and in working-class spaces, but need focus and forethought. While specifically 'Chartist' halls were certainly in existence (see chapter one) and got up by focused members of the movement, in many cases purpose-built community spaces could be arranged to meet all the needs of the community, from the grand Bradford Temperance Hall to the Leith Co-op and Arnold sick club. As the specifically Chartist newspaper, these ideas and discussions are already taking up space on paper; but through the building and establishment of different buildings within these communities they are furthermore occupying physical space and cannot be turned over or ignored. The bodies in purpose-built spaces and the body of the pages of the *Northern Star* would be seen as affirming their right to protest and enfranchisement; demonstrating the working-class deservedness of the next step of occupying space in Parliament.

Purchasing Power in Mid-Chartism

At the tail end of an 1841 report on the Chartist Intelligence of Glasgow, the correspondent concludes that,

> Mr. Pattinson then rose, and in an eloquent appeal to the power of the press; and concluded by bringing forward a plan which has been some time under consideration by the Central Committee for Scotland, for establishing a Joint Stock Printing Establishment, to be divided in one thousand shares at £1 per share. The speaker concluded that by showing the great usefulness of such an establishment in forwarding the movement, by the printing of political tracts, and other works, in a cheap form, &c…[56]

The ambition of Chartist community groups in creating their own spaces for discussion and agitation is notable in itself, and the proposed Joint Stock Printing Establishment goes one step further in establishing the ownership of a community press for Scotland. The Central Committee for Scotland, in effect the Scottish fore-runner of the NCA, was founded in 1839 and funded by district associations for, among other things, 'printing and circulating political tracts, and doing all in their power to disseminate knowledge among the people with a view to

[55] 'Leith', *NS*, 25/06/1842, p. 2.
[56] *NS*, 'Glasgow,' 06/02/1841 p. 1.

organising Scotland.'[57] While newspapers such as the *Northern Star* would double as small jobbing presses, as Joshua Hobson's publishing office in Leeds did, these offices were not community based. The *Star* itself was initially funded through shares until they were all bought back by Feargus O'Connor, thereby legally and financially enshrining himself as the sole proprietor of the *Star*.[58] This proposal is wholly different: a printing establishment to be split between 1000, at a relatively cheap price. Given that the average weekly take-home pay from a working family in Manchester as of 1841 was £0 8s 2 ½d, after necessary expenditures of rent, bills, food, coals etc. were paid, a family could potentially save 2s per week and purchase a share in the Joint Stock Printing endeavour in just 10 weeks.[59] What this proposal really means is the opportunity for working-class people to take the writing and printing of political material into their own hands, an assertion of their own power. Given that one of the main barriers to enfranchisement objected to by the Chartists was the qualification of property ownership, a further motive for Chartism-adjacent movements such as temperance and Co-operation was the ability to demonstrate independence and power financially, as limited as it may be. The further developments of Scottish Chartists in Alexandria, north west of Glasgow, seem to confirm this, as in a report just one week later in the *Star* (held where else, but the 'Democratic Seminary,' once again elevating and legitimising their demands through religious institutions) shows:

> 'That the Association take three shares in the joint-stock printing and publishing company' that [on the advice of Henry Vincent and others] we form a democratic teetotal society, in connection with the Universal Suffrage Association.' Lastly, a committee was appointed to receive donations of books, &c., for the forming of a library in connection with the association. To others we would say, 'go and do likewise.'[60]

To these groups of Chartists, at least, broader reform for the working classes is part and parcel of Chartist agitation, while demonstrating that ownership in a co-operative can be co-operative in itself, a collaborative effort by the members of this organisation splitting the costs between them in order to buy shares in the joint stock printing company, and furthermore asserting their

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[57] *NS*, 24 and 31st August 1839, in Alexander Wilson, *The Chartist Movement in Scotland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970.), p. 88. See also Hamish Fraser, *Chartism in Scotland* (London: Merlin Press, 2010).

[58] Epstein, 'The Lion of Freedom,' p. 58.

[59] At the time of writing I was unable to find data relating to the average weekly income of families in Glasgow or elsewhere Scotland for the year 1841. Data derived and averages calculated from Wm. Neild, Esq., 'Comparative Statement of the Income and Expenditure of certain Families of the Working Classes in Manchester and Dukinfield, in the years 1836 and 1841,' *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 4. 4 (1842), p. 334.

[60] 'Alexandria, Vale of Leven', *NS,* 13/02/1841, p. 1.

commitment to both temperance and Chartism. The plan is clearly outlined in stages, the reference to the Universal Suffrage Association serving as a kind of rhetorical accreditation, emphasising the organisation and administration behind such schemes. The *Star's* editorial commentary, advising readers to 'go and do likewise' adds another level of institutional backing to the organisation, with the almost instructional outline enabling readers to see the process behind such initiatives. It is here that we see the importance of property and spending power in the movement, just as the Arnold Chartists begin to suggest. By taking the act of printing into their own hands, it is they who determine access to information for themselves, among other resources. Co-operation, temperance, and exclusive dealing are seen as an important way of asserting one's independence and devotion to Chartism outside of the movement, an attempt at effecting longer term change within the capitalist system, as agreed in a brief report from Longton in March 1842.[61] A report from Newton Heath, later in the year, in which 'a goodly number of Chartists and their wives sat down to a cup that cheers, but not inebriates,' at whose joint stock store 'they have butchered their own beef and mutton, which has not only paid them good interest for their money, but has brought down the price of meat to the whole of the inhabitants one penny per pound.'[62] In addition to challenging the 'shopocracy' of the middle classes, whom some Chartists saw as the enemy, the Newton Heath Chartists manage to assert the values of self-education (self-taught butchery) and co-operation. Women are invited to the celebration at the store, and rather than focus on the 'evils of intemperance' that many other Temperance Chartists do, subtly assert their stance on teetotalism as being 'cheered' but not drunk, emphasising the respectability of the whole affair. This, again, was a deliberate choice of the editorial team of the *Northern Star* in reflecting their own attitudes, as well as those of the readership community. In 1843, with Temperance advocate William Hill sacked from his post as Editor of the *Star*, this support for temperance began to decline.

This idea of ownership, in these cases burgeoning (co-operative, rather than competitive) businesses, was perhaps a sly way to challenge the laws around enfranchisement and gain suffrage. Eileen Yeo asserts that 'self-sufficiency was an integral strand to Chartism as a mass movement,' demonstrating self-government.[63] I argue that this had an element of performativity, with small-scale local governments and wide-ranging consumer action

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[61] 'Longton, Staffordshire Potteries', *NS*, 05/02/1842, p. 1.
[62] 'Newton Heath', *NS*, 12/11/1842, p. 5.
[63] Yeo, 'Some Practices and Problems' (1982), p. 349.

demonstrating ability to participate in governance on a national level. It is in this context that we must understand the National Charter Association as a political party, as well as the Chartist Land Plan. O'Connor's most ambitious plan for the Chartists was a co-operative: the Co-Operative Land Society founded in 1845. Chase notes that this marked change stems from the 1843 Chartist Convention, following which 'all mention of the Charter was expunged from its objectives,' which instead were expressed as 'by peaceful and legal means alone to better the condition of man,' re-defining the NCA as a traditional friendly society rather than a political protest. What's more, this allowed the NCA to apply to the official Registrar of Friendly Societies, enabling the NCA to buy and sell land with more ease.[64] This was by far the largest Chartist attempt at Co-operation, which enabled subscribers to enter themselves into a lottery to win a plot of land on which to build a house and farm, and effectively thus become owners of property worth over £10, the minimum qualification in order to vote or run as an MP. Sold as a kind of utopian vision, the plan gained momentum and upwards of 70,000 subscribers.[65]

An instalment of Chartist Intelligence in 1845 contained a total of ten reports, nine of which focussed on the Land Plan from all over the country, from Cockermouth down to East London. Mr. Kydd, speaking at a Glasgow meeting, argued that under the present system that one could be 'trundled out of his garret or cellar to beg for bread or the straw. Evil habits were thus engendered. […] The *secure* possession of the land was the remedy for this evil.'[66] The kind of 'evil habits' are only hinted at, this ambiguity making such a description all the more fearful in comparison with the emphasis on secure ownership of the land. In spite of the lack of agricultural expertise that many of the Chartists in these industrialised cities actually had, it was the idea of the land that was important: the fertile potential for a better life outside of a cramped cellar, and a kind of natural, slow living that would not be out of kilter with the mindfulness rhetoric of the twenty-first century. Contrasting with the 'evils' of capitalist cities, Kydd states that 'the land is a natural bank, and never failed to give in return a fair dividend'; the advantage of the *Chartist* Co-Operative Land Society (emphasis mine) over similar schemes such as those decried by the ACLL was 'possession of the land *for ever*' (emphasis original). In contrast to the precarity of rented accommodation and minimal, fragile material

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[64] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 248. For details of the long legal battle the Chartists had in registering the Society, see the same, pp. 250-258. See also Alice Mary Hadfield, *The Chartist Land Company* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1970).

[65] This was at the peak of the Land Plan movement in 1847-8. Chase, 'Chartism and the Land: "The Mighty People's Question"', in *The Land Question in Britain, 1750-1950,* ed. by Matthew Cragoe and Paul Readman (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 57-73, p. 57.

[66] 'Glasgow,' *NS*, 21/6/1845, p. 5. Emphasis original.

possessions, including the very newspaper in which this notice was printed, the prospect of permanence and legacy suggests a kind of power level with those landowners who were enfranchised. This potential of the Land Society, perhaps rather than any concrete proposals, was this chance at a permanent legacy promised specifically by O'Connor, their leader. In October of that year a report from North Shields notes that 'the very word 'Co-Operative' has something ominous in it to the ears of the inhabitants of this district'; due to 'the incompetency and the dishonesty of the parties entrusted with the management [of some co-operative stores in the region] have failed. […] These failures have been caused through the shareholders neglecting the advice "to take the management of their affairs into their own hands."'[67] Not only is the advantage of the land, in comparison to other co-operative endeavours such as stores or meeting rooms, the aspect of permanence and small business afforded to the lucky winners, but the trust in O'Connor's hands-on approach to the plan. The difference between the Chartist Land Plan and previous attempts at radical agrarianism, Chase asserts, was O'Connor: 'what marks it out firstly is its size […] [the] scheme's huge success, in terms of the support that it attracted, had never been anticipated.'[68] Frequently referring to himself in editorials and speeches as the 'father' of the Chartists and his readers, O'Connor linguistically renders himself God-like; his status as a radical gentleman landowner implies that he practically hands his 'children' a legacy, managing the business of purchasing the land ready for them to inherit. This literal application of paternalism to O'Connor's personal wealth and ideology seems a striking contradiction to the concept of a co-operative, but did allow those winning subscribers to essentially beat the system, 'inheriting' land through a co-operative lottery fund. Meanwhile, the operating of the farms, once bought, would be the responsibility of the labour of the allottee, a more literal 'hands on' approach to reaping the 'dividends' of the Land. 'The greatest recommendation of the Land Society,' writes the North Shields correspondent, 'is its being founded upon this principle.'[69]

In addition to the ideas of legacy and permanence holding the appeal of the Land Plan, was the continuation of having one's own space and own rules, a legal assertion of intellectual as well as financial independence. As the number of subscribers to the Land Plan grew, so did the arguments in favour of a legal means of attaining property ownership as a Chartist act. A report from 'The Gorgie Mill (near Edinburgh)' publishes the 'unanimous' resolution that 'we

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[67] 'North Shields,' *NS*, 11/10/1845, p. 2.
[68] Chase, *The Chartists* (2015), p. 49.
[69] 'North Shields', p. 2.

are fully confident that the working out of the land scheme, under the same board of directors, will greatly accelerate the obtainment of the People's Charter.'[70] In spite of the 1843 Convention's resolution to distance itself from the publication and principles of the People's Charter, the Land Plan is nonetheless undoubtedly part of the Chartist agenda.[71] Specifically stating the caveat that 'the same board of directors' is necessary for the 'confidence' of the group, doing their bit to ensure a sense of continuity to proceedings, while furthermore suggesting that only Chartists should be enrolling under the Land Plan, to ensure that, once propertied, they use their vote to continue support for the principles of the People's Charter, reforming the system from the inside out. As we have seen previously, support for the Land Plan came from as far afield as France, seen perhaps by expatriated Chartists as an opportunity to return home, and an alternative to the government-supported emigration schemes to the colonies of Canada and Australia. Published in the issue of 29th August 1846, Land Societies from Boulogne, Mantes (Seine et Oise), and Saint Germans de Navarre report meetings in tandem with the opening of O'Connorville in Hertfordshire earlier in the month. William Peddie, of Boulogne, notes that the soirée in honour of O'Connorville not only left

> every face radiant with joy at the success that has already attended the Land Society, and full of high hopes that the time will soon come when every man will have a 'home which he can call his own, and not as he is now driven from his native land to seek employment under a foreign despotism.[72]

This soiree reported from France not only serves as inspiration for readers back in Britain to join the Land Society, but emphasises the sense of neighbourly community possible in the Land Plan utopia, as well as harking back to the sense of community co-operation that brought about Chartist groups at the beginning of the movement. This sense of community betterment is furthered one year later in a report from the Coupar-Angus Mutual Improvement Society, which reports upon an 'intellectual feast in an argumentative and convincing speech on co-operation, as illustrated by the Leeds Redemption Society, the United Trades' Association, and the National Co-Operative Land Company.'[73] The idea of the intellectual nourishment derived from co-operation and class betterment not only supports the wider culture of self-help of the late 1840s, but the illustrative use of the Land Company locates the group in terms of a wider plan for betterment, while still relating to the principles of the People's Charter. The use of

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[70] 'Scotland,' *NS*, 3/01/1846, p. 8.
[71] Chase, *The Chartists* (2015), p. 53.
[72] 'Boulogne (France),' *NS*, 29/08/1846, p. 8.
[73] 'Coupar-Angus,' *NS*, 27/02/1847, p. 1.

'nourishment' in this way continues a common theme in Chartist writing, that intellectual and educational 'self-improvement' has the potential to improve material conditions. The Chartist Co-Operative Land Company was closed to new subscribers in December of 1847, though the lottery continued for some time.[74] The vast reach of this co-operative, one of the largest of the Chartist Movement (although several local co-operative stores would correspond in order to discuss best practice), was cut short in just two years. The lucky subscribers, it was assumed, would continue to enjoy the 'dividends of the land,' and it was noted that the building of the cottages on the farms was remarkably high quality for cottages of the time.[75]

3. The *Northern Star* and 'Other' Reforms

> **Wooton-under-Edge** -- Thanks of this association go to Messrs. Dover and Hewitt, for their honest, noble, and patriotic conduct in so boldly unmasking and exposing the sophistry of the anti-slavery "humbug," at their late meeting in Norwich.
>
> **Mountsorrel** -- Mr. Mason commenced by urging the people to union, without which they were powerless, but with which they were omnipotent; he then in an able manner exposed the Corn Law humbug, and severely commented upon the Poor Law.[76]

While the Chartist Intelligence column was undoubtedly home to information pertaining to Chartist-related activities and reforms, it also gave updates on those reforms not supported by Feargus O'Connor and his followers. The Anti-Corn Law League (ACLL), established in 1838, was a formal association engulfing all smaller branches of the Anti-Corn Law Association, founded in 1836. Much like the Chartist movement, it was concerned with the wellbeing of the working classes, and emerged from a long Radical tradition; the artificial inflation of grain prices (the Corn Law, passed in 1815) was a contributing factor to the march that became the Peterloo Massacre of 1819. Likewise, the Abolitionist movement of the late eighteenth century employed the tactics of consumer action and moral superiority in order to campaign for the end of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, both in terms of the trafficking and sale of enslaved peoples, made illegal in 1807, and the ownership of enslaved peoples in the British Isles and Empire between 1833 and 1840. While these reform movements, much like Temperance, overlapped

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[74] Yeo, 'Some Practices and Problems' (1982), p. 372.

[75] I am grateful to the organisers of Chartism Day 2017, as well as the current residents of former O'Connorville, for the opportunity to see these structures first-hand. So good was the building work of these houses that they are still standing some 160 years later.

[76] 'Wootton-under-Edge', 'Mountsorrel', *NS,* 12/12/1840, p. 1.

and coincided with agitation for the People's Charter, and indeed shared many of the same Radical roots, they were not necessarily beloved by O'Connor, and in turn, the *Northern Star*. The above example, from 'Chartist Intelligence' in December 1840, encompasses both a sense of radical culture and radical exclusivity of the Chartist movement. Temperance, Co-Operatives, and Land ownership are on brand with the *Star's* vision, while the Corn Law repealers and in some ways, Abolitionists, are portrayed as middle-class hypocritical distractions from the noble cause of the people's franchise. In this section I will explore the ways the Corn Law and Abolitionist reform movements are treated by the *Northern Star,* exploring manipulations of 'unions' to deliver a specific activist vision, as well as negative definitions of 'Chartist Intelligence' and the branding of movements unhelpful to Chartism as 'humbug'.

Radical Traditions, 1840-1843

As we have seen, imagery invoking the Radical heroes of the past played an important part in Chartist rhetoric, including figures such as Henry Hunt and Thomas Paine. The points of the Charter, as well as anti-Corn Law agitation and Anti-Slavery movements, were all part of the 'golden age' of reform from the 1790s onwards; most notably, all of these issues formed the impetus for the march that became the Peterloo massacre of 1819. These three movements, each aiming for the betterment of the people in different ways, all fall under the umbrella of early nineteenth-century reform culture, and share roots in the same Radical traditions. It was the 1832 Reform Act, Dorothy Thompson argues, that 'had defined more clearly than at any time before or since in British history, and more clearly than had been done in any other country, a qualification for the inclusion in the political institutions of the country based entirely on the possession of property and the possession of a regular income.'[77] While these reforms were born around the same time, perhaps the first Reform Act should be seen as the point at which they splintered.

By the time of the establishment of the *Northern Star,* chattel slavery had, for the most part, legally been abolished in Britain, while the Anti-Corn Law League concentrated their efforts on the new electors created by the Reform Act of 1832. Pickering and Tyrell write of the monster pamphleteering propaganda campaign of 1843, that each envelope 'was an entree card, headed, "You Are An Elector!", followed by a message that urged the elector to consider

[77] Thompson, *The Chartists* (1984), p. 5.

his vote as a privilege. In turn, this was followed by a stark warning of the dire echoes that confronted him: "plenty or scarcity" "comfort or misery", "LIFE OR DEATH", "a bread taxer" or "a candidate who will untax the poor man's loaf"' as well as a variety of letters and essays from public and government figures, including unlikely ally Sir Robert Peel.[78] The ACLL's use of binary oppositions is not unlike those used in Chartist writings, particularly 'comfort or misery,' for all intents and purposes, these phrases could well be from any Radical movement of the period. Chartist complaints against the ACLL, however, suggest that it was not the terminology and the message but the recipients who were the problem. Sent only to the electorate, who at this point comprised only 16% of the population, this suggests a betrayal of the radical traditions under which the Chartist and Anti Corn-Law Movements were first aligned: of 31 mentions of the Corn Law or anti-Corn Law agitation in the *Northern Star* in 1840, 7 refer to it as 'humbug,' a term used so frequently to degrade the ACLL later on in the paper's run it practically becomes shorthand. A long and detailed report of a debate held in Manchester, between James Leech (Chartist) and J. J. Finnegan (ACLL) demonstrates the *Star's* stance on the matter, as the concluding point of the debate, given by Leech, illustrates

> the Corn Laws were bad, [Leech] would admit; but they were not the cause that stood between them and prosperity, and he wondered how any one could think that repeal would benefit the workers, so long as the masters were reducing their wages already. It was sheer humbug for any man to say that they would not, after a repeal of the Corn Laws, carry it on still to a further extent.[79]

The problem that the *Star* had with the ACLL was its misguided intentions, the Corn Laws being only part of a wider problem which the Charter would aim to solve. Likewise, the language of the abolitionist movement is used to describe domestic poverty and labour issues in Britain, as a report from the 'democrats of Bedlington' in 1840 suggests. They

> have resumed their former position in the cause of Universal Freedom, for the purpose of aiding that acquisition of that great, glorious, and ever-to-be-contended for object -- universal justice. A reorganisation has taken place for the purpose of accelerating that means adopted for our emancipation, and the abolition of English slavery, and all are going on with a dauntless determination and a cheering aspect.[80]

The Bedlington 'democrats' do not define 'English slavery' any more clearly, but with Chattel slavery having been abolished, it is emancipation from 'political slavery' that they campaign

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[78] Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), p. 22.
[79] 'Discussion on the Corn Laws at Manchester', *NS,* 10/10/1840, p. 1.
[80] 'Democrats of Bedlington, *NS,* 28/11/1840, p. 1.

for and align themselves specifically with the Chartist movement. This example is representative of a wider attitude towards reform movements. This is not to say that the Chartists were not aware of the distress experienced by victims of chattel slavery in the U. S., as Kelly J. Mays notes in her study of Chartist poetry, that "at least a few poems refer to slavery in terms so abstract that they could be interpreted as designating any or all [contemporary British workers, people of colour enslaved in British colonies prior to 1838, and to enslaved African Americans]."[81] By delving back into their radical traditions they see the opportunity to use the rhetoric of anti-slavery movements, legitimised by the British Government, to benefit their own cause. The tone is bright and optimistic, likewise for our ACLL debate in Manchester. We can infer some journalistic flourish in the conclusion of the debate, when

> time was now called by the Chairman, and before Mr. Leech could even finish his sentence, and greeted him with the most tremendous shouts of applause, clapping of hands, and stamping of feet, &c. that we ever witnessed. A vote of thanks to the Chairman was then carried by acclamation; and thus ended the long-looked for triumph of the Chartists over the sham-Radical Corn Law Repealers of Manchester.

The Chartists of Bedlington, as 'democrats' campaigning for 'emancipation' contrast themselves with the 'sham-Radical Corn Law Repealers,' with the *Star* stripping the ACLL of their 'radical' credential in standing opposite them, siding with the newly powerful middle-class electors. These early discussions of alternative reform movements in Chartist Intelligence demonstrates the power that the *Star* could have in splintering other reform movements in order to push their own agenda.

Class Tensions

Further to the class-based political divides following the 1832 Reform Act, came the perception of the Anti-Corn Law League and Abolitionist movement as part of an absent, ignorant middle class. Not only were the supporters of the ACLL 'sham-radicals' and traitors, but seemingly separate due to 'class legislation.' An extended report of an 'Anti-Corn Law Delegate Meeting' in Birmingham in early 1842 suggests a link between the new enfranchisement of the middle classes and the ACLL:

> Mr. Richard Thompson, delegate from a factory in Rea-Street, handed in his credentials, and stated that his shopmates had instructed him to state that they considered the Corn Laws not the sole cause of the nation's distress, but that the whole resulted from class

[81] Kelly J. Mays, 'Slaves in Heaven, Laborers in Hell: Chartist Poets' Ambivalent Identification with the (Black) Slave,' *Victorian Poetry*, 39:2 (2001), pp. 137-163, p. 147.

> legislation. They were therefore resolved to agitate for the People's Charter; and nothing less.[82]

Thompson identifies himself immediately as a factory worker from the city and a representative of his work, his 'credentials' enabling him sufficient status to make his point at the debate. In representing the group Thompson furthermore adds emphasis to his point, knowing he has the backing of his fellow workmen: the resolution that their 'distress' results from class legislation suggests strength in numbers, and a consensus of opinion. While it does not state Thompson's place in the hierarchy of the factory, his reference to his 'shopmates' suggests a lower position than management or supervisor. They are the victims of class legislation, not the beneficiaries. Thompson's points emphasise those made earlier by his "friend' and fellow-Chartist, Mr. Smith Lindon, who asked,

> 'Why then did [the ACLL] not assist them in getting their rights, then there would be no further occasion to advocate for the repeal of a single law, as they would have the power to send men to parliament to repeal all bad laws, and enact other laws in their place calculated to secure the happiness of the whole people. (Hisses from the committee.) They might hiss at him as they thought proper, perhaps they thought that because he wore a fustian jacket that he had no business to speak his mind, but would do so in defiance of any man.'[83]

Lindon goes further with his speech than Thompson does: in responding to the hisses of the committee he first of all directly positions himself in opposition to them, but by emphasising his fustian jacket, established by Feargus O'Connor as a symbol of working-class life, uses iconography to make his point not only to the room but to the reporter, and thus the readers of the *Star*. The imagery emphasises class antagonism, while portraying the ACLL as misguided in their attempts to repeal only the Corn Laws and not use their status as electors to campaign for extending the franchise, and the potential to repeal 'all bad laws.' The 'fustian jacket' is evoked as the image of the working class, the reporter suggesting that the ACLL speaker is dehumanising them by referring to himself as 'a fustian jacket' rather than any other qualifier. The evocation of the fustian jacket can be seen further as specifically O'Connorite Chartism; a reference to his editorials in the *Star* and theatrical release from York Gaol. The 'defiance' of which Lindon speaks foreshadows the strike action of the summer. The Plug Plot strikes that would follow these debates in 1842 demonstrate the extent to which these tensions were felt.

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[82] 'Anti-Corn Law Delegate Meeting', *NS,* 22/01/1842, p. 1.
[83] *Ibid.*

Feargus O'Connor famously labelled his working-class followers the 'manufacturers of wealth,' positioning the middle classes in opposition as 'millocrats' or 'shopocrats,' unfairly wielding power over their working class employees.[84] One lecture given in London in 1843 by a Mr. Knight briefly decries 'the Slavery practised by the Millocrats and Mine Owners of country on Men, Women, and Children; to 'great approbation' from the crowd. The short length of this report, only about four lines, suggests that this content needs no further elaboration; the readers of the *Star* understand the problem exactly.[85] In positioning the 'men, women, and children' of the general public as subjects of slavery, Knight not only attempts to highlight the hypocrisy of those wealthy plantation owners who no longer use chattel slavery, but create unity between formerly enslaved peoples and the miners and mill workers of Britain, that their suffering is one and the same. Knight likens the working of children in factories to the generational enslavement faced by people in chattel slavery. Janet Toole writes that this was part of a wider strategy, and that 'the first stage involved emphasising the hypocrisy of the British middle class, who had supported abolition [in Britain and the West Indies] whilst resisting demands for state regulation of manufacturing industry.'[86] It is significant that just twenty years later, during the American Civil War, confederate supporters of slavery would appropriate these arguments of 'industrial slavery,' or wage slavery, in order to portray themselves as benevolent masters who, unlike British capitalists, provided room, board, and land for the labourers they enslaved.[87] These tensions are further compounded by the taxation of the British public in order to compensate British slave owners for the 'loss of property' following abolition, which, as Nick Draper, among others have noted, further enshrined generational wealth of the ruling classes.[88] A report by Mr. Dixon, of his 1844 lecture tour, further emphasises this by implying the sexual violence faced by women in chattel slavery extends to women working in factories:

> Facts that have come to my knowledge over the last fortnight will make every honest Englishman burst to hear what a depth of slavery and degradation we have fallen. Listen fathers, and blush for the chastities of your daughters. In many of the factories of North Lancashire the hands have to go and ask the overlooker or the manager of the room where

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[84] Clark, 'The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity,' (1992), p. 69.
[85] 'Mr. Knight', *NS,* 18/3/1843, p. 4.
[86] Janet Toole, 'Workers and Slaves: Class Relations in South Lancashire in the time of the Cotton Famine,' *Labour History Review,* 63: 2 (1998), pp. 160-181.
[87] Toole, p. 165. See also chapter three of Marcel van der Linden, 'Why (Free) Wage Labor?' *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008). Many thanks to Peter Halton, at the University of Sussex, for alerting me to this.
[88] Nick Draper, 'Possessing Slaves': Ownership, Compensation and Metropolitan Society in Britain at the time of Emancipation 1834–40,' *History Workshop Journal*, 64: 1 (2007), pp. 74-102.

> they work for a ticket to go and ease nature when requiring it. This law is binding upon both males and females. Englishmen, look at that specimen of the infernal factory system, and ask yourselves -- Can you allow your virtuous and industrious daughters to be thus insulted?[89]

Dixon engages the readers of the *Star* in a wider debate about the structure of industrial factory work and likens it to the enslavement of entire families in the chattel system, by emphasising the oppression of '*females'* within the factory system; removing wives from the home and hearth, and daughters from the safety and privacy of the home. 'Daughters' are specifically singled out, suggesting that these are not adult women but are infantilised, requiring the care of the family patriarch, as opposed to a factory patriarch. The 'chastities' of the daughters implies at best sexual impropriety, at worst sexual violence committed against the female factory workers. The class imbalance between female factory workers and factory overlookers is seen in this speech clearly as a struggle of power and agency, victimising the working-class female factory hands. This is further emphasised by the reference to the women as 'virtuous' and 'industrious,' suggesting that these qualities go hand in hand, each informing the other. The issues are addressed not to these 'virtuous daughters,' but to their fathers, situating Chartist and factory agitation within the domestic sphere. This is literally a problem relating to home, as opposed to the 'foreign' slavery experienced by those in Chattel slavery in the West Indies and outside of Britain. The patriarchal authority of the working-class father is displaced by the factory overlookers, who are suggested to be factory patriarchs, compared with the family patriarchs that Chartist men see themselves to be.

'Distractions and Tricks'

The point made by Thompson and Lindon at the ACLL debate in Manchester brings us to the crux of the issue of reform: within the pages of the *Northern Star,* alternative reform movements are seen to be an obstacle to the betterment of the working classes, a distraction from agitation for the Charter which would, theoretically, solve many problems at once. Both through the criticism of the Anti-Corn Law League and the adoption of slave narrative rhetoric, the *Star'*s Chartists aim to draw focus to some issues and distract from others: on the one hand for agitation for the Charter in order to enfranchise all men to solve more problems, while

[89] 'Mr. Dixon's Route', *NS,* 02/03/1844, p. 2.

calling on both their 'fellow slaves'[90] and the middle-class enablers of 'home slavery'[91] to grant them emancipation. As Ryan Hanley has asserted, following the emancipation act of 1833, 'while moral support for slave emancipation remained widespread, this provision [of financial compensation for slave-owners] could hardly have been better calculated to set working-class reformers against the parliamentary abolitionists.'[92] Class tensions are further enshrined through compensation payments to slave-owners, with working-class Chartists aligning their labour grievances with those of slaves, whose lives are seen as geographically distant to their own. The idea that 'charity begins at home' is applied in the context of domestic labour issues within the British empire. An 1840 lecture in Manchester on the subject of anti-slavery movements, given by George Thompson and accompanied by Lord Brotherton, M. P. for Salford attracted heavy criticisms by Chartist audience members:

> The greatest attention was paid to the lecturer, except at times when he was describing the black slaves of British India. The Chartists reminded him of the white slaves of England, then under his own nose, which seemed to annoy him very much. He continued to draw pictures of the slaves abroad, until the people thought it was time to hear a little of slavery at home; and at length called out for Leech to talk, amid the cries of "Leech," "Time," "Home," "New Poor Law," "Factory Slaves," and great conclusion, until the lecturer was obliged to conclude.[93]

The Chartists here make their issue with abolitionist movements quite clear: they want their issues prioritised above others, subscribing to the notion that once allowed participation they too can join discussions of foreign policy. In addition to the crowd and Mr. Curran aligning themselves with those enslaved in India, both in the adoption of the label 'slave' as well as drawing attention to legislation such as the New Poor Law, the reporter opens the piece by likening the audience physically to the 'black slaves' of India. As the room filled up, the reporter observes that 'by half-past [seven] it appeared nearly full, the latter part being of black hands and faces.' Through the cries of 'white slavery' we can infer that these attendees were white people whose faces were covered in soot and pollution; but this distinction is not one that was made by the reporter, subtly inserting the white Chartist reformers into a discussion of entrenched racism and imperialist politics where they did not belong. In doing so, the

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[90] Bronterre O'Brien, 'To the Unrepresented People of Great Britain and Ireland!', *NS,* 08/09/1838, p4. As Hanley notes, O'Brien in particular saw little disparity between Chattel slavery and wage slavery. Ryan Hanley, 'Slavery and the Birth of Working-Class Racism in England, 1814-1833,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 26 (2016), pp. 103-123, p. 122.

[91] 'Anti-Slavery Meeting at Norwich – Interference from the Chartists (from *The Times*)', *NS,* 28/11/1840, p. 2.

[92] Hanley, 'Slavery and the Birth of Working-Class Racism in England, 1814-1833', p. 122.

[93] 'Manchester – Triumph of Chartism over the Anti-Slavery Humanity-Mongers', *NS,* 12/12/1840, p. 2.

reporter enacts a sort of rhetorical blackface on the part of the Manchester Chartists. The repetition of 'white slavery' and the use of the New Poor Law as an exemplification of this perceived system was not particular to Manchester or this lecture. A report from January 1841 in Banbury, describes how 'The Poor Law Bastiles were not forgotten. […] [They] regret the many proofs of despotic slavery both at home and abroad, and pledge [… to] use exertions to put a final stop to slavery wherever it is found to exist.'[94] Again, the *Star* engages with Radical tradition in its coverage of the New Poor Law, the 'Bastiles' an obvious reference to revolutionary France. In keeping with this slightly more global outlook than that of Manchester, the *Star* acknowledges 'slavery both at home and abroad,' and accepts some issues of imperialism as well as domestic problems, compared to the Manchester Chartists silencing the lecturer. They remain, however, adamant that the abolitionist movement is not a suitable solution, again putting their agenda first and foremost: 'This meeting considers Universal Suffrage the only remedy for the total extermination of slavery.'[95]

Some months later, a meeting in Stockport further embroils the Anti Corn Law agitation in the problem of 'home slavery' and more general discontent:

> it was starvation, slavery, and hunger when in work, and not much worse when out of work; so much then, for the fallacy of the Corn Law Repealers, in stating, that the starvation and distress was caused by want of employment. Thousands upon thousands were in the greatest distress imaginable in the year 1819, and complained about the Corn Laws, and assisted in the agitation for their repeal. But what part did the manufacturers take at that time? Did they join in the cry for the big loaf? (No.) But most of them called us disaffected and rebellious, and persecuted poor Hunt, and massacred the people on the field of Peterloo.[96]

The Corn Law Repealers are emphasised here as traitors to the betterment of the general public, dispelling the 'fallacy' of their argument by calling again upon a shared radical memory, particularly the tragedy of Peterloo. The Chartist claim that the number of sufferers being in the 'thousands upon thousands' compared with the small concentration of power of the 'manufacturers,' whose numbers are not represented, is emphasised to make the class disparity clear. The *Star* once again brings up issues of truth and newsworthiness in their argument against the Corn Law repealers. 'Free trade, in the way that the Plague were advocating, was one of the greatest humbugs that was ever brought before the public.' The lecturer furthermore brings the idea of decay and poison by adopting a common insult used by Chartists against the

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[94] 'Banbury', *NS,* 02/01/1841, p. 1.
[95] *Ibid*, p. 1.
[96] 'Stockport', *NS*, 03/04/1841, p. 1.

Anti Corn Law League, the wordplay of changing 'League' to 'Plague.' Like 'humbug,' by June 1841 'Plague' had become *Northern Star* shorthand for the ACLL. A report from Manchester states that 'information having been received that the 'Plague' were again mustering their Irish forces for the election, that the Chartists of Manchester would forgo their intention of bringing forward candidates at this election, in order that no pretext for massacre may be afforded to the bloodthirsty villains,' while in the same issue a correspondent from Stockport reports that 'the 'Plague' men seem to have profited by their lesson, and the people are suffered to assemble, and disperse peaceably.'[97] These shorter reports effectively use the label of 'plague' as shorthand not only for the ACLL but for the ACLL's arguments, assuming the *Star's* readers have familiarity with the organisation's 'tricks.' Support or criticism for corn law repeal varied between localities, but Paul Pickering and Alex Tyrell have argued that Anti-Corn Law agitation must be seen in the wider context of reform. An "uncomfortable reality" of Corn Law repeal agitation was that, 'on many occasions employers and employees stood on opposite sides during industrial disputes.'[98] The application of 'humbug' and 'plague' to middle-class Corn Law Repealers is loaded with class tensions, the opposition to disparagements of the working-classes as 'unwashed.' In addition to the generally unpleasant and unhealthy connotations of 'plague' being transferred to the ACLL, the use of 'plague' as a label furthermore suggests a tainting of the movement, that the support of it is at the detriment of agitation for the Charter.

For the *Northern Star,* the underlying problem with Chartist-adjacent reforms was not the actual impetus behind the campaigns: as we have seen, activists argued that emancipation and fair conditions were to be strived for. The Charter was supposed to be the overarching solution for all of these issues: by extending the franchise to working-class men, more support could theoretically be drawn for these progressive movements in parliament, killing two birds with one stone. The fact that both the Abolitionist and Corn Law Repeal movements were predominantly middle-class added insult to injury: not only were middle-class elector activists valued more highly than the larger number of working-class activists, but in professing to speak for the oppressed denied agency and independence to those who felt so aligned with the Chartist movement for these reasons. Peter Gurney notes that the same middle-class supporters of Corn

[97] 'Manchester', 'Stockport', *NS* 26/06/1841, p. 1.
[98] Paul Pickering and Alex Tyrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000), p. 141.

Law repeal were often also advocates of free trade,[99] which would rely on the exploitation of labourers in order to keep prices in demand. The emergence of these arguments in the pivotal years of 1840-1842 is intertwined with the development of what Feargus O'Connor called 'whole hog' Chartism, and strives for other smaller Chartisms such as Temperance Chartism and the Land Plan in order to assert independence and individual control. The language of antagonism and of alignment respectively used by Chartists about the Anti Corn Law League and Abolitionist movements created their own shared community rhetorics. The rhetoric of slavery and emancipation co-opted by the Chartists in order to portray themselves as 'white' or 'home slaves' was part of a transatlantic conversation, and, as scholars such as Angela Davis have noted, influenced debate in the United States around the same time: 'noting that they saw the white worker in the North [of the US], his or her status as "free" labourer notwithstanding, was no different from the enslaved "worker" in the South: both were victims of economic exploitation.'[100] The rhetoric, ranging in severity from mild comparisons to 'breaking chains' of class legislation to the sooty 'black faces and black hands' of white Mancunian factory workers, suggests a unification of white British Chartists with their colonised contemporaries throughout the rest of the British empire, who they perceived as sharing the same conditions of political freedom. The Anti Corn Law League, by comparison, were represented in the pages of the *Star* not as activists engaged in an adjacent reform but traitors to previous generations of radicals by wilfully ignoring the bigger problem of disenfranchisement and discontent. According to the *Northern Star,* the only solution to these issues was 'the Charter, and No Surrender!'

Conclusion

The pages of the *Star*, shaped by its readership and activist community, demonstrate a breadth of activity and interest. As we have seen, the reporting gives us a flavour of a wealth of activities, created through various modes of writing and expression, from the appropriation of a prisoner's love letter to his wife, to step-by-step guides to joining a land plan, descriptions of grand openings for small spaces, to the imposition of a rhetorical blackface onto a crowd of

[99] Peter Gurney, 'Languages of Democracy in the Chartist Movement,' *Journal of Modern History* (2014), pp. 566-602, p. 585.
[100] Angela Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Vintage, 1981), p. 41. See also Clare Midgley, 'Anti-Slavery and Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Britain,' *Gender & History,* 5:3 (1993), pp. 343-362.

white workers. As Eileen Yeo has noted, 'Chartism tended to use organisational forms that were multipurpose.'[101]

The creation of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column allowed not only for speedy reading but put Chartist activity front and centre of the *Star*, defining 'front-page news' long before this became standard practice for newspapers. On the page, we see regional and local groups of Chartists placed together, unified by the common theme of Chartist activity, allowing for direct comparison between different activisms and activities. The use of the periodical format in this way demonstrates the parallels between the page and the crowd, the assembly of topics and speakers. Helpful both for contemporary readers and future historians, the column offers a comprehensive overview of what is happening and where. The *Star*'s definitions of 'Chartist' activity are made evident, including social events such as tea parties and soirees, and lectures and processions. We begin to see a practical guide to Chartist activism. Further to this we see how the *Star* defines how other reforms can be seen to be related or disparate to Chartism; with initiatives such as Temperance and Co-Operation blending with the movement as a kind of practical methodology in itself. If these Chartist-adjacent activities can be used to help the progress of the Charter, they should be: by not spending money on taxed beer one can not only contribute ideas but contribute financially to the Chartist economy, either at a Chartist co-op store to benefit the community, to buy an issue of the *Northern Star* or other radical paper, to donate to the Victim Fund, or to subscribe to the Land Plan. The emphasis on exclusive dealing within Temperance and Co-operative Chartisms allowed working-class activists with little disposable income to exercise some degree of agency in their futures, and furthermore, actively exclude the middle-class 'shopocrats' by whom they, in turn, felt excluded. In the reported disputes between Chartists and the Anti-Corn Law League, as well as middle-class slavery abolitionists, this politics of inclusion and exclusion continues on a larger ideological scale, through preserved writing. While participation in a local Chartist economy had immediate effects, these were smaller, on a personal scale: in the written disputes there is a legacy of ideas and rejection of those who the Chartists, and specifically the *Star*, felt were detracting from their more pressing cause. The cumulative effect of these is the creation of a larger culture of reform in which the *Northern Star* aimed to become dominant. In absorbing aspects of different reform agitations and cultures the *Star* and its readership were able to curate the ideal picture of activism, asserting a right to participate on several different levels and furthermore, establish

[101] Yeo, 'Some Practices and Problems' (1982), p. 351-2.

the voice of the *Star* as an authority between the readership community and the media community at large.

Chapter Four: The *Northern Star*, Literature, and Reviews

Introduction

REVIEWS

THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN: exhibiting her Natural, Civil, and Political Claims to a Share of the Legislative and Executive Power of the State. By R. J. Richardson, Author of the Black Book, Rights of Englishmen, &c. &c. Edinburgh: John Duncan, 114, High-street ; John Cleave, London ; Heywood, Manchester.

This is a most able publication.

A SECOND LETTER TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL, on the Plan of the Society for the Civilization of Africa. By Sir John Stephen. London ; Saunders and Otley. 1840.

This very able and well written pamphlet is in reply to 'Remarks by an anonymous writer,' who, it seems, is not inimical to the objects of the African Society, but dissents from the plans proposed by Sir Fowell Buxton and the Committee.

THE DOOM OF TOIL; a Poem, by an Ambassador in Bonds. Sunderland: Williams and Binns.

This is an effort of the imprisoned muse of one of the best hearted Chartists of whom we know anything.

THE SUNDAY SCHOLAR. Published Monthly, Heywood, Manchester.

This is a new candidate for public favour, and, as far as we can judge by a single number, is calculated to do considerable service in giving it a right direction to the minds of those for whose especial benefit it is intended.

THE CORN LAWS, AND THE NATIONAL DEBT; or the Parson's Dream, and the Queen's Speech. By a SOMERSETSHIRE CLERGYMAN. London: John Green, 121, Newgate-Street. 1841.

This is a well written and sensible little pamphlet.

THE CHARTIST WARBLER. By THOMAS HAIG, Kinross, Perth. Printed at the *Chronicle* Office. 1841.

This is a collection of patriotic songs, recitations, &c., by a Scotch Chartist, who is desirous that justice and truth should be universally diffused.[1]

Just as the *Northern Star* demonstrated its commitment to its readers, it asserted itself within publication networks too. As was practice at the time, the *Star* reviewed literature sent to the

[1] 'Reviews', *NS,* 30/01/1841, p. 4.

editorial team, encompassing a variety of materials, from books to pamphlets, poetry to periodicals. A large proportion of the material reviewed was periodicals, significant not only because of the popularity of periodicals during the Victorian period, but also due to the continual nature of the format. Periodicals, Margaret Beetham argues, are an unusual genre; each issue (unlike a bound novel or singular pamphlet) is part of a cohesive whole, and relates to previous and future parts of the periodical.[2] We can therefore see periodicals reviewing each other as a kind of professional dialogue, through which they mutually negotiate their authority among readers and readers of other periodicals. In this chapter, I will argue that in the *Northern Star*, as a Chartist newspaper, the literature and reviews column was employed as a method of actively engaging with professional publishing networks as well as enabling readers' interaction with a variety of reading materials, all contained within the pages and 4*d* price of the *Star*.

Almost every periodical examined in this chapter had its own literature and reviews column, of a similar sort. As many including Laurel Brake writes, it was standard practice for both the content of articles and professional reviewers to be largely anonymous. The practice of sending a publication to be reviewed made business sense, especially for new titles, as it represented an opportunity for free advertising. Suspiciously flattering 'puff pieces' were common complaints of periodicals from the 1830s, with reviewers abusing anonymity in order to 'praise the work of friends and damn that of enemies.'[3] The use of anonymous reviewing allowed earlier papers to keep opinion pieces within the house style, creating a sense of homogeneity and cohesion between potentially disparate articles in the same publication for the benefit of the consumer.[4] As part of this, actual review content of articles was often minimised in order to prioritise lengthy quotations from select articles; such 'scissors-and-paste' journalism offered readers the chance to 'try before you buy'.[5] In the last decade, digital reading practices have encouraged a surge of interest in the 'scissors-and-paste' journalism practices of the Victorian period, especially in international contexts. However, much of this work,

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[2] Beetham, 'Towards a theory of the periodical' (1990), p. 23.

[3] Laurel Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges*: *Journalism, Gender, and Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), p. 20.

[4] Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges* (1994), p. 57.

[5] Catherine Feely defines 'scissors-and-paste' journalism as the practice 'of excerpting from or recycling of articles from other publications,' from 'agreed syndication to unacknowledged piracy.' Feely notes that in the 1820s and 1830s this was adopted by the radical unstamped press and then by literary miscellanies. It is in this latter context the *Star* seems to use reprints, whether acknowledged or not. ''Scissors-and-Paste' Journalism,' in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 561.

notably by Bob Nicholson and Stephan Pigeon, corresponds to the rise of telegraphy and expansion of railway networks from the 1860s onwards.[6] Early Victorian *review* culture, compared with news, relied less on this 'scissors-and-paste' approach to news and information, but largely depended on the style of the publication, choosing pieces for relevance. Indeed, it is partially because of the rise of periodicals as an industry, that 'the growth in the reading public had naturally resulted in a larger market for books, enabling publishers to buy more manuscripts and to pay less for them,' lessening the influence of wealthy patrons who had funded the print industry so heavily in the eighteenth century.[7] The shift towards the serialisation of popular books partially relied on positive reviews, so that readers would want to buy the next part. The affordability of periodicals, as we have seen previously, was essential to the Chartist movement (and the *Star's* readers), and reflects a wider pattern within the industry. Catherine Seville's work on the 1842 Copyright Act explores the issue of reprinting within the periodical industry through the case study of the Society for Diffusion of Useful Knowledge [SDUK], a middle-class organisation which sought for their own ideas of 'useful knowledge' to trickle down the working classes, principally through the circulation of their *Penny Magazine*, part of the burgeoning self-help movement of the mid-nineteenth century.[8] Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, copyright of material published in the *Penny Magazine* was 'usually assigned outright to the SDUK,' enabling them as the proprietors of the magazine to print for their own use.[9] Thus, *Penny Magazine* reviews could reproduce lengthy extracts of literature and minimise any of the usual copyright tax or legal issues. As a result, prices of the magazine could remain low, offering SDUK a potentially wider readership for its middle-class ideals. The variety of publications reviewed by the *Star*, as exemplified in the above epigraph, still suggests a level of discernment for the *Star's* readership community: the titles' references are not light reading or Sunday amusements, but rather all engage in politics in some way, whether poetry, periodical, or pamphlet. Even the *Sunday Scholar* is not recommended as recreation, but as a 'service' by which the *Star*'s readers can educate themselves. Not only does this suggest the *Star*'s mediation of literary culture for its readership, but it also demonstrates

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[6] Bob Nicholson, ''You Kick the Bucket; We Do the Rest!': Jokes and the Culture of Reprinting in the Transatlantic Press,' *Journal of Victorian Culture,* 17:3 (2012), pp. 273–86; Stephan Pigeon, 'Steal it, Change it, Print it: Transatlantic Scissors-and-Paste Journalism in the *Ladies' Treasury,* 1857–1895,' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 22:1 (2017), pp. 24-39.

[7] Catherine Seville, *Literary Copyright Reform in Early Victorian England: The Framing of the 1842 Copyright Act* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 26.

[8] Seville, *Ibid.,* pp. 105-109.

[9] Seville, *Ibid*, p. 108.

its place within publishing and activist networks, the *Sunday Scholar* being published by Abel Heywood of Manchester, agent for the *Northern Star*.

It is significant the *Star* was born from a culture of access to literacy for the working classes: had taxes been higher, it may have been as short-lived as many other Chartist titles. Discussions around the 1842 Copyright Act included concerns about a potential rise in taxes, thus pricing reprinted material out of the reach of the working class.[10] The *Star*'s price of 4½*d* per issue allowed it to contain news and discussion, the driving force behind its production and consumption. The Newspaper and Stamp Duties Act was one of the 'Six Acts' passed following the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, enforcing a tax of 4*d* on all periodical publications in an attempt to clamp down on periodicals publishing 'opinion' masquerading as news.[11] The Stamp was not only a concept but a visual signifier, applied to every newspaper sold by the Stamp Office. The 'taxes on knowledge' were finally reduced to 1*d* in 1836, effectively encouraging the development of the *Northern Star* as a stamped newspaper in 1837, and enabling it to publish current affairs and maintain a regular print schedule.[12] This was significant, but unique in the Chartist literary network. Monthly magazines, including some progressive titles, were often more expensive as they were longer in the number of pages as well as the time that passes between the 'new' information being published. Likewise, 'circulars' had smaller readerships and were confined to specific communities; thus, though they could minimise prices, they were unable to publish regular news as opposed to opinions and essays. The weekly frequency of the *Star* furthermore granted it the ability to publish a greater variety of reviews, and to define its house style as that which might appeal to a Chartist-oriented, working-class readership. The 'Literature & Reviews' column provides a window into the business of the periodical industry in the 1840s, providing contemporary readers with a selection of interesting and relevant material. The column not only enables, but publicly demonstrates engagement with literary, political, and informational cultures both by readers and by the *Star* itself, in terms of consumption and production, claiming what I define as a kind of literary citizenship.

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[10] Seville, *Ibid.,* p. 89.

[11] James Chandler, *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 43.

[12] Martin Hewitt, *Dawn of the Cheap Press: The End of the 'Taxes on Knowledge'* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 5-8.

1. Comrades and Contemporaries, 1838-1843

Commencing in January 1838, it is telling that some of the first periodicals mentioned in the 'Literature & Reviews' column of the *Northern Star* are temperance periodicals. Describing the *Hull Temperance Pioneer,* the *Star* notes that,

> the power of the press is all but invincible when properly exercised and skilfully directed. […] We hail with great pleasure the appearance of the numerous periodicals which are now devoted to the service of the best interests of society, in the cause of temperance; amongst which the one before us bids fair to hold a distinguished rank.[13]

Likewise, although *Livesey's Moral Reformer,* 'reached us too late for special notice this week,' it is nevertheless acknowledged that 'Mr. Livesey's name is a guarantee that its columns will be devoted to the best interests of the whole community, and especially of the working classes.'[14] While the *Star* may have advocated temperance in its news columns, such glowing reviews of alternative papers suggest a business relationship, or the apparent risk of losing readers unless such reviews were reciprocated. The *Star*'s Leeds contemporaries, the *Leeds Mercury* and the *Leeds Times,* furthermore, participated in periodical review culture, but not like-for-like genres. Neither the *Mercury,* the (Leeds) *Times*, *Intelligencer,* or the *Northern Star* appear in each other's pages except to correct or disparage a point made by the other. Furthermore, such pages, and those of other local or provincial newspapers, do not appear in any of their 'literature and reviews' columns. The cause for this is obvious: they are not only contemporaries, but competitors in the Leeds news marketplace. For each of these periodicals to include material in its 'literature and reviews' column, the items reviewed must offer something different, lest they lose sales to a competitor.

As we have seen in chapter three, the early years of the *Northern Star* were immersed in a wider culture of activism, including associated movements such as Temperance and Co-Operative. In addition to this, the *Star* emerged out of a culture of protest at the 'taxes on knowledge,' with publisher Joshua Hobson having previously been imprisoned for running an unstamped paper.[15] Emerging at the end of 1837, the *Star* was born into a tradition of radical

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[13] 'Literature & Reviews', *NS*, 06/01/1838, p. 7. The *Hull Temperance Pioneer* was an unstamped eight-page penny circular of the Hull Temperance Society, edited by R. Firth and published by Robert Gardham, Hull. Issued monthly, it ran from 1837 to 1845.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 7.

[15] Stanley Chadwick, *'A Bold and Faithful Journalist': Joshua Hobson, 1810-1876* (Huddersfield: H. Charlesworth & Co., Kirklees Libraries and Museums Service, 1976), p. 20. Chadwick also notes that Hobson's unstamped *Voice of the West Riding* often contained reprints from '*Cobbett's 'Political Register'*, the '*True Sun'* – 'the only truly honest daily paper' – and the '*New York Gazette'* – message of Andrew Jackson, President of the

publications, and a newly established, specifically Chartist press which included titles such as the *Northern Liberator* (Oct. 1837, [*NL*]), the (Scottish) *Chartist Circular* (Aug. 1839, [*CC*]), and the *English Chartist Circular and Temperance Record* (1840, [*ECC*]).[16] While reviewing other periodicals was standard practice within the periodical industry, the *Northern Star* demonstrates an uncommon level of collegiality and camaraderie in its reviews of other specifically radical papers. In the fairly small market of Chartist periodicals, however, this seems an odd business strategy, running the potential risk of losing readers (and income) to other radical periodicals. In this section I will explore the ideological and business decisions behind the *Star*'s reviews of other radical periodicals, identifying a structure to the radical print network in the *Star*'s formative years.

Ideology of Radical Reviews

While 'Literature & Reviews' were standard practice for many Victorian periodicals, what is significant about the *Northern Star*'s reviews of its radical contemporaries is that none are reciprocated in surviving records. Of a total of 102 individual periodical titles referenced by the *Star* in only the 'Literature & Reviews' column, twenty-three can be confidently identified as Radical papers. The definition of 'radical' I use in this chapter refers to early-Victorian reform culture more broadly, as outlined in chapter three, and is therefore inclusive of explicitly Chartist titles as well as Temperance, Owenite, and generally non-Whig or Tory political papers. Rebuttals of articles or reports made by other papers, as remains standard journalistic practice, appear in the *Star*'s radical contemporaries, but none like the reviews the *Star* itself published. For example, *Northern Liberator* write that 'our zealous and worthy contemporary, the *Northern Star*,'

> has bestowed upon us this week, a couple of additional columns with remarks of a somewhat desultory kind, of which mark of attention, of course, we are not inclined to

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United States,' who was a particular revolutionary icon of the Chartist movement (p. 17). John Halstead notes that Hobson had become good friends with the London Chartists, including John Cleave, over their shared experiences during the 'war of the unstamped' (pp. 92-3). The *Star*'s literary endeavours from 1843-44 should therefore be considered in light of this. John Halstead, ''The Charter and Something More!' The Politics of Joshua Hobson, 1810-1876,' in *The Charter Our Right! Huddersfield Chartism Reconsidered,* ed. by John A. Hargreaves (Huddersfield: Huddersfield Local History Society, 2018), pp. 83-122.

[16] See Owen R. Ashton, Robert Fyson, Stephen Roberts, eds., *The Chartist Movement: A New Annotated Bibliography* (London: Mansell, 1995), p. 64, 65, 67. The *Northern Liberator and Champion* (1837-40) was a stamped Radical eight-page 4½*d* weekly, edited by Augustus Harding Beaumont, and published by Henry Gibb in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The unstamped Radical halfpenny weekly tabloid, the *Chartist Circular* was edited by William Thomson and published by W. & W. Miller in Glasgow (1839-1842). While it contained eight pages, the pages measured half the size of the *Star*, *Northern Liberator,* or *English Chartist Circular*.

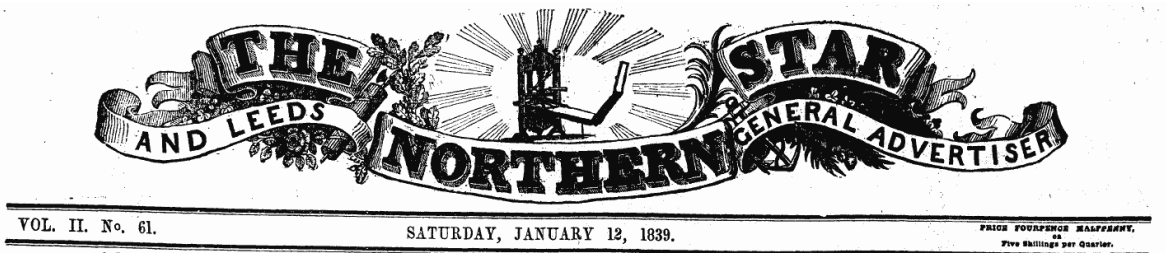
> comment. The editor of the *Star*, will, by this time, have seen that he had inadvertently misunderstood, in some degree, the purport and language of our article headed, peace or war.[17]

The *Star*, arguably the best-selling of the few explicitly Chartist periodicals of the time, is addressed with excessive politeness in the *Liberator*'s rebuttal, resulting in a sarcastic overtone.[18] This is representative of other Chartist rebuttals to the *Star*, from Oastler in his *Fleet Papers* to the Scottish *Chartist Circular*. Meanwhile, reviewing practices of these radical contemporaries tend to focus on pamphlets and books, again differing from the *Star*'s periodical-heavy review strategy. I argue that the *Star*, in an attempt to define Chartist identity, sought to create a sense of authority within the Radical press network by engaging with radical traditions: it may have been the best-selling paper but, ideologically, it had to match its Chartist ethos of equality and co-operation.

As we have seen previously, the *Northern Star* was very much engaged with the traditions of British radicalism. What was special about the *Star* was that prized stamp, which allowed O'Connor, Hill, and Hobson to print news. That said, it engaged with the tradition of the radical press and its unstamped heritage. As Aled Jones notes in his analysis of the Chartist press as an influential genre of Victorian periodical, this was best conveyed visually. In his comparison of Chartist newspaper mastheads in 1839, Jones notes that the *Charter* uses the iconography of a banner held between two labourers, one holding a hammer and the other a sickle, with clasped hands over the top. Likewise, the *Northern Star*'s limited illustrated masthead from 1839 is particularly expressive, as described by Jones:

> The printing press casts its light, the fasces and anchor are emblems respectively of power and unity, and hope (the altar also in some cases of Christianity), and the oak, leek and thistle suggest the national reach of the paper, with the rose (presumably white) nestling under the word 'Leeds' being a reference to its Yorkshire home.[19]

Figure 12: The *Northern Star's* 1839 decorated masthead. (12/01/1839, p. 1).



[17] 'Northern Star', *NL,* 21/11/1840, p. 4.
[18] The *Star's* circulation peaked at around 80,000 copies per week in 1839, and still enjoyed a circulation of around 12,500 at the end of 1842, according to Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007).
[19] Aled G. Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture' (2005), p. 4.

This elaborate masthead, though only used for thirty-three issues of the *Star*, is indicative of the rich iconographic traditions of radical political culture. Jones correctly notes the similarity of the printing press in the centre of the masthead to that of Henry Hetherington's famous unstamped *Poor Man's Guardian,* 'established, contrary to the "law" to try the power of "might" against "right"'.[20] Hetherington's masthead is simpler, but the printing press is encircled by a banner reading 'knowledge is power,' the fresh print on the bed, declaring 'liberty of the press.'

Figure 13: The *Poor Man's Guardian* masthead (10/12/1831, p. 1).


THE
POOR MAN'S GUARDIAN,
A Weekly Paper
FOR THE PEOPLE.
PUBLISHED IN DEFIANCE OF "LAW," TO TRY THE POWER OF "RIGHT" AGAINST "MIGHT."
No. 25. Saturday, December 10, 1831.
Friends, Brothers, and Fellow-Countrymen.

The imagery of these mastheads furthermore corresponds to the platform culture of radical politics, and thus Chartism, the banners delicately shaded to represent folds of fabric like those banners carried in processions. The explicitly Chartist periodicals reviewed by the *Star* continue the use of slogans, borrowed from platform culture: the *Northern Liberator*'s second issue is underlined by the quotation 'we should advance the multitude' by Herodotus, the Ancient Greek philosopher, the title of whose book 'The Histories' would translate in English to 'inquiry.' This motto emphasises the importance of literacy as 'liberation' in the *Northern Liberator*'s own name, engaging with the tradition of the unstamped press widening access to literature.

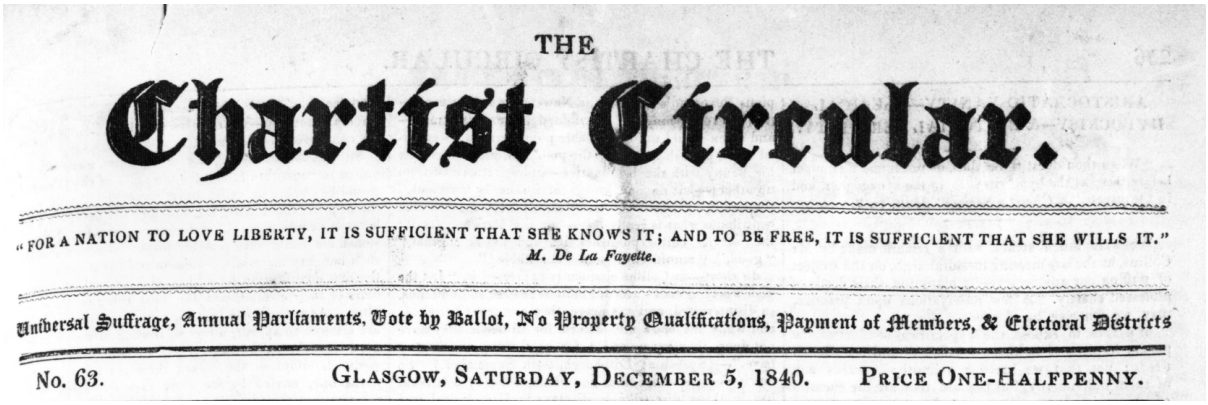
Figure 14: *Northern Liberator* masthead (19/12/1840, p. 1).

[20] Stanley Chadwick, *'A Bold and Faithful Journalist': Joshua Hobson, 1810-1876*, p. 18.


The Northern Liberator
AND CHAMPION.
VOL. IV. No. 165. NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, 89, SIDE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1840 PRICE 4½D.
TENTH WEEK IN QUARTER. "WE SHOULD ADVANCE THE MULTITUDE."—HERODOTUS. PER QUARTER 3s., IN ADVANCE 4s. 6d.

Likewise, the *Chartist Circular*'s title is followed, in all capitals, with the words, 'For a nation to love Liberty, it is sufficient that she knows it; and to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it,' attributed to American revolutionary the Marquis de Lafayette. It is further underlined, as if for clarification, by the six points of the People's Charter.

Figure 15: Masthead of the *Chartist Circular* (Glasgow) (05/12/1840, p. 1).


THE
Chartist Circular.
"FOR A NATION TO LOVE LIBERTY, IT IS SUFFICIENT THAT SHE KNOWS IT; AND TO BE FREE, IT IS SUFFICIENT THAT SHE WILLS IT."
M. De La Fayette.
Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, Vote by Ballot, No Property Qualifications, Payment of Members, & Electoral Districts
No. 63. GLASGOW, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1840. PRICE ONE-HALFPENNY.

While these periodicals do not connect with the iconography of radical tradition, their appropriation of Classical and Revolutionary quotes very much signals a new generation of literate radicalism, which Ian Heywood argues is the distinguishing feature of Chartism compared with previous radical movements.[21] The other examples from which I will draw include the *English Chartist Circular,* established in 1841, whose first issue notes the six points of the Charter as a strapline, again in capital letters, but by issue five has apparently abandoned its commitment to 'equal electoral districts' and features instead the other five points of the Charter. By volume two (issue 132) editor John Cleave, a prominent figure in London radical publishing, had opted for a new masthead, featuring an illustration of an Eagle sat beneath a banner reading 'E Pluribus Unum,' which translates from Latin as 'out of many, one.' This

[21] Ian Haywood, *Working Class Fiction: From Chartism to* Trainspotting (Tavistock: Northcote House, 1997), p. 4.

illustration and motto combination having been immortalised in the United States shortly after the American revolution, the sixth point of the Charter reappeared and all text in italics beneath.[22]

Figure 16: The *English Chartist Circular,* vol. 2 masthead (issue 134, 1840. University of Leeds holdings).

Although these periodicals do not reciprocate the *Star*'s often glowing reviews of their work, it is evident that there is a community identity established through maintenance of radical traditions and iconography, be it the points of the People's Charter or the explicit semantic field of revolution shared by all.

The variety of papers reviewed by the *Star*, even within this small subset, illuminate part of the *Star*'s ideology of reviewing 'like-for-like' papers. From the beginning, the *Star* was a unique publication: it was a broadsheet, it had eight pages, it was stamped. The *Star* most often reviewed temperance papers, the odd Chartist paper, and Owenite or other radical circulars, with the *Star* encapsulating these progressive ideals while the papers it reviews are generally (with the exception of the *New Moral World*) smaller, and singularly themed.[23] By reviewing these smaller papers, the *Northern Star* establishes itself as a big name within the community of reform, and this matches the emphasis on regional news and small community activism in the early years of its publication, prior to the establishment of its 'Chartist Intelligence' column. The overlaps in readerships and communal reading practices, furthermore, provide support as to why the editors of the *Star* might ideologically wish to review other periodicals; as Jones notes, 'they openly acknowledged that the entire "brunt of

[22] Cleave had also served in the Navy and at some point during this time explored America before returning home. I. J. Prothero, Joel H. Wiener, 'John Cleave', *Dictionary of Labour Biography*, vol. VI (1982), p. 59.

[23] The unstamped *New Moral World: A London Weekly Publication, Developing the Principles of the Rational System of Society* (1834-1845) leaned radical, and was the official periodical of the Owenite movement. Launched by Robert Owen, it was a weekly penny (later twopenny) publication based in London, later edited by George Fleming and, for a time, published by Joshua Hobson of the *Star* office. Malcolm Chase, 'New Moral World' in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 444.

the battle of Democracy" lay not on their shoulders alone, although at no time did they cede to any other organ the supremacy they claimed over the democratic press.'[24] While the *Star* was certainly not adverse to the inclusion of Chartist merchandise, including 'Chartist Blacking' in its advertisement slots, its stance on advertisements of other papers is not fixed. An article from December 1838, entitled 'Newspaper Prostitution,' condemns the reviewing and reporting practices of other periodicals for dishonesty:

> A regular newspaper-reader requires no very extraordinary insight into the arcana of the broadsheet to enable him to detect a number of paragraphs which, under the assumed guise of public intelligence, are just neither more nor less than so many advertisements, inserted and paid for by the parties whose private interests they are intended to serve.[25]

The *Star* further complains that, 'This, in technical phrase, is the *puff-paragraph-advertisement*, a class which comprises the great bulk of the paragraph-advertisement commodity, and rarely deceives even the most casual reader,-- not, however, in virtue of excess of honesty, but, even through very attenuation of deception.' It goes on to cite an example of such egregious advertising from their office-neighbour and local competitor, the *Leeds Mercury*. The literary strategies used by these Editors, the *Star* writes, are over-flowering, flattering language, in 'virtue of excess,' noting that this is more a fault of the professions than the trades. In conclusion, the *Star* asks, 'has the Mercurial puff paragraph been regularly taxed with the advertisement duty?'[26] Such 'puff pieces' are common practice in contemporary newspapers, according to the *Star*, which makes its maligning of this practice all the more interesting considering the one-sided relationship with other papers. Jones notes that the *Star* strived 'to demonstrate its lack of sectarianism by advertising from its earliest numbers Joseph Livesey's *Moral Reformer*, Cleave's *London Satirist* and Robert Owen's *New Moral World*,' but he does not state whether these appear in the clear advertisement pages, or in the 'Literature & Reviews' column.[27] In the case of the *Star*'s apparent favourite radical periodical, the *English Chartist Circular,* it appears in both, with suspiciously 'puffy' language. An article entitled 'Chartist Press' from March 1841, located between a news report and a notice of a forthcoming portrait giveaway, notes that, 'we have been watching both with interest and delight the progress hitherto of the *"English Chartist Circular"* -- a worthy compeer for its "bonny brother ayont the Tweed,"' that it is,

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[24] Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture' (2005), p. 8.
[25] 'Newspaper Prostitution', *NS,* 29/12/1838, p. 4.
[26] *Ibid,* p. 4.
[27] Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture' (2005), p. 9.

> being sought after, purchased, and read, with the avidity equal to that of starving men in search of food; while the bare offering of a large sheet, like the *Chartist Circular,* filled with sound wisdom and no trash, for one halfpenny, is enough to break the rest of tyranny.[28]

Not only does the *Star* treat the *Chartist Circular* and *English Chartist Circular* as part of a family of radical publications, but significantly for a working-class periodical, it uses the language of consumption, implicitly comparing the 'hunger' for information to those starving men who are featured in the charity appeals in the same pages, experiencing the very same poverty which the periodical now treats as a rhetorical device. This column is not a review, as the 'Literature & Reviews' column ran approximately monthly, towards the end of the month. Neither is it on the advertisement page, mixed with correspondence and 'Chartist Intelligence'. Thus, we may turn the *Star*'s accusation of prostitution back on itself: has the *Star*'s puff paragraph been taxed with the advertisement duty? While, like the advertisement of Chartist merchandise, this is suggested to be of benefit to the *Star*'s readers and to the Chartist community at large, the hypocrisy of its own 'puffery' suggests that the true reasons behind this 'puff piece' are not as co-operative and comradely as they first appear.

Business of Radical Reviews

While all these periodicals fit under the umbrella definition of radical periodicals, there are distinctions to be made. The *Star* and the *Northern Liberator,* as stamped newspapers, were the most expensive of them, costing 4½*d* per issue. In reviewing papers such as the *English Chartist Circular*, which started at one halfpenny before rising to one penny in volume two, we can identify different types of radical periodical, and thus some more business-like motives for reviewing or advertising would-be competitors. The *Chartist Circular* was one halfpenny, and Oastler's *Fleet Papers* just one penny, and this low price reflected the content within.[29] The titles 'Circular' and 'Papers' are further indicative of these *types* of periodicals: the *Chartist Circular* and *English Chartist Circular* were just that: public letters, reviews, and

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[28] 'Chartist Press', *NS*, 06/03/1841, p. 5.

[29] Richard Oastler's unstamped *Fleet Papers* (1841-44) were a series of letters, written largely to William Thornhill, his former employer at Fixby Hall, Huddersfield, and later to Sir James Graham and others, while he was imprisoned for debt. Costing 1*d* at its launch, eventually rising to 2*d*, the page size was much smaller than other radical periodicals, but stretched to 24 pages per issue. It was published by W. J. Cleaver of Baker Street, London. Oastler was a Tory-Radical, famous for his campaigns against the New Poor Law (1834) and the employment of women and children in factories, which he deemed 'Yorkshire Slavery'. See Matthew Roberts, 'Richard Oastler, Toryism, Radicalism, and the Limitations of Party, *c.*1807-46', *Parliamentary History*, 37: 2 (2018), pp. 250-273; Cecil Driver, *Tory Radical: The Life of Richard Oastler* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946).

advertisements, taking more of a news*letter* format than a news*paper* one. The *Star*, therefore, could comfortably review and even advertise these 'competing' papers with minimal risk of losing readers. The *Star* ensured that it was quite literally bigger and better than its contemporaries, both in terms of circulation and physical size. Having already expanded the printing equipment in order to keep up with demand in early 1839, the *Star* became something of a trendsetter. In a short notice entitled, 'Enlargement of the Northern Liberator,' editor John Turnbull wrote 'to the public':

> *For the great and, perhaps, not altogether deserved support which the Proprietor of this Journal has received from the Public. We wish to show by outward and visible signs, and these signs of a nature stronger than is that of mere expression, that we appreciate the support which we have received and are determined to cultivate it. We, therefore, beg respectfully to announce to our Readers and the Public in general that we are engaged in preparations for an Enlargement of this Paper. It is our intention to print it upon a Sheet similar to that of the excellent popular Journal the Northern Star, containing FORTY-EIGHT COLUMNS of Letter Press.*[30]

Through the *Liberator*'s explicit reference to the *Star*, we can speculate some cause and effect in terms of circulation and business decisions. The editor emphasises that the 'verbal' thanks they give to their readership community is not enough, but that 'outward and visible signs' could more accurately convey the thanks they wish to give. Not only does this suggest ideas around print in terms of semiotics, but also that the physical enlargement of the paper makes a visual statement, and becomes eye-catching in the newsagent's shop. As a means with which to 'cultivate' support, enlargement represents what we might now think of as a merchandising strategy, aimed at not just 'readers' but also the 'Public,' to reproduce the *Star*'s division of public and private correspondence. Further emphasising the *Liberator*'s theme of visuals, there are multiple typefaces used to create the notice: the body of the text is in italics, with the 'forty-eight columns' highlighted in an O'Connorian manner through the use of upper-case italics; the address 'To the Public' in a bold, gothic font; and the headline is in all capital letters, in three different font sizes. This combination of stylistic choices helps to distinguish the notice from all other matter on the same page of the newspaper, drawing the eye to the capital letters and italics on what would be the edge of the page. The use of the gothic font further distinguishes the notice from the 'gaudy' typeface used to head up advertisements in the paper, representing the change the *Liberator* hopes to convey in its ambitious plans to increase the columns of letterpress by 77%. Given that the *Star* and the *Liberator* at this point shared the

[30] 'Enlargement of the Northern Liberator', *NL,* 13/4/1839, p. 3. Italics original.

same price of 4½*d* per issue, the *Liberator*'s flashy announcement of its growth indicates its fear of competition: at this point it cost the same for approximately 56% of the material of the *Star,* after both had been in circulation for nearly two years. The business decisions of the *Star*, even at the basest level of size and readership, had made it a rarity even within the radical press, and it was this unique selling point that allowed it to offer reviews and advertisements for its contemporaries: the *Liberator* folded in late 1840, while the *Chartist Circular* ceased publication in 1842.

This is not to say that the *Star* didn't have weaknesses or drops in circulation. The *Liberator* was the best-selling radical paper on Tyneside, while the *Chartist Circular* had a much bigger following than the *Star* in its native Scotland.[31] Part of the *radical* reviewing practices of the *Star*, I argue, were strategic choices made to centre it comfortably within an established radical media network, both ideologically offering comradely support while keeping market competitors at bay. In the *Star*'s reviews of the *English Chartist Circular* and Oastler's *Fleet Papers,* we see what we might now identify as celebrity endorsements. Over the period 1841-1843, these are the most common radical periodicals appearing in the 'Literature & Reviews' column of the *Star*, with six reviews of the *ECC* and a whopping seventeen reviews of Oastler's *Fleet Papers*. Given the sheer volume of periodicals emerging in the early Victorian period, as well as the *Star* being situated in Leeds, the surprising hub of journalism in Yorkshire of the time, the concentration of the *Star*'s reviews of these two small titles has to be driven by business interests.

'The first number' of Oastler's *Fleet Papers* is reviewed in January 1841, and is presented in a conversational style, suggesting readers' familiarity with Oastler, and emphasising his name as a kind of 'star power' recommendation:

> we have glanced cursorily through it. The style is Oastler's own – respectful even to excess, though addressed to his bitterest enemy – benevolent and kindly, even in in its keenness—but yet keen as words can be. […] There is a P. S. as usual, containing the following announcement:--
>
> 'It is my intention that the first volume of 'The Fleet Papers' shall contain a well-executed view of Fixby Hall […] Whether I can afford those plates without any extra charge, will depend upon the circulation of these Papers.—R. O.'[32]

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[31] Joan Hugman, '"A Small Drop of Ink": Tyneside Chartism and the *Northern Liberator*,' in *The Chartist Legacy*, ed. by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts (Woodbridge: Merlin Press, 1999), pp. 24-47, p. 29.

[32] 'Oastler's Fleet Papers', *NS,* 02/01/1841, p. 4.

The *Fleet Papers* are a series of public letters to Oastler's former employer published while imprisoned – hence the name, the 'fleet,' referring to the prison near to the river. The *Star* emphasises Oastler's position as a 'gentleman radical', not unlike O'Connor, in the 'respectful' style of these public letters, personable in the 'benevolent and kindly' tone of his writing. The appended personal postscript appeals to his future readership community to ensure that he can deliver illustrations as part of the product. Oastler is very much banking on the *Star*'s network of loyal readers and supporters, as well as his celebrity status as 'Factory King' of Huddersfield.

By contrast with reviews of Oastler's periodical, the *Star*'s reviews and advertisements for the *English Chartist Circular* do not trade on the name of its editor. Mentions of John Cleave are conspicuously absent. One such testimonial from 1841 appears not in the 'Literature & Reviews' column, but with the rest of the 'original correspondence,' mysteriously signed 'A Chartist, Liverpool:'

> 'SIR—It rejoices my soul to see another number of the *[English] Chartist Circular*, which, from its tardy arrival this last week at this sink or cesspool of Toryism, I had begun to fear had gone to that bourne from which only the immediate energy of our Chartist brethren can rescue it.
>
> Every working man in the whole breadth of the land should carry the *[English] Chartist Circular* in his bosom, and read it to his dear wife and children at his meals. It is printed and composed for his benefit, and should be worn next to his heart…'[33]

The evocation of the domestic family dinner gives some indication of the intended readership for Cleave's periodical, and the importance it is assumed to hold. Once again likened to food, this periodical is implicitly described as nourishing; its 'benefit' is so insurmountable, it needs no further description. While the *Star*'s review of Oastler's periodical plays up his tone, and is more descriptive, the testimonial of the *ECC* is significant for what it does not say. There are few descriptors; instead, the correspondence relies on intense emotional imagery. By April 1842, the *Star* notes, in its 'Literature & Reviews' column, that 'it is of course needless for us to say anything to the Chartist public about the merits of this little Work. They are well and universally known.'[34] Timed to coincide with the publication of the first complete volume of the periodical, the *Star*'s review nevertheless offers some description of the *English Chartist Circular*'s contents:

> here may be found nearly all the important addresses […] issued by the Executive; a series of most valuable letters on topics connected with moral, social, and political regeneration, by Mr. T. B. Smith; many pieces form the pen of McDouall, all full of

[33] 'The English Chartist Circular, *NS,* 27/11/1841, p. 5.

[34] 'The English Chartist Circular', *NS,* 23/4/1842, p. 4.

> sound instruction and fervent exhortation; a vast mass of miscellaneous, light, and edifying reading, both prose and poetry. […] We are quite sure that we have said enough to account for the finding of this advocate and asserter of his right, on every working man's table.[35]

With the evocation of the 'table,' we once again have an assertion of the *Circular*'s ability to nourish and feed the working man, with the implicit suggestion that the working man is the patriarch of the domestic sphere. The star power of its columnists, including sometimes-*Star* contributor Dr. McDouall, is emphasised, with Cleave conspicuously in the background. Given his reputation in the radical publishing industry, it seems that it is his backing that is 'needless,' once again.[36] It is this confidence in the periodical, the notion that its benefits are 'well and universally known' that not only allows the *Star* to establish itself as something of a literary authority, but emphasises its power in the centre of the radical periodical network at this time: the unreciprocated reviews of the *ECC* suggest that the *Star* does not need to be advertised, and, likewise, its faith in the *ECC* unquestionable. It is the unsaid that is the most revealing part of the *Star's* relationship with the *ECC*: a review of the *Union*, 'a Monthly record of Moral, Social, and Educational Progress' in the same column, praises the 'spirit of calm and useful investigation' of the writing of the periodical, before providing an extract in order to 'shew our readers something of its manner.'[37] The *Union* must be read to be believed; the *English Chartist Circular* can get by on the *Star's* recommendation alone.

The *Northern Star* occupied a unique place in the radical print network of the early 1840s: from its conception it was the Chartist movement's leading source of information. Its stamp allowed it to print news not only of the movement, but of local and national interest, as well as parliamentary politics. Other radical papers, including those reviewed by the *Star*, catered more towards niche interests: among many other temperance periodicals, the *Hull Temperance Pioneer* promoted total abstinence; the *New Moral World* catered for Owenite readers, and the *Chartist Circular* specifically served Scottish Chartism. Significantly, these competing periodicals, smaller both physically and in terms of circulation figures, were not in the same league as the *Star*, being not newspapers, but what we might now think of as 'lifestyle' magazines or circulars, created by and for specific, smaller communities based around

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[35] *Ibid,* p .4.

[36] Cleave was heavily involved in the early organisation of the Chartist movement, having worked with Lovett to establish the LWMA, while his pamphlet *Self-Culture* was published in 1839 and, Tom Scriven argues, formed the intellectual basis for Chartist self-improvement culture. Scriven, *Popular Virtue*, p. 105.

[37] 'The Union', *NS,* 23/4/1842, p. 4.

interests. In these early years of the *Star*'s print run, the subtitle 'Leeds General Advertiser' cannot be forgotten. By establishing itself not only as a Chartist newspaper but as a 'Leeds General Paper', it emphasises its ability to pay advertising duty, as well as its local news focus. Through reviewing other radical periodicals, it begins to establish and subsequently reinforce itself as an authority within the early Victorian print circuit: literally the largest of the Chartist periodicals, the *Star* represents itself as unique within the wider print network, while maintaining an activist identity as reflexively defined with its readers.

2. Education & Self Help, 1844-1847

The Literature & Reviews column of the *Northern Star* was, like many periodicals of the time, a standard feature, and this column would include details of a wide range of contemporary publications. For the *Northern Star,* it would seem that just as the editors felt sure of their safety from the 'competition' of other radical periodicals, so too were they certain that the *Star* occupied a unique place in wider media culture. The *Star*, as part of the Chartist movement, advocated self-help contemporaneously with wider attitudes toward self-help at the time. The Chartist movement, however, did not understand self-help as an individual enterprise, but combined it with community effort, aiming to improve the lot of the whole of the working classes. This 'self-help' ideology, in the hands of the Chartists, translated into a dedication to improvement for all. In conjunction with Chartist platform culture and the establishment of regular lecture circuits, co-operative shops, the Chartist Land Plan, and working men's libraries, the *Northern Star* included self-help and educational texts in their 'Literature & Reviews' column. After all, the libraries needed to fill their shelves. In the *Star*'s advertisement of these educational or improving periodicals, they not only reclaimed access to swathes of information from the elite classes, but advocated literacy as the path to emancipation. The Charter, was a literary document, and the huge range of literature advocated by the *Star* suggests a wider belief in reading as a means of accessing power previously denied to working-class people.

While we have seen that the *Star* did not seem to consider its radical contemporaries to be a threat to its readership or sales figures, we must beg the same question of the variety of 'improving' texts recommended by the *Star* to its readers in later years. Reviewed texts varied in topic and title, from science and healthcare periodicals such as *The Healthian* and *Medical Times*, to literature, art, and music magazines such as the *Musical Herald*, through to the seemingly very middle-class *Simmond's Colonial Magazine* and *Mackenzie's Railway*

Timetables. The variety of texts reviewed in the 'Literature & Reviews' column is suggestive of the need among readers for affordable practical knowledge as well as mainstream entertainment and understanding of foreign and colonial affairs. The *Star* was certainly a self-identified activist periodical, but the 'Literature & Reviews' column emphasises its awareness of readers' potential desires to cultivate personal identities and to enjoy leisure time *outside* of this activism. The *Star* thus served as an all-around reference text for its working-class readers, advising on matters that would be practical and entertaining in their pursuit of the Charter.

Science and Healthcare

The *Star* reviewed a wide range of reading material very early on, including science periodicals. Titles such as the *Healthian* and the *Naturalist* make appearances throughout 1838. Reviews emphasise the style of writing, in addition to the subject matter:

> This number is the first we have seen of this valuable and interesting work. There is a great display of talent displayed in the serval articles contained in this number, especially the one on 'The Sources of Heat which Influence Climate,' and the one on 'Connexions of the Natural and the Divine Truth.[38]

> The present number has an excellent lithograph by Dr. John Latham, accompanied by a memoir written in a very chaste and elegant style. There is also a very ingenious article by Geo. Bird, Esq., 'The Singular Phenomenon connected with the Deposition of Mud in the Tray,' and 'Sketches of Ornithology' by the Editor, being an excellent series of criticisms on Mr. Gould's Work. The work is well worth the attention of the general student.[39]

Both reviews focus on the style and skill of the writing, suggesting that if they cannot be an authority on subject matter, they can at least be trusted to know good writing when they see it. The emphasis on 'talent' and the 'chaste and elegant style' of the articles referenced allows for the *Star*'s reviewers to draw on their work-based expertise in the periodical industry, their early success qualifying them to do so. Furthermore, the 'excellent lithograph' distinguishes it, perhaps from other science periodicals of the time, as a 'valuable and interesting work.' If a periodical's selling point is the information inside, we can assume that 'value' is measured in readership: the *Star*, knowing its readership well, and encouraging the educational aspirations of its readers, suggests this value does apply to 'general students' their potential shared readership.

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[38] 'The Naturalist', *NS,* 15/09/1838, p. 5.
[39] 'The Naturalist', *NS*, 13/10/1838, p. 7.

The first issue of the new year on 6th January 1844 brought the introduction of a new column, neighbour on the page next to 'Literature & Reviews', called 'Science and Art.' Like 'Literature & Reviews', this column fluctuated in its appearances, being anything from regular in January 1844, to sporadic in the spring of the same year. The column contained snippets or short columns of science news from science periodicals, suggesting that these were the science headlines of the time, small updates to keep readers abreast of developments without taking over space dedicated to Chartist news, the *Star*'s priority. Gowan Dawson and John Topham emphasise that the regular issues of the periodical were the perfect way of disseminating up-to-date scientific knowledge to the general public as well as the scientific community, generating a commercial interest in science.[40] Bernard Lightman, furthermore, states that '[b]efore 1860, many of the science journals for popular audiences encouraged their readers to participate in the scientific enterprise […] [stressing] the universal accessibility of the scientific endeavour based on the proposition that all men possessed the same capacity for understanding nature.'[41] The introductory column of 'Art and Science', for instance, includes: a report of a meeting of the Polish community of London to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Copernican system, and a short biography of Copernicus' life as described by Col. Syrza; a letter sent by 'G. Sugden' forecasting a comet's effect on the weather; a report of the 'Eruption of Etna' copied from the *Naples Journal*; and finally a longer article detailing 'The Machine at Tresavan Mine (Cornwall).' What is significant about these snippets of scientific news, and their inclusion in the *Star*, is their relevance to the Chartist agenda. A weather report is obviously practical information for the *Star*'s readers. The weather report included in one 'Science and Art' column from a January 1844 issue explains,

> the transit of comets is one of the most powerful causes for perturbation in the meteoric action of the atmosphere (as proved by those of 1840, 1841, and 1842. The thermometer was at Christmas day 50 degrees, and as the present high state of the barometer shows a great atmospheric pressure, which according to the nature of things cannot last long, then probably great depressions will follow with snow storms.[42]

The article explains why and how the comet has influenced the 'mild weather' of late, as well as what to expect based on previous instances in the readers' lifetimes. The Copernicus

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[40] Gowan Dawson and Jonathan R. Topham, 'Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical,' *Literature Compass (*2004), pp. 1-11, p. 2.
[41] Bernard Lightman, *Victorian Popularizers of Science: Designing Nature for New Audiences* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 296.
[42] 'The Comet and The Weather, *NS*, 13/01/1844, p. 7.

anniversary celebration, furthermore, was organised by the Polish refugees who had strong connections with Chartists in London, where Col. Syrza emphasised Copernicus' opposition to the 'Teutonic system in Prussia, whom [the supporters of the 'system'] he considered foes to Poland and enemies to the Prussian people,' as well as his ability as a 'civil engineer, who constructed hydraulic machines for supplying the town with water, and so forth.'[43] Syrza does not make direct comparisons between Copernicus and the Chartists. However, the detail with which he mentions his political opinions in a lecture on the history of astronomy, as well as his reference to his civil engineering project on water is directed at an audience who would go on to benefit greatly from the Sanitation enquiries begun around this time. The 'Machine at Tresavan Mine,' essentially an early elevator, meanwhile, seems to be directed at the Trades. It concludes that the '"Man-engine," as it is termed, will have the happy effect of extending the average duration of the miner's life, and of relieving him of many of the ills under which he has been compelled by his necessities to drag out a laborious existence.'[44] While science news may initially be used to fill space during less active periods of the Chartist movement, it is still chosen carefully to cater to a Chartist readership. We also see the *Star* engaging in the practice of 'scissors-and-paste' journalism which would go on to become a mainstay of journalism and news circulation in the period.[45] Significantly, however, the *Star* credits those newspapers from which it prints extracts. The article about Mount Etna, for example, is credited to the *Naples Journal,* while subsequent columns cite the *Globe*, *Herapath's Journal,* and the *Medical Times*. Through the practice of attribution and citation, we see the *Star* providing references for readers to potentially follow up, as well as taking care to avoid another prosecution for seditious libel.

Those science periodicals with the most appearances in the *Star*'s 'Literature & Reviews' column suggest, however, not the kind of science news shared in the 'Science and Art' column, but practical references for the average self-improving Chartist. *The Healthian* has by 1844 rebranded itself as the *New Age and Concordium Gazette,* and makes no fewer than nine appearances in the column in 1844, although it is not always shown in a positive light. While usually praised for 'interesting' articles on topics such as 'the vegetable diet,' as well as radical-leaning issues such as co-operative societies; it is at times seen as impractical

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[43] 'Copernicus', *NS*, 13/01/1844, p. 7.
[44] 'The Machine at Tresavan Mine (Cornwall)', *NS*, 13/01/1844, p. 7.
[45] As Feely states, 'scissors-and-paste' was usually used by provincial newspapers to provide news of surrounding areas or national news, but was not often cited. See Feely, '"Scissors-and-paste" journalism,' (2009), p. 561.

and overly evangelical. In April 1844, for instance, the *Star* decries an article on 'Sexual Communion' (or rather, abstinence therefrom) as being,

> in our humble opinion, opposed to man's nature, and therefore opposed to all that is substantially virtuous and truly wise. Such monkish notions may suit a few fanatics, and ascetics, like the half-knaves, half-dupes of the middle ages. If our friends, the Concordists, would stick to showing how the millions might be released from the accursed rule of kings, priests, and profit-mongers; they would do much more good.[46]

While the *Star* does not comment on the scientific content of the extracts reprinted in the Science column, focusing instead on stylistic points, they do feel a sense of authority on this subject, advising the *New Age* to abandon its focus on mysticism. The original article is a far cry from the *New Age*'s usual brand of popular science, taking an extremely religious stance against sex, arguing that 'the true order of human progress in the Divine life, is association upon the principle of entire abstinence *from all sensual gratification…*'[47] The *Star*'s editors clearly feel that they are sufficient authorities on 'man's nature' to 'protest' the article, which, significantly, they choose not to quote from. The *Star*'s robust defence of 'man's nature' does not mention its relationship with advertisers for the self-help book, 'The Silent Friend of Human Frailty,' which allows the reader to diagnose and treat sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive issues, nor its endorsement of 'Cordial Balm of Syracum' and 'Perry's Specific Purifying Pills,' whose open advertisements of treatment for syphilis and gonorrhoea suggest a frank attitude to sexual activity among the *Star's* readers (and staff) compared with other 'self-help' journals.[48] Tom Scriven has noted that sexual expression formed part of the bawdier culture of early Chartism, leftover from the late eighteenth-century, citing the Ashton Female Political Union's assertion that '"no man shall ever enjoy our hands, our hearts, or share our beds" if they were not Chartists.'[49] In spite of some interest in mesmerism covered by the *New Age*, the *Northern Star* draws a line, confusing its attitudes towards sexual liberation and an emphasis on nuclear family and domesticity within its self-help agenda.

The *Medical Times* and its annual almanacs make more frequent appearances, especially around Christmas time. A notice from November 1844 contains lengthy extracts from a biography of Dr. Lettsom, 'who rose, from being an apothecary's apprentice, to be one

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[46] 'The New Age, and Concordium Gazette', *NS,* 06/04/1844, p. 3.
[47] 'Sexual Communion', *The New Age and Concordium Gazette*, 1.16 (01/04/1844), p. 202.
[48] 'The Silent Friend', 'Perry's Specific Purifying Pills', *NS,* 07/12/1844, p. 2.
[49] Scriven, *Popular Radicalism* (2017), p. 63.

of the most eminent medical men of his day.'[50] The *Star*'s review concludes that 'the large circulation and increasing popularity of the *Medical Times* is its best recommendation; but we may hasten to add that it has our hearty good word, and to our readers both medical and non-medical, we heartily recommend it.' The biography, like that of Copernicus, emphasises Lettsom's radical attributes, and considers him an example of how 'self-help' movements can benefit readers of the *Medical Times*, in addition to the 'heartfelt' recommendation of the *Star* on medical matters. Further reviews of the *Medical Times* emphasise the domestic practicality of the publication. A short notice of the *Almanac* for 1845 informs readers that it includes 'directions for gardening operations for each month, law charges, allowances, &c., ; a list of fire insurance and life assurance companies, a number of useful recipes, and an immense mass of information connected to the medical profession.'[51] The variety of information suggests that this almanac was a handy reference guide to readers. More importantly, the *Star*'s emphasis on the volume's contents has specific purposes for its readers: gardening operations and insurance details would benefit subscribers to the Land Plan, while 'useful recipes' and medical information would allow readers to take their healthcare into their own hands, without having to pay doctors for simple diagnoses. The notice of recipes suggests that this periodical, and others that the *Star* suggests, were part of the *Star*'s domestic science ideology, feeding into desires for self-sufficiency and domestic agency so important to co-operation and the Land Plan campaigns at this time. This idea of up-to-date scientific information for domestic use is furthered by the *Star*'s reprinting of articles on the potato famine in November 1845, including detailed information on whether diseased potatoes could be made safe to eat, as well as the risks of feeding diseased potatoes to humans and to livestock.[52] As the *Star* continues, its scientific focus moves away from matters of practical healthcare or scientific news, but more onto gardening and agriculture, in line with the newspaper's focus on the Land Plan as a means by which to obtain the Charter. By 1847, the main scientific periodicals are the *Midland Florist* and *Western Agriculturalist*, with one review noting that 'the calendar of kitchen garden operations for the month of April, contained in this number will be very useful to thousands.'[53] While Melanie Keene explores what we may think of as 'familiar science' articles often containing mock conversations with a child in order to develop a scientific education, I argue that in the context of the radical working-class periodical, it is the science of and for the

[50] 'The Medical Times', *NS,* 16/11/1844, p. 3.
[51] 'The Medical Times Almanack for 1845,' *NS*, 18/1/1845, p. 3.
[52] 'The Medical Times,', *NS*, 08/11/1845, p. 3. See also 'The Potatoe Famine', p. 6.
[53] 'Western Agriculturalist, *NS,* 03/04/1847, p. 3.

family.[54] The inclusion of inspiring biographies of great scientists and information on medical conditions and gardening calendars is for practical application in the domestic, familial sphere, rather than the development of the next generation of experimental scientists. In order for the *Star*'s readers to participate in Chartist activism, they had to be healthy and well first.

Art, Music, and Literature

In the *Star*'s recommendations of self-improving periodicals, the importance of domesticity and the everyday was not confined to science and healthcare. Art, music, and literature periodicals were all seen to be 'improving' or 'instructional' in some way. Literacy, after all, was what allowed the *Star* to thrive; the poetry column provided exposure for aspiring Chartist laureates. If the *Star* could not provide much expertise on scientific matters, it was at least some kind of authority on literature and culture. The majority of periodicals reviewed by the *Star* in this period, with some notable exceptions I will come to later, were also 'self-improving' in some way, with literary and general publications designed to be educational first, entertaining as an afterthought. Again, this was a long-held tradition of the *Star*'s: as far back as 1841, a review for '*Parley's Penny Library*' (published by London Chartist and *ECC* editor John Cleave), recommends 'this cheap and elegant little substitute for the slipslop novels which too often occupy the reading hours of young people.'[55] Again, price point is seen to be imperative for the working-class reader. 'Slipslop' or watered-down, shallow writing links cultural consumption to food and nourishment. It is implied that this *Penny Library* will instead be robust and filling for 'young people,' a position that assumes that there is a desire for improvement across generations.

This intergenerational 'improvement' is especially emphasised in the variety of 'family' magazines reviewed by the *Star*. Titles such as *Cleave's Gazette of Variety*, the *Family Journal*, and the *Family Herald* emphasise the familial nature of reading practices, tacitly insisting that the periodical and the experience of reading is to be shared in the domestic space. The reappearance of Cleave, this time with his *Gazette of Variety*, once again emphasises the notion of a radical network within periodical culture at this time, a consensus of 'suitable' radical entertainments. The *Gazette*'s subtitle, 'A Miscellany of Knowledge, Literature, and Science' is credited to the growth of mass literacy and mass reading. In a lengthy early review, it is said that, as a result of the,

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[54] Melanie Keene, 'Familiar Science in Nineteenth-Century Britain,' *History Studies,* 52: 1 (2014), pp. 53-71.
[55] 'Parley's Penny Library', *NS,* 09/10/1844, p. 3.

> flood-gates of intelligence [having] opened, and the masses hitherto prevented even tasting the life-giving spring, are now slaking their thirst with the waters of knowledge. It has been a hard struggle to rescue the pen and the press from the manacles forged by priests and kings; but at last in this country the triumph on the side of light over darkness is all but complete.[56]

The review, which is nearly a page in length, describes in great detail the consequences of the Stamp Act and 'Taxes on Knowledge,' praising Cleave as an 'innovator', 'actively engaged in disseminating cheap and really useful knowledge.' The review concludes that,

> we might as well pretend to judge of the pudding by a solitary plum, as to attempt to give our readers an idea of the contents of this publication by any extract for which we could possibly find room. We have only to again recommend this highly useful and entertaining publication to those for whom it is principally intended--*the many*; as one every way worthy of their patronage, because calculated to improve and instruct, and render most important service to the progression of humanity.[57]

Once again, Cleave's publication is heralded as being nutritious, a 'life-giving spring' of knowledge to the parched 'many', while each article in the issue represents a 'solitary plum' in the 'pudding' of the entire piece, not only a meal, but a treat to be shared, the plums having connotations of fertility, growth, of organic matter melded together by skilled hands to become the pudding. The *Star* even shares a press-related pun, the idea of type 'proofs' being in the 'pudding' of Cleave's *Gazette*. Significantly, it is neither 'variety' nor amusement that is emphasised in the review of the *Gazette*. Rather, the *Star* highlights the *Gazette*'s capacity for instruction: it is said to be able to 'improve' and 'instruct' the many, and to deliver an 'important service' through the provision of 'knowledge' as opposed to entertainment. The *Gazette*'s subsequent rebranding as the *Illustrated Family Journal* brings the act of reading not for pleasure, but for self-improvement, into the domestic space. Contemporaries also reviewed by the *Star*, including the *Family Herald*, emphasise this:

> Of all the cheap miscellanies combining information and amusement for the 'million,' we know none worthier of approval than the *Family Herald*. Rightly it is named *Family*; its contents rendering it a most fitting companion for the family circle. We have facts and philosophy for gentlemen; hints and entertainment for ladies; questions and diversion for youth; and recreation and harmless pastime for all. When we state that the *Family Herald* circulates something like *fifty thousand* copies weekly, the actual readers probably amounting to at least four times that number, the reader will see that we have good ground for our belief.[58]

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[56] 'Cleave's Gazette of Variety', *NS,* 23/03/1844, p. 3.
[57] *Ibid,* p. 3.
[58] 'Family Herald', *NS,* 15/02/1845, p. 3.

The *Herald* is praised firstly for its provision of 'information', emphasising the importance of this in reading matter. The *Star* proceeds to situate the *Herald* within the familial space, isolating appropriate content for each member of the family. Interestingly, it designates 'facts' for 'gentlemen', 'hints' for 'ladies', rather than separate content for 'men' and 'women': by reading the *Family Herald,* the *Star*'s readers can access the 'spring' of knowledge from the middle classes to whom such material was previously restricted. This combination of 'information and amusement' allows for the transgression of class boundaries, situating the *Star*'s readers firmly within the aspirational 'self-help' consumer market. The division of content along gendered lines could certainly be interpreted as a means of condescending the 'ladies' among the readership, giving them only 'hints' instead of 'facts' but could also suggest 'gentlemen' as needing facts, while 'ladies' are trusted to be more perceptive, able to review 'hints' and take or leave them according to their judgement. The 'questions' advertised for 'youths' further perpetuates the self-help ideology of the review, echoing the structure of 'object-lessons' so praised in familiar science tracts and later adopted as the standard for schools following the 1870 Education Act.[59] Other arts magazines encouraged this domestic and familial practice of communal reading, as lauded here by the *Star*. The *Family Herald's* sister publication, the *Musical Herald*, provides a link between 'self-improving' periodicals and radical platform culture, encouraging all to develop their musical ability. The idea of 'information' and 'conversation', especially with regards to arts and culture, mirrors the curriculum of a typical middle-class girl's usually home-based education, suggesting that the development of these skills not only allows for the transgression of class and gender boundaries, but entitles the *Star*'s readers to a larger sense of citizenship.

The need for a sense of cultural citizenship outside of the specifically 'Chartist' citizenship that the *Star* provides for its readers is further enhanced by the recommendations for Penny Libraries and literature magazines. The placement of reviews on the page often puts them alongside the *Star*'s poetry column, suggesting that readers are able to participate in the Chartist canon. Titles including the *Penny Balladist* and *Penny Shakespeare* are praised not only for being affordable, but also for immersing readers in a sense of literary history and tradition. An 1845 review of the *Pictorial Penny Balladist*, for instance, notes that the issue includes,

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[59] Keene, 'Familiar Science' (2014), pp. 67-68.

> several ancient ballads, and several of modern date, from the pens of Dr. LEYDEN, SCOTT, CARLETON, and others. Not the least interesting feature of this publication is the preservation of the old spelling, so quaint but as expressive. The illustrations, as we have before remarked, add much to the beauty of the work.[60]

The *Star* does not evoke a sense of any kind of specifically national citizenship or patriotism, but does instil a sense of humanity and tradition in the evocation of 'ancient and modern' ballads, using the star power of the philologist Leyden, as well as poets Walter Scott and William Carleton as representative of the British Isles. Furthermore, the *Star*'s praise of the 'faithful' depictions of 'ancient traditions' suggests, once again, that even illustrated ballads are to be instructive before they are entertaining. The emphasis on the 'preservation of the old spelling' allows the readers of the *Star* and the *Penny Balladist* to engage with texts in a scholarly way, as opposed to depending on contemporary translations which may remove the 'expressive[ness]' of the texts. The illustrations, finally, emphasise the materiality of the publication, that the 'beauty' of the work is not just in the content of the texts themselves, but also in the form in which they are presented. By combining instructive ballads in a pleasingly authentic design with evocative drawings, the *Penny Balladist* could be an ephemeral object within the home. Such titles augment the performativity of reading practices. This sense of performativity in reading is emphasised further by the *Star*'s next review in the same issue, of the *Pictorial Penny Shakespeare*:

> The Englishman who has not read SHAKESPEARE may doubt his nationality; he is, at best, but half an Englishman, when ignorant of the works of his greatest countryman: and yet, to how many millions has SHAKESPEARE been but little, if anything, more than a mere name.[61]

To a much greater extent that possession of the *Pictorial Penny Balladist*, possession of the *Pictorial Penny Shakespeare*, the *Star* suggests, is integral to one's sense of national belonging and citizenship. The adoption of ballads and literature is an integral part of the *Star*'s brand of Chartism, with the Romantic poets and Shakespeare often evoked as revolutionary heroes: Anne Janowitz rightly notes that these form a kind of '"people's" poetic tradition' themed around land and home.[62] Likewise Antony Taylor has isolated G. J. Harney and Ernest Jones, specifically, as responsible for creating a 'radical literary canon [comprising writers such as

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[60] 'Pictorial Penny Balladist', *NS,* 29/11/1845, p. 3.
[61] 'Pictorial Penny Shakespeare', *NS,* 29/11/1845, p. 3.
[62] Anne Janowitz, *Labour and Lyric in the Romantic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 160.

Bunyan, Burns, Milton, and Shelley] that dignified and elevated the struggle for reform.'[63] With Harney taking over as editor of the *Star* following the move to London in late 1844, we can see potential for some personal preference to influence the reviews column of the *Star* in this period. Taylor notes that radical readings of Shakespeare's works was a stratagem of some Chartist and radical activists, which 'tied into notions of who was or was not deserving of the franchise, with a list of illustrious unenfranchised literary figures providing evidence of the arbitrary nature of the preconditions used to define those excluded from citizenship.'[64] The *Star*'s review of the *Penny Shakespeare* suggests that Shakespeare and Englishness are almost inseparable, you cannot have one without the other. Peter Holbrook notes that the *Star*'s Scottish competitor, the *Chartist Circular*, years prior to this particular review, often enlists Shakespeare as 'one of the enslaved and despised people' just as the *Circular* and its readers see themselves.[65] Knowledge and appreciation of Shakespeare as a literary figure is not only performative in the sense of gaining a kind of 'respectable' literary and cultural citizenship. It also claims Shakespeare as a long-dead citizen of the unenfranchised community, raising questions of who is and isn't 'worthy' of the franchise, as Taylor notes, and of patriotism and belonging on a wider scale. The *Star*'s reviewer concludes, as a result of this 'enterprise', that 'no man need now be without a copy of *Shakespeare*,' again bringing back the materiality of literary consumption, and the performative nature of not only reading the contents, instilling a sense of patriotism and belonging, but of simply having the copy to begin with, both material and spiritual ownership of literature.[66]

The more literary 'Literature & Reviews' entries of the *Northern Star* reached a peak in 1844-1846, a more quiet point for action in the movement, but that did not mean that readers of the *Star* could relax their efforts in contributing to the movement. Engagement with wider culture, especially art, literature, and song, ensured that the *Star*'s readers were seen as active and engaged cultural citizens, and that these products were not necessarily consumed for enjoyment but for awareness of the current cultural zeitgeists. Even these creative and cultural readings can be seen in the *Star*'s reviews as establishing a kind of radical curriculum for the

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[63] Antony Taylor, 'Shakespeare and Radicalism: The Uses and Abuses of Shakespeare in Nineteenth-Century Popular Politics,' *The Historical Journal* 45: 2 (2002), pp. 357-379, p. 363.
[64] *Ibid*.
[65] Peter Holbrook, 'Shakespeare, 'The cause of the people,' and *The Chartist Circular* 1839-1842,' *Textual Practice*, 20: 2 (2006), pp. 203-229, p. 211.
[66] 'Pictoral Penny Shakespeare', *NS,* 29/11/1845, p. 3.

Star's readers, feeding into the culture of 'self-improvement' and respectability in the home, if not on the streets.

Current Affairs

This kind of cultural citizenship, for the *Star*'s Chartist readers, applied not only to literature, art, and music, but to the wider world. Paul Pickering and Gregory Vargo have explored the role of the *Northern Star* in reporting not only local, regional, and even national news, but also international and colonial developments to its Chartist readership.[67] Additionally, the subjects of editorials and reviews in the *Star* point readers to other sources to find out more about matters including economics, parliamentary news, current affairs, as well as travel writing further to what the *Star* has already reported itself. In addition to the focussed agenda of the Charter and the Land Plan, the *Star* employs the 'Literature & Reviews' column to recommend further reading, and hence to encourage independence and auto-didacticism in its readers, albeit with some points more focussed than others.

Reviewed titles such as the *Economist* and the *Spectator* suggest a middle-class readership, or at least the *Star*'s agenda to enable working-class readers to keep abreast of the middle-class press. Once again, we see the formation of media relationships within the London metropolitan press, in the *Star*'s partnership with publisher Mackenzie.[68] Throughout 1845 and beyond, several of Mackenzie's publications appear in the *Star*'s 'Literature & Reviews' column, from the pompous-sounding *Connoisseur*, or *Monthly Record of Fine Arts, Music, and the Drama* through to volumes such as *Photography Made Easy* and *Mackenzie's Handbook to Billiards*.[69] The common link between these titles appearing in the *Star*, aside from Mackenzie's name, is the ethos of 'self-improvement' and education. The *Star*'s review of the *Handbook to Billiards*, for example, emphatically concludes that it 'ought to be wherever a

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[67] Gregory Vargo, '"Outworks of the Citadel of Corruption": The Chartist Press Reports the Empire' *Victorian Studies*, 54: 2 (2012), pp. 227-253, p. 232; Paul Pickering, ''Mercenary Scribblers' and 'Polluted Quills': The Chartist Press in Australia and New Zealand', in *Papers for the People,* ed. by Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton (2005), pp. 190-214.

[68] The works published by E. Mackenzie, of 111 Fleet Street, advertised in the *Star*, are noted to also be available at John Cleave's shop, on Shoe Lane, just around the corner. I have been unable to find any further information on Mackenzie as a publisher, except that he published at least one novel, George Herbert Bonaparte Rodwell's *Memoirs of an Umbrella* (1845). Troy J. Bassett, ed., *At the Circulating Library: A Database of Victorian Fiction, 1837-1901.* (2007-) <http://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/show_publisher_titles.php?pid=565&year=1845> [Accessed 29/01/2021]

[69] 'The Connoisseur', *NS,* 26/07/1845, p. 3.

billiard table is kept, either as a work of instruction, of preference, of authority, or science.'[70] Just as the motif of the dinner table recurs in the *Star*'s reviews of Cleave's works, so too is the *Handbook to Billiards* provided a home by the *Star*, a fixed spot within domestic or public spaces, anchoring it to suitable settings. The review furthermore emphasises the largely middle-class identity of the *Handbook to Billiards*' prospective readership, recommending the text to 'those who have leisure, or possessing opportunity to participate in the game,' in a way that recalls the Chartists' emphasis on labour as a mode of property.[71] (Notably, the reviewer here ignores the role of billiards in practising gambling, rather than the *Star*'s approved Chartist uses of disposable income.) The expense and equipment involved in pastimes such as billiards and photography, especially at the latter end of the hungry forties, suggests that the *Star* is attempting to attract a more middle-class readership in this period. The economic conditions of the hungry forties furthermore suggests a higher level of mobility in its readers than in previous years: just as the *Star* has removed itself to London, it frequently recommends *Mackenzie's Monthly Railway Timetable*, *Advertiser*, *and London Strangers' Guide,* to its readers who may also be on the move. The regular volumes of this periodical not only emphasise the sense of timeliness and the reconfiguration of time, pace, and modernity of this period as a whole, but reviews of this title in the *Star* make up 16% of the total reviewed titles for the year 1847. The *Timetable* seems to straddle Mackenzie's (apparent) target markets: it is 'a real pennyworth', with the low price frequently emphasised by the *Star* in reviews, and therefore accessible to the working classes; but it also encourages mobility, a possibility usually restricted to the middle classes. The *Timetable* also seems to take on a life of its own: much as the unstamped *Poor Man's Guardian* of the 1830s embodied its title, acting as a friend and protector to its readers, the *Timetable* is a 'Guide', and, according to the *Star*'s reviewer, 'a most necessary companion.'[72] Unlike the *Handbook to Billiards*, or the *Family Herald*, which have fixed spatial contexts, the *Timetable* is unfixed, has an independence of its own, used to help the *Star*'s Chartist readers who may also find themselves displaced by economic unrest. The appearance of these guides in the year 1847, furthermore, suggests that mobility is a new aspect of the Chartist agenda: families hoping to win the lottery of the Land Plan will need to move to their new homes; Chartists are campaigning in the 1847 general election, which would see Feargus O'Connor stand for Nottingham and George Julian Harney for Tiverton, Cornwall;

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[70] 'Mackenzie's Handbook to Billiards', *NS,* 06/02/1847, p. 3.
[71] Josh Gibson, 'Natural Right and the Intellectual Context of Early Chartist Thought,' *History Workshop Journal*, 84 (2017), pp. 194-213, p. 202.
[72] 'Mackenzie's Monthly Railway Timetable, Advertiser, and London Strangers' Guide'*, NS,* 16/01/1847, p. 3.

and preparations are underway for the final petition and monster meeting in Kennington Common in 1848.[73] As with other recommendations made in the 'Literature & Reviews' column, possession of Mackenzie's *Timetable* is a means of preparation and self-improvement, with the brand name of Mackenzie already thoroughly endorsed by the *Star* as a friendly face.

Considerations of mobility were not restricted only to the British Isles during the latter part of the 1840s, but internationally too. Previous works on Chartist attitudes to foreign and colonial affairs have noted two things: firstly, that a marked change occurs in the *Star*'s coverage of international affairs following the editorship of George Julian Harney, after Joshua Hobson's departure in 1845; secondly, that the *Star* disagreed with emigration schemes. Gregory Vargo acknowledges that the *Star* dabbled in publishing travel writing, namely Lawrence Pithkeithly's travels around America, which both 'recount[ed] [the emigrés'] hardships and scrutinize[d] "the thousand and one" flattering statements circulated' about the country.[74] Yet 'even though Pithkeithly's letters indicated Chartist ambivalence toward emigration they also provided advice on how best to make the trip.'[75] In spite of the largely negative attitude towards emigration programmes espoused by the *Star*, Vargo illustrates how these issues were still treated as self-improvement, and, as such, matters upon which the *Star* could advise. He furthermore identifies one particular source for colonial news in the *Star*, *Simmond's Colonial Magazine*. In my analysis of the 'Literature & Reviews' column, *Simmond's* makes no fewer than thirty-six appearances over four years. Indeed, *Simmond's* is one of the few explicitly international news sources not only quoted in the *Star*, but reviewed, praised, and reprinted at length. The *Star*'s proclivity to reproduce and endorse *Simmond's* indicates the extent to which the *Star*'s interest in mobility transcends the national, and extends to a consideration of mobility throughout the empire. An early review of *Simmond's*, published in July 1844, targets, 'the colonist, the merchant, and politician' to whom they 'recommend this publication,' suggesting, as with Mackenzie's publications, the newspaper's understanding of a wider readership than their working-class Chartist 'loyal readers'.[76] Issues covered in other reviews include emigration, and treatment of convicts.[77] Published by Peter Lund Simmonds, who came from a naval family and had worked as a mariner since the age of twelve, *Simmond's*

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[73] For more detail on the 1847 election preparations, see Malcolm Chase, '"Labour's Candidates": Chartist Challenges at the Parliamentary Polls, 1839-1860', *Labour History Review* 74: 1 (2009), pp. 64-89.
[74] 'Emigration', *NS,* 08/04/1843, p 3, in Vargo, '"Outworks of the Citadel of Corruption"' (2012), p. 248.
[75] Vargo, '"Outworks of the Citadel of Corruption,"' (2012), p. 248.
[76] 'Simmond's Colonial Magazine', *NS,* 20/07/1844, p. 3.
[77] 'Simmond's Colonial Magazine', *NS,* 17/7/1847, p. 4.

Colonial Magazine aimed to publish solutions for improving the lives of colonisers in the British empire. It was 'a source of "practical knowledge" about the discovery of new plants and animals and their potential utility in the development of colonial agriculture and industry,' mixing popular self-help culture with white supremacy and imperialism, as an expression of power.[78] The issue of transportation and treatment of convicts in Van Dieman's Land is of particular relevance to the *Northern Star*, allowing readers at home in Britain to learn about the conditions faced by their transported brethren, including Frost, Williams, and Jones. Indeed, though the *Star* heralded the importance of *Simmond's Colonial Magazine* to the 'colonist, the merchant, and politician', it maintained that *Simmond's* held wider national significance. According to the *Star*, the magazine contains 'many subjects of importance to all in a commercial country like England'. Such a claim both calls non-readers' national citizenship into question, and suggests, like the importance of access to Shakespeare's works, that international affairs are part of one's global citizenship.

The *Star* quotes at length an article on transportation, a letter from 'An Old Australian Colonist,' remarking that,

> under the new system the result has been that a far greater degree of 'unjust inequality,' as regards severity of punishment, has existed, than at any former time; while, instead of a system conducive to reform, we have had one which affords only a solution of the diabolical problem, how criminals can be made most completely and irrevocably criminal.[79]

The implication is that political prisoners, such as those supported by the *Star*, and transported due to their participation in the Chartist movement, are isolated with other prisoners, all of whom are punished under the same level of severity, reproducing the inequalities fought against by Chartists in Britain. This repeated focus on the treatment of convicts suggests that the inclusion of *Simmond's*, at such a large rate, not only demonstrates a new global outlook of the Chartists, establishing fraternity, as Vargo notes, with oppressed native peoples of English colonies. It also establishes a kind of Chartist diaspora, whether those Chartists were transported or emigrated of their own accord, allowing readers at home to keep abreast of the conditions of their fellow Chartists throughout the empire. This kind of 'self-improvement' therefore serves to reinforce the Chartist agenda of the *Star* in Britain, while widening the reach of problematic Chartist political networks across the world.

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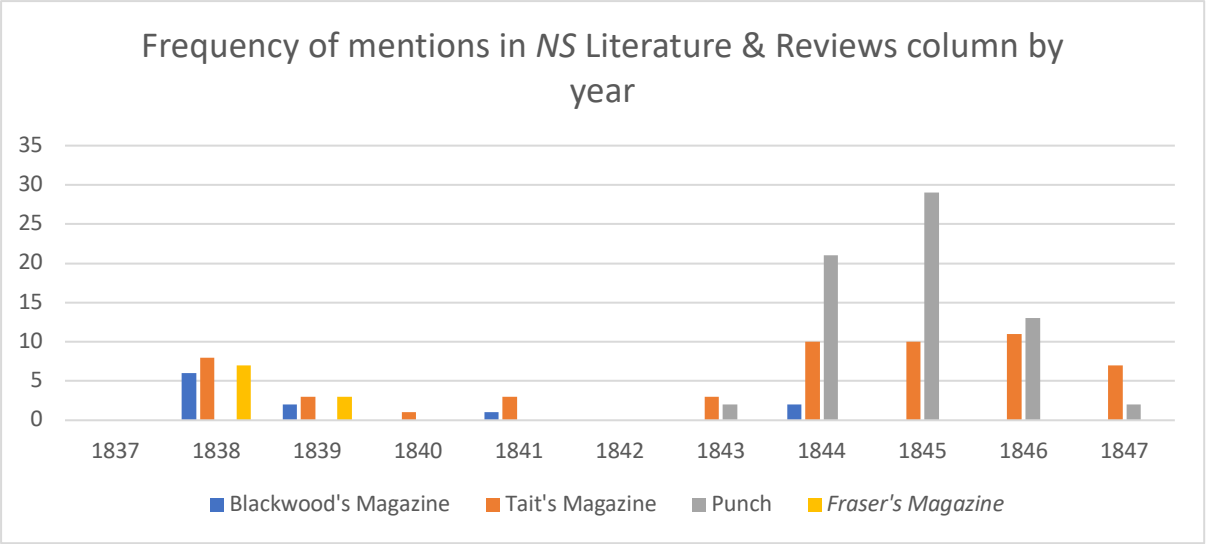
[78] Timothy Cooper, 'Peter Lund Simmonds and the Political Ecology of Waste Utilization in Victorian Britain,' *Technology and Culture*, 52: 1 (2011), pp. 21-44, p. 23, 24-25.
[79] 'Simmond's Colonial Magazine', *NS* 21/8/1847, p. 4.

Of the wide variety of periodicals reviewed by the *Star*, a large proportion can be categorised as 'instructive' or 'self-improving' in nature. Although these terms are often deployed to describe recommended reading as early as 1838, the increased emphasis on these kinds of periodicals suggests a wider culture of self-improvement within the *Star*'s Chartist readership. Of a total of 186 different periodical titles I have counted in the *Star*'s 'Literature & Reviews' column, at least fifty fall under the category of 'Self-improvement', be they for domestic healthcare texts, scientific news, gardening guides, train timetables, 'penny' literature, musical magazines, or current affairs. The *Star* recognises the impossibility of writing comprehensive reviews of such materials, and is therefore selective in those extracts presented to their readership, picking and choosing as necessary what may be most representative or relevant to their readership. Thus, the editors and reviewers of the *Star* establish themselves as authorities in these matters: although they are not professional authorities in areas such as medicine, literature, or colonial law, in the selection of materials recommended to readers they participate in a kind of gatekeeping of knowledge. They are able to do so because they have established the trust of readers, in part by personalising 'recommendations' for their wide readerships. Notwithstanding the *Star*'s (necessarily) selective recommendations, in the reprinting of extracts, we can see the 'Literature & Reviews' column not necessarily gatekeeping knowledge *per se*, but gate-opening. In recommending a variety of self-improving reading material, the *Star* encourages the development and broadening of readers' literacy and invites them to participate in wider cultural discussions, exercising an autodidact spirit. By reprinting extracts from periodicals, readers are able to 'try before they buy' in terms of reading material, while the emphasis on cheap literature encourages access to the material written about in the *Star*. In enabling access to such knowledge, the *Star* fosters a wider kind of citizenship and community building, as clearly evidenced by products such as the *Penny Shakespeare* and *Railway Timetables*, asserting their individual right to belong both in public spaces and in public discussions. Participation in 'self-improvement' culture, including possession of such literature advocated by the *Star*, served not only as a means of autodidact education but of performing knowledgeable citizenship. 'Self-improvement' demonstrated to the *Star* and the Chartists' critics their right to participation in the franchise.

3. The *Star* and Literary Citizenship, 1837-1847

Figure 17: Frequency of mentions of middle-class magazines in the 'Literature & Reviews' column by year.



In the *Star*'s aim to become a 'universal press,' the 'Literature & Reviews' column not only covered a wide range of genres, but reprinted other press content, as we have seen. I argue that, in doing so, it became a universal press in that it encompassed such a range of material from other presses, from Temperance advocates to the latest *Punch* satires. While the *Star* is not unique in containing extracts of a variety of other publications, the reprinting of middle-class magazines in a 4½*d* periodical is a bargain, undercutting those magazines it was reviewing. The *Star* did not engulf, but consumed this wide variety of other periodicals and reproduced them, with commentary, for its own readers. For the poorest reader, the *Star* need be the only publication they buy. Middle-class magazines such as *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817-1980), *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* (1830-1882), *Punch; or the London Charivari* (1841-1992) and *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* (1832-1861) make frequent appearances in the *Star*'s 'Literature & Reviews' column, and are striking because of their mainstream popularity in comparison with other material reviewed in the column.[80] All four are significant in their aim for a middle-class readership. *Blackwood's*, *Tait's*, and *Fraser's* explicitly identify as magazines, containing longer articles to be perused at leisure rather than

[80] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, consisting of around 140 pages per issue, *Fraser's Magazine*, consisting of around 200 pages per issue, and *Tait's*, spanning around 65 pages per issue, were all monthly magazines costing at least a shilling. The page size was significantly smaller than a tabloid paper, with continuous numbering designed to be collated into bound volumes at the year end. By contrast, *Punch* was more similar in presentation to the *Star,* costing just 3*d,* spanning 12 double-columned pages. It was unstamped, published in weekly single issues, but also available, as Brian Maidment notes, 'monthly compilations which came in decorative wrappers and carried a considerable amount of advertisement and half- yearly volumes, which included an elaborate and often highly decorative index.' In this way, we might consider *Punch* to be a middle-ground in print formats between the *Star* and the middle-class monthly magazines. Brian Maidment, 'Punch', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 517-519, p. 519.

the speedy intake of fresh information. Their prospective leisurely reading pace is emphasised by their monthly release, suggesting a slower rate of production and consumption compared to the *Star* and *Punch*, both being Saturday weeklies. *Punch*, also, in its comedic style, joins them in their aim to be consumed as enjoyment and entertainment rather than information and education, compared to the *Star* which sees itself as an organ of the Chartist movement, having its own agenda of information above all else. When we consider circulation figures, however, we need to consider the *Northern Star* as a contemporary of these publications: although it was a weekly stamped newspaper, by enjoying a large, nationwide readership, it had a broad influence in working-class society compared to *Blackwood's, Tait's, Fraser's*, and *Punch*, whose targeting of the middle classes limited their influence.

Figure 18: Circulation of middle-class magazines per issue. [81]

Periodical titles	**Price per issue**	**Circulation according to Waterloo Directory**	**Avg. circulation per issue over period examined**
Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine	2s 6*d*	7,500 (1838); 7,200 (1839); 7,000 (1840-42); 6,500 (1843); 6,800 (1844); 6,000 (1845-46); 5,750 (1847-49);	5,678
Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country	2s 6*d*	8,700 (1831); 8,000 (1860);	8,350
Tait's Edinburgh Magazine	1s	4,000 (1832 - 1834)	4,000
Punch	3*d*	6,000 (1841-2)	6,000
Northern Star	4½*d*	10,000 (1838); 40,000 (1839); 12,500 (1842); 8700 (1843); 6,000 (1846)	31,100

All five periodicals published the latest poetry, literature, and, in the case of the *Star, Fraser's,* and *Punch*, illustrations of the day, and all had a degree of radicalism in their political leanings.

[81] Data adapted from Michael Wolff, *Waterloo Directory for Victorian Periodicals (*Waterloo: Wilford Laurier Academic Press, 1979), and Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007). For context, by 1860, the average circulation for weekly magazines (including *Punch*) was 99,000, and the median circulation was 80,000. The average circulation for monthly magazines (including *Fraser's* and *Blackwood's*) by 1860 was 18,400, while the median was 8,000. This indicates that weekly periodicals already had a much larger circulation potentially due to their increased frequency, weekly availability, and lower per-unit price (Adapted from Alvar Ellegård, *The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian Britain* (Göteborg: Göteborgs universitets årsskrift, 1957), repr. *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter,* 13 (1971), pp. 3-22).

In publishing poetry and literature alongside reviews and extracts from these middle-class literary magazines so essential to the everyday reading life of the Victorian period, the *Star* created a kind of literary citizenship for its readers. By this, I mean that the *Star* widened access to the middle-class literature of the day while critiquing and contributing to the literary debates of its publishing contemporaries. It enabled unfranchised readers to acclimate to these cultural products and further perform self-improvement.

Politics and Radicalism

The *Northern Star*, as a Chartist newspaper, was explicitly radical in its politics: this was the entire driving force, composition, and readership of the paper. When comparing it to these middle-class magazines, it is important to consider how definitions of 'radicalism' differ in the eyes of the beholders. *Blackwood's*, *Fraser's*, *Tait's*, and *Punch* all considered themselves radical in some way, despite enjoying a middle-class readership. *Blackwood's*, the most established of these middle-class literary magazines, was also the most conservative: Jessica Roberts defines the magazine's readership as 'the newly forming wealthy intelligentsia who were educated, literary, and assumed to be politically conservative,' fearful that the radicalism of the 1820s and 1830s would reach the same bloody heights as Revolutionary France of the 1790s.[82] In a similar vein, *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* favoured the Tories, but less strictly than *Blackwood's*: its first editor, William Maginn, jumped ship from *Blackwood's* to *Fraser's* and, while still aiming for a well-off, well-educated readership, allowed radical politics a little more leeway. On the other end of the spectrum, *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine,* edited by William Tait and Christine (sometimes spelled 'Christian') Johnstone, defined itself as Whig-Radical and proto-feminist, and was conceived explicitly as an alternative to *Blackwood's*, suggesting an element of local as well as political competition.[83] Finally, *Punch* aimed to be above all politics, taking a reformist line but radical in its aims of making a target of all society. In the aim of all these periodicals to publish and publicise literary and cultural writings, they became inherently political.

While the *Northern Star* reviewed these literary and political essays, poetry, and prose pieces, it is interesting to note how many directly address the Chartist movement. Political

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[82] Jessica Roberts, 'Radical Contagion and Healthy Literature in *Blackwood's*', *Literature and Medicine*, 34: 2 (2016), pp. 418-39, pp. 419-20.

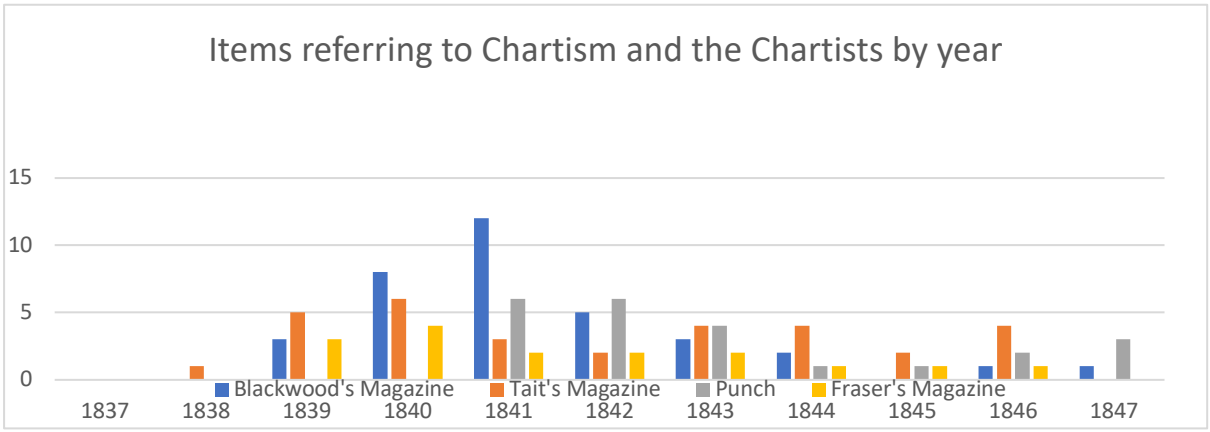
[83] Christine (sometimes represented as 'Christian') Isobel Johnstone, editor of *Tait's*, manipulated anonymity in order to publish a variety of material across Scottish periodicals, from more traditionally 'feminine' cookery books to essays on class and gender: Alexis Easley, *First Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-70* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 77.

agenda aside, the *Star* is unusual in that it was born as a provincial periodical.[84] It retained this link with the provinces even after its move to London in 1844 (see chapter five), with its new subheading declaring that it was not a London 'Trades' Journal, but a 'National' one. The *Northern Star* arguably took a broader national view in terms of the geography of its content, as we have seen already, and certainly in comparison with the aforementioned magazines. Henry Miller, writing on *Punch*, argues that it was overly focused on London, not yet even the literary headquarters of the country, to the detriment of other provinces. Miller notes that 'even *Punch*'s comments on social problems largely focused on those of the capital, from sweated labour of the East End or the pollution of the Thames,' a parochialism that contributed to its lack of understanding of the Chartist movement.[85] This narrowing of focus as a metropolitan periodical rather than a provincial one, could furthermore be applied to the more conservative *Tait's* and even more conservative *Blackwood's* Edinburgh magazines, whose material reflected what they knew in the metropolis of the North, Edinburgh. Indeed, *Tait's* was founded as a rebuttal to *Blackwood's* and *Blackwood's* founded as a rebuttal against the Whig *Edinburgh Review*; as both strived for their well-off, well-educated readerships, they narrowed their focus to Scotland's literary capital, while Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Perth saw flurries of Chartist activity. Although *Fraser's* was published in London, its subtitle 'For Town and Country' is suggestive of its desired readership: not provincial workers, but the countryside gentry. A comparison of the individual items in each of these magazines that make reference to the *Northern Star* or the Chartists suggests the *Star*'s preoccupation with the magazines, rather than vice versa. The periods in which the *Star* abandons the usual 'Literature & Reviews' column are those in which Chartist activity is busiest, suggesting less time for leisurely reading due to the focus, both in terms of the space in the paper and of its readers, on political action. By contrast, the references made to Chartism within the magazines operate by an inverse logic, with Chartist activity occupying space in the news and causing noticeable disruption to middle-class lives. This is particularly evident by early peaks in the graph: spikes in 1841 and, to a lesser extent, in 1842 correlate with the trials of the Newport Rising organisers, Feargus O'Connor's imprisonment, and the Plug Plot riots; references to Chartism and the Chartists reduce around the time of the *Star*'s move to London and the Land Plan drive (see figure 19). The content of these references to Chartism vary, in part according to each periodical's broad

[84] *Blackwood's* and *Tait's* were both based in Edinburgh, which I here consider to be a literary capital, rather than a province.
[85] Henry Miller, 'The Problem with *Punch*,' *Historical Research*, 82. 216 (2009), pp. 285-302, p. 289.

political leaning, and the level of sympathy individual writers had toward Chartism. The *Northern Star*, in one review of *Douglas Jerrold's Illuminated Magazine,* for example, praises the editor, encouraging readers to 'witness, too, his labours in that scourge of humbugs and scoundrels - *Punch*,' referring readers to his other works, also reviewed in the *Star*.[86] In the publication of some racier materials, from *Fraser's* 'Confessions of an Opium-Eater' by de Quincey, to *Blackwood's* support of Thackeray, the magazines toe a fine line in maintaining respectability, but do so in a different way to the *Star* thanks to their middle-class readerships, having the cultural capital and respectable readership that the *Star* lacked.

Figure 19: Mentions of 'Chartism' and the 'Chartists' in the middle-class magazines.



Reciprocity and Overlap

Despite the *Northern Star*'s wide reach across the country, it is these differences in readership communities that become evident in the magazines' treatment of Chartism. Specific references to the *Northern Star,* or even to Feargus O'Connor, are few and far between. *Punch*, for example, references the *Star* just twice in seven years, both instances in separate items from October 1841, compared with a total of twenty-two mentions of 'Chartism' or the Chartists between 1841 and 1847. Blackwood's, meanwhile, references the *Star* twice, compared with twenty-nine references to Chartism in total. The *Star*'s practice of reviewing these literary magazines has three key consequences: it fulfils their agenda to become a 'universal press', it raises awareness among their working-class readership of current cultural zeitgeists from which they are priced out, and it allows the *Star* to claim a level of authority as a periodical insofar as it demonstrates the newspaper's expertise in the journalistic profession as well as in activism. It is important that the *Star* is a newspaper rather than a magazine; its practice of

[86] 'Douglas Jerrold's Illuminated Magazine', *NS,* 13/7/1844, p. 3.

reviewing literary magazines is a form of punching up the social and economic ladder. For a staunchly Tory magazine such as *Blackwood's* to review the *Northern Star* would be a cultural step down, even if such reviews were unfavourable (as indeed, many of the *Star*'s reviews of *Blackwood's* were). Catering to their particular readerships is a performative act. One lengthy *Blackwood's* essay, entitled 'Vote of Confidence in Ministers' from March 1840, expresses fears about the threat of revolution in Britain, remarking that, 'in England, we have several hundred thousand Chartists, armed, organized, and prepared, at a moment's warning, to renew the fires of Birmingham and the insurrection of Newport over the whole manufacturing districts of Britain.' It ultimately concludes that the 'frightful anti-religious and anti-social doctrines which have spread amongst them, is the profuse distribution of the power of reading that is, the means of perusing the obscenity of the Socialists and the sedition of the *Northern Star*.'[87] *Blackwood's* makes a timely reference to the forthcoming trial of Feargus O'Connor for the publication of seditious libel in the *Star*, foreshadowing the result of the trial, and generally blaming the violence of Chartist activity on the 'profuse' rise in literacy and access to the *Star*. There are no references at all to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in the *Star*'s 'Literature & Reviews' column for the entirety of 1840, suggesting that the charges of libel may have deterred the editors of the *Star* off from harsher reviewing practices, which previously it did not shy away from, giving the *Blackwood's* issue of June 1839 the backhanded compliment of 'unusually brilliant.'[88] *Fraser's* closing section, 'Notes of the Month', in an article entitled 'Lamentations of a Liberal' does not reference the *Star* by name, but declares that '[t]he factious conduct of the Chartists is at the root of the mischief,' itself quoted from 'a very acute journalist in the west of England, the editor of the *Cheltenham Free Press*. They appear so just and rational, that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of putting them before our readers'.[89] By mimicking the *Star*'s own approach to literature and reviews of similar periodicals, *Fraser's* is able to criticise both the Chartist movement and the *Star*. The *Star*'s review of this issue of *Fraser's* is quoted in full as follows:

> This is the worst number of *Fraser* we have ever seen. The only bearable article in it is the 'Selections from the Diary of a Traveller in the Alps'.[90]

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[87] 'The Vote of Confidence in Ministers', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,* 47 (March 1840), pp. 412-430, p. 424-425.

[88] 'Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine', *NS,* 22/06/1839, p. 3.

[89] 'Lamentations of a Liberal', *Fraser's Magazine,* 19 (March 1839), pp. 379-386, p. 380-381.

[90] 'Fraser's Magazine', *NS,* 09/03/1839, p. 3.

In referring to the magazine as 'Fraser' rather than *'Fraser's Magazine*,' the *Star* personify the periodical, their review becoming a more personal attack, and specifically referring to only one original article, as opposed to rebuffing the 'Lamentations of a Liberal' quoted from the Cheltenham editor. This practice of ignoring unflattering content is unlike Feargus O'Connor's personal style, but becomes a kind of censorship in preventing their own readership from accessing the article.

The absence of references to the *Northern Star* across the magazines is notable given the literary and cultural aspects of these periodicals, even if, unlike the *Star*, their practices of reviewing are focused more on books and not on periodicals. Though the relative absence of the *Star* is not surprising given that reviews tend to punch up instead of down, the newsworthiness of the Chartist movement and exceptional circulation of the *Star* would, in theory, be of note. The only consistent references to the *Northern Star* by name come from the more radical-leaning *Tait's*, whose editorials on politics and society make use of the *Star* to add context to their own observations, a far cry from the techniques of *Blackwood's* and *Fraser's*. The four references to the *Northern Star*, out of a total of twenty-eight items on Chartism and the Chartists, add nuance for their middle-class readers who, as discussed, may be geographically as well as culturally removed from the action of the movement. In their 'Political Register' of December 1840, an essay titled 'The Chartists' astutely remarks that, 'the readers of the "respectable" newspapers see no trace of these [public meetings, dinners, soirees and lectures] in their journals, and they believe that Chartism is extinct'. The essay continues:

> if the sceptical on this point would occasionally look at *The Northern Star*, they would be convinced of this. (Mr. O'Connor's, published in Leeds) is read by the unenfranchised in every part of the empire. The publishing office of *The Northern Star* is the centre of a perpetual working. There is a whole world of politics among our unenfranchised, of which the enfranchised know nothing, and seem determined to know nothing, and yet have a deep interest in knowing something.[91]

The recommendation of the *Star* is confined to *Tait's* specific political section: it is held up as further reading so that its readers may understand the context of the Chartist movement. The avoidance of the *Star* in the literary reviews of *Tait's* and its contemporaries comes down to a difference in target readership, as the *Star* is only relevant in this one section. Meanwhile, the *Star*'s reviews of the magazines tend, in most cases, to avoid political articles, focusing on the

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[91] 'The Chartists', *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, 7 (December 1840), pp. 811-812, p. 811.

literature, poetry, and biography that make up the bulk of the magazines. In addition to the differences in target readership, the 1840 libel trials suggests the need to be careful: while the *Star*'s readership may at times be higher, the legal costs would be too great, and the *Star*'s existence takes precedence over correcting an unkind reference. While the magazines (*Tait's* included) do not see the *Star* as necessary reading for their readerships, often or at all, the *Star*'s reviewing practices demonstrate an understanding of class mobility, literary citizenship, and knowledge of media networks and practice. The *Star* provides their working-class readers with the material by which they can demonstrate 'self-improvement' to higher social classes. The *variety* of material is what enables readers to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge if questioned. Such reviews across the board not only support the *Star*'s commercial viability gained from collegial reviews of other papers, but ensures that the *Star* remains the readers' choice because it contains such variety.

Reprints and remediation

The role of the *Star* is negotiated between its readership networks as well as periodical networks, ensuring both circles continue to engage with it. The 'Literature & Reviews' column of the *Star* is a part of this, establishing its place within a community of periodicals of all genres, from all over the country, and is clear in its aim of participation. It is unclear whether all material reviewed by the *Star* was sent to the editors, or whether reviewed material was covered by choice: certainly, a review of *Tait's* from late December 1843 suggests that the *Star* regularly received material for review, and had a system in place to 'afford them that notice the parties naturally look for when sending them for review' (which, the reviewer apologises, fell by the wayside in their delayed review of the December issue of *Tait's*).[92] In fact, the reviewer of *Tait's* describes the practice of reviewing as 'perform[ing] what we deem to be a duty'.[93] Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, the *Star* firmly maintained its practice of literary participation.

Alexis Easley argues that *Tait's* feminist and radical-leaning agenda, spearheaded by editor Christine Johnson, 'provided an important model for future reformist periodicals [… which] established a link between class and gender politics, a connection that would lead to the development of politicised reviewing practices.'[94] This explains its being sent to the *Star*

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[92] 'Tait's Edinburgh Magazine', *NS,* 30/12/1843, p. 3.

[94] Easley, *First Person Anonymous* (2004), p. 77.

for review, and suggests that *Tait's*, if not the other magazines, recognised the *Star* as its contemporary. In turn, the *Star* recognises the privilege and evokes a sense of honesty and nobility in its 'duty' to review periodicals, including what I describe as a class-based 'politicised reviewing practice'. This 'duty' is expressed as being to the periodical in question, but in publishing this response, the *Star* suggests that it is also a duty to the reading public, as well as to post office employees to ensure they do not disrupt the cycle of receiving and disseminating information. The duty of reviewing, furthermore, being 'performed' evokes not only a turn of phrase but ensures that the *Star* is seen publicly to participate in this literary sportsmanship, telling not only *Tait's*, but any potential readers that they are a literary authority and demonstrating their engagement in periodical practices. The performance of literary citizenship does not only apply to their readers, but also to the periodical networks. Once again, this is shown to be a mostly one-sided mode of participation: although *Tait's* recommend the *Star* to interested parties, the reviewing practices of *Tait's* (and the other magazines) are extended only to literary and poetic works, with some reprints. While the *Star* does reprint often lengthy extracts from a variety of periodicals, they specifically reprint the original content published in the magazines, as a means of extending the reach of these more expensive literary products to their readers. Chartist values shape the material that is selected for reprint, including the 'people's canon' of romantic revolutionaries such as Byron and Shelley, and notably Thomas de Quincey's biographies of Wordsworth and Shelley in *Tait's* from 1845-46. The majority of reprints in the *Star* occur in the mid-late 1840s and focus especially on the two most radical of the magazines, *Tait's* and *Punch*. A particular favouritism for *Punch* on the part of the *Star* is discernible from the summer of 1844 to 1845, an otherwise quiet period for the Chartist movement. During this period, the newspaper printed a recurring column entitled 'A Bowl of "Punch"', which reprinting short miscellanies in the column. The new year of 1845 is rung in through the demarcation of the 'Bowl of "Punch", *Fresh* Brewed' (emphasis mine), ensuring that the whole eight pages of the *Star* remain filled, and perhaps covering up any teething issues that arose with the change of address from Leeds to London, while also enabling readers to follow the middle-class hot topics. After all, by buying the *Star*, they no longer need to purchase *Punch*, as the *Star* will contain the previous week's pithy miscellanies to share with friends and colleagues. Cost is therefore a driving factor in the *Star*'s reprints of the magazine's contents, allowing their readership to follow jokes, but ensure that their own costs are kept to a minimum by reprinting text instead of *Punch*'s characteristic illustrations, and therefore using the printing technologies they already have available. Again, the Chartist values of accessibility

and participation are prioritised above all else, while also ensuring relevance to their own readership. One of the *Star*'s later reviews of *Tait's*, from November 1847, laments that there is 'nothing quotable but an extract from a review of Prescott's "History of the Conquest of Peru"', an extract that takes up a column a quarter of the length of the page. This extract, entitled 'Peruvian Agrarianism', describes how,

> 'a more thorough and effectual agrarian law than this cannot be imagined,' describing how 'the territory was cultivated wholly by the people […] they next tilled the land, of the old, of the sick, of the widows, and the orphan, and of soldiers engaged in actual services -in short, of all that part of the community who, from bodily infirmity, or any other cause, were unable to attend to their own concerns.'[95]

This positive description of Peruvian agrarian systems, coming from a history book reviewed by *Tait's*, elevates the status of such an idea, effectively as free propaganda for the Chartist Land Plan explored elsewhere in this issue of the *Star*. The inclusion of this extract as the only 'quotable' material suggests that the *Star*'s editors are not only the recipients of reviewable material, but that they are actively searching for material of relevance and interest to their readership community.

The *Northern Star*'s relationship with the leading middle-class magazines of its day was forged of necessity: within the periodical and publishing industry, collegiality was a requirement. By publishing anything, the editors of and contributors to these periodicals were part of a professional network. By actively engaging in review culture, however, the *Star* asserted its right to become part of a national conversation about literature, culture, and politics. In reviewing and reprinting material from these magazines, the *Star* publicly demonstrated a hunger for periodical consumption and awareness of the world around them. The public element of this is crucial: if the *Star* was reviewing these periodicals intended for the middle classes, it asserted its right to be treated as a journal of the same calibre. Further to this, it widened the range of literary material afforded to its working-class readerships. By reading material from *Punch*, *Fraser's*, *Tait's*, and *Blackwood's*, albeit shortened and re-mediated by the *Star*, the *Star*'s readers could engage in the literary and cultural discussions of the day, from which they were otherwise priced out. The public nature of the *Star* demonstrated how barriers to the franchise may be removed, and that, by engaging with such 'lofty' material, its readers were deserving of the franchise, as literary citizens. The readers of *Blackwood's*, who claimed to 'uphold not Chartism or the Chartists,' were thereby reading the same material as the

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[95] 'Tait's Edinburgh Magazine', *NS,* 13/11/1847, p. 4.

Chartists, thus sharing fewer differences than they claimed.[96] This element of performativity worked both ways, with the *Star* reprinting literary material that was culturally and economically deemed 'above' their readers' usual tastes; the magazines, with the exception of *Tait's*, avoid evoking the *Northern Star* partly for reasons of genre, but partly because this would be a step down for their wealthier, more conservative readerships. All of these periodicals had to select and publish material in order to satisfy their loyal readers and ensure their continued business success and longevity within the periodical network. While the review and publication of literary material was in part a performative act, and one that allowed the *Star*'s readers to be seen as literary citizens, these materials had to meet the *Star*'s Chartist values. Hence the inclusion of the 'people's poets' (Shelley and Byron), histories of civilisations, biting satires, and a Valentine's-themed 'Labourer's Love-Song' from a fresh issue of *Punch*. If the magazines were publishing material that could be co-opted for Chartist purposes, they must be seen to be supporters of the movement too.

Conclusion

The variety of material reviewed and extracted by the *Northern Star* not only places it in the middle of a network of periodicals of all genres, but provides a gateway to these materials for its readers. The manipulation of the 'Literature & Reviews' column as a kind of miscellany ensures that it is aware of the many issues of the day that are relevant to the Chartist movement, but not restricted to it. In publishing these, the *Star* demonstrates an overlap in cultural issues, demonstrating what writers and readers from many different backgrounds and with different interests have in common. Furthermore, it is a case of performing literary, education, and cultural engagement, from which the Charter would propel readers to civic engagement via suffrage. The role of literacy is integral to the Chartist movement, specifically a literary citizenship. Not only do readers demonstrate a hunger for education and an appetite for political and cultural dialogue, but the 'Literature & Reviews' column distinguishes this generation of radicals from the oral traditions of radicalism. While letters and the Chartist Intelligence column point to reading practices sharing commonalities with the orality of platform culture,[97] the Literature & Reviews column relies on literacy and an appetite for reading. Literacy becomes both a symbolic and practical marker of voting ability: the 'secret ballot' in the six

[96] 'The Chartists and Universal Suffrage', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 46 (September 1839), pp. 417-430, p. 420.
[97] See chapters two and three of this thesis.

points of the Charter relies on the ability to read, a prerequisite for participation. The fulfilment of the Charter is dependent on a much wider societal shift in the reclaiming of a fundamental skill, literacy, previously reserved for only the middle-classes and above. Thus, even reading the *Northern Star* becomes a benchmark by which self-education and citizenship by literacy can be measured.

Through its reviewing practices, the *Northern Star* both stimulates working-class autodidacticism and literacy, and co-opts middle-class literature and rhetoric for its own gains. 'Self-improvement' culture (as evidenced by educational miscellanies and manuals for healthcare, science, and even gardening) is performative not only in the sense that it displays a thirst for knowledge but also insofar as it highlights the ability to teach oneself, thus demonstrating strength and self-sufficiency. We know that 'independence' was framed as a particularly Chartist quality; such 'self-improvement' material was seen as evidence. Furthermore, the alignment of 'nourishment' and the table with educational periodicals reviewed in the *Star* not only centres the idealised domestic hearth within the Chartist imaginary but places the *Star* and the Chartist imaginary alongside middle-class, rigid separations of gendered spheres of labour and civic participation. It also, significantly, discusses information in terms of food and nutrition, marrying mental strength alongside bodily strength, thereby asserting that industrial labourers are not only 'hands' but minds, too.

If the *Star*, and Chartist literary culture is referenced in middle-class magazines, it is elevated by this association and re-mediation. Reprinting material from socially-elevated periodicals, not only in terms of social or cultural capital but in price, is again a performance of literary and cultural engagement on a broader scale. Reading the same material creates a sense of commonality and shared taste between social classes, 'lowering' the prestige of the magazines and, thus, their target readership. This becomes a performance of literary democracy, with the *Star* widening participation in price-exclusionary literary and cultural practices. Further to this expression of Chartist readership, it highlights the specifically long-term vision and cross-cultural reach of the *Northern Star* as a paper in its own right.

Chapter Five: ‘Leeds General Advertiser’ to ‘National Trades’ Journal’, 1843-1845

Introduction

The front page of the *Northern Star* on the 23rd November 1844 is unlike any of its previous front pages. Immediately below the date, the masthead declaring it ‘The *Northern Star* and Leeds General Advertiser’, PRICE FOURPENCE HALFPENNY or Five Shillings Per Quarter’, are two short blocks, two columns in width, the first announcing that ‘the Northern Star and National Trades’ Journal’, ‘price Fivepence, will be published on SATURDAY NEXT, the 30th November 1844, at 340 Strand, London.’[1] The second, entitled ‘WELCOME TO THE METROPOLIS’ announces a ‘PUBLIC SOIREE to Welcome Labour’s Organ -- the *NORTHERN STAR*-- to the Metropolis...’.[2]

Figure 20: The *Northern Star* front page, 16/11/ 1844, p. 1.

TO THE WORKING CLASSES.

MY FRIENDS,—On Saturday last, the *Northern Star* newspaper had completed its seventh year. When I established that organ of communication between the working classes, who were never before faithfully represented in the press, some allowed it three months, some six months, a few nine months, but none twelve months to live. They were prophets who imagined that they had the power to fulfil their own prediction. They were aware of the difficulties that they could throw in my way and the means to which they could resort to put me out of the way. A Government prosecution was instituted against me upon the appearances of the first number; and from that day to the present hour vengeance and persecution have done their worst. Not a year has passed over my head that I have not been the victim of Government persecution: and yet I have baffled the machinations of all; and the *Star* still lives, and SHALL live, in spite of all.

It was my intention to put the Readers and Agents in possession of the requisite information consequent upon the removal of the *Star* to London this week. However, my engagements have been such, and my time for discharging them so short, that I am obliged to postpone the subject until next week, when I shall fully explain the good that I anticipate from the change, and the day upon which it shall take place. Of one thing, however, the readers of the *Star* may rest assured; and that is, though it changes its locality it never shall change its principles, or pass out of my possession. It is the opinion of all whom I have consulted that London is the place for Labour's organ; and so convinced are the London people of this fact, that they mean to celebrate the advent by a grand jubilee.

I invite you to keep your eye steadily fixed upon the great Trades' Movement now manifesting itself throughout the country, and I would implore you to actby all other trades as you have acted by the Colliers. Attend their meetings, swell their numbers and give them your sympathy; but upon no account interpose the Charter as an obstacle to their proceedings. All labour and all labourers must unite; and they will speedily discover that the Charter is the only standard under which they can successfully rally: but don't interpose it to the interruption of their proceedings.

Within the last seven weeks I have addressed the people of Newcastle four times; of Sunderland twice; Shields once; Carlisles one; Leeds three times; Bradford twice; Huddersfield twice; Halifax

The Northern Star,

AND LEEDS GENERAL ADVERTISER.

VOL. VII. NO. 366. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1844. PRICE FOURPENCE HALFPENNY or Five Shillings per Quarter.

EARL RADNOR ON THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.

DEAR SIR,—In the *Chronicle* of the 2nd there was a letter signed "W." on "Allotments," which begins by stating that "the public attention is now occupied, but still with hardly sufficient sense of the importance and merits of the scheme, with the allotment system." Changing the words "importance and merits" into "mischievousness and demerits," I quite agree with "W.;" and, thinking as I do, that, with some plausible points, very likely, when not fully considered, to captivate the benevolent and kind-hearted, it is full of danger, and directly contrary to every principle of good government and of political economy, I trouble you with these lines on the subject.

1. In the first place, I would ask the friends of the system whether they think the granting of allotments is a matter of obligation, or of favour and kindness? If of obligation, I would then inquire—

2. First, on whom the obligation lies? 'On all the landlords of a parish, or only on some of the principal ones? If not on all, who is to settle the persons on whom it lies, and the proportion in which it falls on each? If on all, what is to be done in the case of such landowners whose proportionate allotment might not be sufficient to raise a cabbage upon?

3. Secondly, in favour of whom is this duty to be performed? Of all the labourers in the parish, without reference to their circumstances, to their wages, to their families (whether single or married, and whether having large families or small), to their character, or ability, or inclination to make good and profitable use of their allotments? If these things are not to be attended to, how unjustly and partially will the system work! If they are attended to, who is the person to consider these matters? The persons lying under the obligation, each for himself? This would be opening the door to favouritism, partiality, and jobbing. The magistrate? How long would it be before the regulating of the allotment system at the petty sessions would lapse into the old system of making up wages only by a method more complicated and difficult of adjustment?

4. But, supposing all these difficulties satisfactorily got over, and the system fairly at work, I hold that nothing but evil would ensue.

6. It is clearly ascertained that agricultural employment does not increase commensurately with agricultural population, or even agricultural produce." Now these two very grievances are what the advocates of the Small Farm System contend against; and they propose their system as a remedy for both. It is true that agricultural employment does not increase commensurately even with agricultural produce; but that's a consequence of your large-farm system, and your new-fangled political tenure at will, whereby you create at one and the same time political serfs and agricultural paupers.

Now, my Lord, in the next sentence of this paragraph you have stumbled upon that egregious fallacy to which the Honourable and Rev. Baptist Noel attached so much importance. You seem to think that manufacturing is the natural avocation of man in England: and that tilling the soil at home is artificial labour. You seem to imagine that migration from the soil to the positionist manufacturing town is natural, right, and indispensable; and you regret that the law of settlement raises considerable and unfortunate difficulties in the way of such migration. And then in one short sentence you breathe the damning Free Trade principle. You say, "AND WHAT CAN BE MORE LIKELY TO BIND A

still when it consists of the superabundance of the produce of each after consumption! I don't think that your Lordship understands the difference between productive and non-productive labour. Cultivating the land is productive labour; because the labourer can go on re-producing and living upon his own produce. He can live upon the crops of 1844, while he is producing those of 1845. That's productive labour: but if you put a man into the Mint to coin sovereigns out of tons of gold, that's non-productive labour, because if you lock the Mint he must starve.

Now I'll give your Lordship an apt illustration of non-productive labour. I met a man at Holmfirth who in ten years had woven as much woollen cloth as would clothe 2753 persons and during the whole of that time he never was able to buy one yard of his own produce; and he had then upon him a coat eleven years old. Now my Lord, would you dishonour the agricultural labourer from his parish to compete with *that* man, in what you call the "FREE LABOUR" market, to make him more comfortable? On the contrary, don't you think that if he had four acres of land on lease for ever at a corn-rent, that he'd be able to buy a coat, or two coats, or three coats in the year? And don't you think that he would be a better customer in the overstocked market that he had left than he is now?

Now my Lord for one word on the concluding sentence in this paragraph. You say: "When this scheme is recommended by worthy people, it is always matter of astonishment with me, that they do not look to Ireland. *There* their favourite system is carried on as extensively as they can desire. Ireland is the land of allotments and small farms; is it not also the land of bad farming, poor farmers, low

ation has come slowly and by degrees, and because your order have not by the same graduated scale provided for the increase, that now society at large is beginning to canvas its rights and your "*obligations*." I doubt that they will recognise in your letter those means by which their rights can be protected, and your obligations enforced. With every million of increase to the population of the country there is a fresh "obligation" imposed on the land; and my Lord, however the principles of Free Trade in the hay-day of production may enable you to reconcile the Englishman to disinheritance by driving him from his parish, yet believe me that when the paroxysm is over the "STRANGER" will return to the "corners of his field" and the "gleaning of his land," and tell you with a voice of thunder that he is a man, and that you are no more, and that God created the land for *his* benefit as well as yours; and that you are only tolerated in possession of it so long as you are the faithful distributor of its produce.

I am, my Lord,
Your obedient Servant,
FEARGUS O'CONNOR.

Chartist Intelligence.

LONDON.—METROPOLITAN DELEGATE COUNCIL, 1, Turnagain-Lane, November 10th. MR. WHEELER laid before the Council a letter from Mrs. Ellis; upon which a resolution was passed calling on the localities to render all the assistance in their power. A communication was read from Mr. H. Ross, suggesting the getting up of a public meeting to welcome the *Northern Star* to London. The idea was most favourably received: the delegates were ordered to bring the subject before their localities, and report on Sunday next. Mr. Westray took his seat for the City locality, vice Tucker resigned. A sub-committee of five was appointed

BOLTON.—All communications must be sent to Thomas Lomax, Great Moor-street.

LOUGHBOROUGH.—A public meeting was held here on Thursday evening, the 7th inst., in the room, Union Yard, to adopt a memorial to her Majesty, in favour of Frost, Williams, and Jones. Mr. Harrold, baker, was called to the chair. Mr. Turner moved a resolution that a memorial be sent. Mr. Bucknall seconded it in a short speech.—Carried. Mr. Shevington then spoke for some time, and concluded by moving the memorial, which was seconded by Mr. Harding, and carried unanimously.

NORTHAMPTON.—The members of the new locality met on Monday last; there was a good attendance. Mr. Cherry brought the subject of the Duncombe Testimonial before the meeting, and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Watson, Cherry, Hollowell, Chyden, and Gammage, was appointed.

BRADFORD.—On Sunday evening Mr. Joseph Alderson lectured in the large room, Butterworth-buildings, to a large and attentive audience, and gave general satisfaction.

Forthcoming Chartist Meetings.

LONDON.—On Sunday morning next, the discussion at the City Chartist Hall, 1, Turnagain-lane, will be resumed at half-past ten o'clock.—The Metropolitan Delegate Council will meet for dispatch of business, at three o'clock of the same day.

FROST, WILLIAMS, AND JONES.—A public meeting will be held at the Hall, 1, Turnagain-lane, Skinner-street, on Tuesday evening next, the 19th inst., to memorialise the Queen for a free pardon for the above exiled patriots. Chair to be taken at half-past seven o'clock.—F. O'Connor, Esq., and J. H. R. Bairstow are expected to attend.

MR. BAIRSTOW will lecture in the St. George's Temperance Hall, on Sunday evening next, at seven o'clock.

A PUBLIC MEETING, on behalf of Frost, Williams, and Jones, will be held on Tuesday evening, at the Hall, Turnagain-lane. Feargus O'Connor, Esq., and Mr. Jonathan Bairstow will address the audience. Admission free.

MR. BAIRSTOW will lecture at the Investigation Hall, Circus-street, Marylebone, on Thursday evening.

SOHERS' TOWN.—Mr. John Sewell will give an account of his late tour through France at Mr. Doddridge's Rooms, 13, Tenbridge-street, New Road, on Sunday evening, at eight o'clock. The members are requested to meet at seven o'clock punctually.

STANNINGLEY.—Mr. Joseph Alderson will address the Chartists of Stanningley, in their room, on Sunday evening, at six o'clock. At the conclusion, a Committee will be elected, for the purpose of organising the locality.

MANCHESTER.—CARPENTERS' HALL.—A lecture will be delivered in the above Hall, on Sunday evening next, by Mr. M'Grath, President of the

[1] ‘To the Working Classes’, *NS,* 23/11/1844, p. 1.

[2] ‘Welcome to the Metropolis’, *NS,* 23/11/1844, p. 1.

Figure 21: *Northern Star* front page, 23/11/1844, p. 1. The last issue printed in Leeds.

The Northern Star,

AND LEEDS GENERAL ADVERTISER.

VOL. VIII. NO. 367. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1844. PRICE FOURPENCE HALFPENNY or Five Shillings per Quarter.

TO AGENTS.

All Agents of the "NORTHERN STAR" will please to address their orders for next week's papers, and afterwards, to "F. O'Connor, Esq., NORTHERN STAR Office, 340, Strand, London:" and as there are always difficulties in the way of getting out the first number of a paper, even in London, we have to request that the Orders may be forwarded in good time.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

The *Northern Star* are requested to send their communications, addressed "Mr. Joshua Hobson, Editor, *Northern Star* Office, 340, Strand, London," as early in the week as possible. Reports of meetings and other transactions occurring on Sunday or Monday *must be in London on Wednesday morning*; the news of Tuesday and Wednesday must be posted off *on Wednesday night*; the news of Thursday, *on Thursday night*; and the news of Friday, *on Friday night*. THESE INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE STRICTLY ABIDED BY by the regular correspondents of the *Star*. No excuse will be received for neglect of duty or a slovenly performance of it. It is our wish to make the *Star* an efficient organ of the great Movement Party: to accomplish this we WILL DO OUR PART,—and must desire others to do theirs. Let us have the matter regularly supplied, and there shall be *no cause* for complaint for non-insertion. Secretaries of bodies of working men, whether banded together as Chartists or as Trades, can aid much in serving themselves and Labour's cause, if they will act on the instructions given above, and send such matters of news as will be interesting to the reader generally, and of service to their own body particularly. We also invite all friends to the cause of Labour to render their assistance to enable us to make the *Star* an organ that will bear comparison with any Journal in the

That fervid eloquence which originates thought would not be tolerated in the direction of the public mind. Thus, then, I justify that for your which the law calls "sedition," while I shall now proceed to saddle it upon the right backs. Never did Chartist fervour go to the same extent as Whig incendiarism, or Bradshaw and Roby anti-Monarchism. It was a lesson, a dearbought lesson, that came from the friendly schoolmaster it is true; but then those who had inculcated the deceptive doctrine deserted and left their scholars to bear the odium of their teaching. The fervour came from O'Connell—who declared that petitions were of no avail—but that if he got one signed by 500,000 fighting men with an assurance that each petitioner would fight, then he would answer for the success; from O'Connell who said that his arm was yet strong enough to wield a sword in defence of his country's rights, and that he would rather see her streams running blood than that her people should longer submit to injustice; from Attwood, who declared that 100,000 armed men were ready to march to London from Birmingham; from Attwood, who declared that upon the refusal of the demands of 1,000,000 petitioners he would stamp his foot, and 1,000,000 brave hearts, backed by brave hands, would respond to the call; from Parson Stephens, who advocated the torch and the dagger, and resounded the vote; from Collins, who recommended us to make hostages of all the magistracy; from Lovett, who declared that all the old laws must be broken before new ones could be substituted; from Vincent, who spoke of destroying all the aristocracy; from Richard Cobbett, who told the people in my presence that the day of talking was over, and that he was ready to tuck up his sleeves and go at it; from

THE NORTHERN STAR,
AND
NATIONAL TRADES' JOURNAL.

THE NORTHERN STAR, Price Fivepence, will be published on SATURDAY NEXT, the 30th Instant, at 340, Strand, London, where all Communications for the Editor are to be addressed. Orders for the Paper, Advertisements, Remittances of Money, and Post-office Money Orders, made payable at the CHARING CROSS Branch Office, to FEARGUS O'CONNOR, are requested to be addressed thus:—"FEARGUS O'CONNOR, Esq., Northern Star Office, 340, Strand, London."

Country Agents will receive their Papers on Saturday morning, as usual. An Edition, containing the Saturday's News, will also be published for London Subscribers, and to supply Country Agents whose Subscribers may desire to have the latest News by Post on Sunday morning.

Private Letters for Mr. JOSHUA HOBSON and Mr. G. JULIAN HARNEY, must be addressed to Mr. D. M'GOWAN's Printing Office, 17, Great Windmill-street, Haymarket, London.

WELCOME TO THE METROPOLIS.

A PUBLIC SOIREE to Welcome Labour's Organ—the *NORTHERN STAR*—to the Metropolis, will be held at the Literary and Scientific Institution, John Street, Tottenham Court Road, on Tuesday Evening, December the 10th. Tea on the Table at Six o'clock precisely:

FEARGUS O'CONNOR, Esq., Mr. JOSHUA HOBSON, and Mr. G. J. HARNEY, have been invited, and will attend on the occasion.

Tickets Ninepence Each, to be obtained at the Metropolitan Delegate Council; of Mr. T. M. Wheeler, 248a, Strand; of Mr. Simpson, Elm Cottage, Camberwell; Mr. Arnott, Middlesex Place, Strand; of Mr. Shipton, Bell Court, Leather Lane; Mr. Parker, News Agent, Harrow Road; Mr. Drake, Standard of Liberty, Brick Lane; Mr. Bishopsgate, Somers Town; Mr. Parker, News Agent, Harrow Road; Mr. Drake, Standard of Liberty, Brick Lane; Mr. Bishopsgate, Whitechapel; Mr. Tillman's Coffee House, Tottenham Court Road; Mr. J. G. Dron, Oakley Street, Lambeth; Mr. Humphries, 63½, Collier Street, Pentonville; Mr. Sherrard, Secretary to the Weavers, Abbey Street, Bethnal Green; Mr. Moyer, Paget Place Wanstead Road; Mr. Abbot, Hanover Street, Lewisham; Mr. Cuffay, 469, Strand; Mr. Fussell, 36, Margaret Street, Clerkenwell; Mr. V. Pake, 33, Devonshire Street, Lisson Grove; Mr. Pattenden, Shoemaker, Beaton Place, Marylebone; Mr. Parkes, Little Windmill Street, Haymarket; Mr. Ford, High Road, Knightsbridge; Mr. Whitehow, 1, Newland Street, Kensington; Mr. Skelton, Cecil Court; and at the Institution, John Street.

Star.—Have not distressed operatives wishing to start in business called on me, and did I not frequently give them a sovereign or two at a time? Yes.—Did you ever know, during the last five years, a man coming to me for money, that my hand was not in my pocket to give it to him? I never knew a man! High Road, Knightsbridge; Mr. Whitehow, 1, Newland Street, Kensington; Mr. Skelton, Cecil Court; and at the Institution, John Street.

THE NORTHERN STAR,
AND
NATIONAL TRADES JOURNAL.

The principles of the *Star* will be—the Six Points of the People's Charter, name and all: the only dif-

NORTHAMPTON.—The members of the New Locality met on Monday last. The Democratic Testimonial Committee reported, and it was resolved to get up a public meeting for next Monday to forward the object. On the subject of an Election Fund also came before the meeting, and the Secretary was instructed to communicate with the friends in the various towns in the county on the subject.

CAMBORNE, (CORNWALL)—On Monday, the 11th instant, a Chartist tea-party took place in the house of James Skewes, jun., at which a goodly number, of both sexes, partook of an excellent tea; when the good things had been disposed of, Mr. James Skewes was unanimously elected to the chair, and opened the business of the meeting by stating that he thanked them most heartily for the honour they had conferred upon him and would endeavour to the best of his ability to fill so important an office. He would commence the business of the evening by proposing "The people, the source of legitimate power, and may they by their united efforts soon enjoy political equality, as embodied in the document commonly called the "People's Charter." The toast was received with acclamation. The Chairman then gave the "Radical Litany." Mr. Doyle was called upon to sing "The People's Charter," after which he spoke to the toast in an impressive and argumentative manner. He was heartily cheered. The remaining part of the evening was spent in social harmony. The company broke up at twelve o'clock, highly satisfied with the night's entertainment. On Friday Mr. Doyle delivered a lecture to the inhabitants of Camborne in a connection room at the back of the Post-office, Mr. James Skewes occupied the chair, and made a brief but effective opening speech and introduced the lecturer to the meeting. Mr. Doyle delivered an address which occupied an hour and a half, in the course of which he showed up in a lucid manner the futility of the many nostrums propounded by political quacks as a cure for the many physical and social diseases which afflict society, and proved the only efficient remedy for them was the enactment of the "People's Charter," which would give the working classes of the country the power of sending men to Parliament who would feel it to be their duty and interest also to make such laws as in their opinion would fully and fairly protect their labour. The lecture gave great satisfaction.

MOSSLEY.—The Chartists of this place held a grand tea party in the Association Room, Brookhouse,

event of a general election, *if so* either votes was raised he hoped the working classes would raise theirs. He had travelled the country recently to the borders of Scotland, and everywhere found that the feeling of affection and regard for Frost and his co-patriots was as strong as ever—(loud cheers). In South Shields he found two vessels built, one the Feargus O'Connor of 600 tons burthen, the other the John Frost, of 400 tons burthen; and these vessels would be chartered to bring back their friends soon, as the public voice must soon overcome the cruel obstinacy of the Minister—(loud cheering). Mr. O'Connor continued to say that he was credibly informed that Sir James Graham, relying on Ministerial strength, and backed by the Whigs and the League, intended, during the next session of Parliament, to introduce another Masters and Servants' Bill, of a far more hideous character than the last—(tremendous groans and hisses). The people must therefore be up and doing, and exhibit a dogged, determined, persevering opposition to it—(great cheering). Backed by the people, he would boldly struggle against the monster Bill—(hear, hear)—but with or without the people, he would resist to the last—(tremendous cheering). He was *determined*, come prison, come death, come scaffold, that Labour should not be taken by surprise—(immense applause). Next Saturday week, the 30th instant, Labour's organ, the *Northern Star*, would be published in London—(thunders of applause)—and he promised them he would take care to keep the cause of Frost, Williams, and Jones prominently before the public —(cheers). He had a large box of memorials at his residence, sent to him to present personally to her Majesty. Now, he would have purchased a court dress and sword, and go[illegible] him a morning Chartist to the Queen—(laughter)—But Sir J. Graham politely informed him that there would be no more levees, and hence he (Mr. O'C.) was prevented from laying upon the feet of the Queen. The Trades were now beginning to stir. Thank God for it; and he hoped to see through Labours' Parliament, a thorough union of all, by which they would be enabled to resist all and every attempt at oppression. Mr. O'Connor retired amid loud and prolonged cheering. Mr. Farrer seconded the motion. Mr. F. Gatefellow also ably and cordially supported the resolution, which was carried unanimously. Mr. Charlewood read the memorial and moved its adoption. Mr. Gardener seconded it. Mr. J. H. Barstow, in rising to support it, was received with loud cheering, and delivered a most eloquent address, which was enthusiastically applauded. The memorial was unanimously adopted. Mr. Shaw moved "That the memorial be signed by the Chairman, and placed in the hands of T. S. Duncombe, Esq. M.P., for presentation." Seconded by Mr. Wheeler, supported by H. Rose, and carried unanimously. A vote of thanks was given to the Chairman, and the meeting separated.

GLASGOW.—For some time past, expecting a comparative few of the most zealous friends of the cause, Chartism might be said to be sleeping in a most alarming locality. This did not arise from any want of love to the principles. The people throughout the surrounding districts have not relaxed their ardour in the measure for obtaining

The Northern Star,

AND NATIONAL TRADES' JOURNAL.

VOL. VIII. NO. 368. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER, 30, 1844. PRICE FIVEPENCE or Five Shillings and Sixpence per Quarter.

TO THE FUSTIAN JACKETS, BLISTERED HANDS, AND UNSHORN CHINS.

"Come one, come all—this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Here I am in the midst of the grand army of pillagers, after having skirmished for seven years with the whole corps of peculators. And to you, who were my first clients, and whose interest has ever been my most anxious care, I address my first letter. Some have told me that it would be my interest to moderate the principles and to subdue the tone of the *Northern Star*; but my answer is that *my* principle is my life—and a spade, I call a spade. You will not expect to see in this week's *Star* a specimen of what your paper shall henceforth be. It is not an easy matter to publish a paper on one Saturday at Leeds, and upon the following, to have all the arrangements completed for bringing it out in London.

We have all done our part: and upon me has devolved the duties of Editor, compiler, scissors-man, clerk, reader, correspondent—in short all save that of bill-sticker and printer's devil. And thank God I was able to do it. Next week I shall have my second self, Hobson, who has stood by me throughout my whole campaign, and who has cheerfully contributed his pow..rful aid in any department where it was required. Your old friend Harney, too, has been engaged in his removal, so that we have been all at sixes and sevens. Here I am then, in the midst of the trimmers, the metaphysicians, and the scribbling politicians, who acknowledge and denounce the existence of grievances but would withhold from you the power of correcting them. The "selling" newspapers that pander to prejudice and entry for base passion—that uphold drunkenness, lewdness, gambling, and debauchery, lest their productions should be excluded from the gin-palace, the bawdy-house, the stable, and the prize ring—are among the greatest enemies that we have to contend against: and one of two things is quite certain—I shall either lessen their profits, or whip them into the Chartist ranks. And, as I believe the only question with them to be what description of merchandize will sell best in the market, I would prefer opening a larger and more extensive repository for their goods than now exists.

What I ask you, then, is to watch narrowly the fe-

the uncertainty of tenure, and enforces the necessity of long leases. Now I tell you these things, that you may have a practical illustration of the fact that I have been before you. Add to these things, I have been incessantly dinning into your ears the absolute necessity of having all the machinery ready to meet such an assault as that with which labour is again threatened. I do it to protect Duncombe, to protect myself, and to protect your friends. Remember the adage, "God helps those who help themselves!" and I tell you now that an election cannot be very far off, and that it is your duty in every borough, town, and city, to be prepared with your machinery, and not to wait till the day of struggle. You should appoint committees in every town in England, to communicate with members of Parliament of all politics, and especially the Free Traders, whom you will find foremost in the enemy's ranks. A central committee will shortly be established in London, and all should be in communication with "England's pride and Finsbury's glory." In conclusion, do not for a moment be lulled into apathy by your present temporary prosperity, and do not be cajoled by the flimsy promises of Liberal members; make them sign the

"TOTAL ABSTINENCE PLEDGE!"

that is, to abstain totally from further aggressions upon the labouring classes. Now then do it, or let it alone. I have done my duty, and am,

Your faithful friend and servant,

FEARGUS O'CONNOR.

Trades' Movements

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THE MAGISTRACY.—The Magistrates decided that the master should pay the man £2 for his wages; and had it not been for some little mistakes which he had made himself, they would have ordered the master to have paid him the full amount claimed, namely, £2 10s., or 5s. per day, for him and his drawer. There were two other similar cases, but the hour being far advanced they were adjourned until Thursday. On Saturday Mr. Roberts appeared to prosecute some of Messrs. Pauling, Henfrey, and Co.'s knobsticks, and one of the firemen, for assaults committed by them. In one case they entered the house of a Mr. Kitcher, and abused his wife; and in two other cases they had abused some of the old hands, without cause. Mr. Hatter appeared for the defence. After a patient hearing, the whole of the knobsticks, with the foreman, were bound over to keep the peace.

ANOTHER VICTORY FOR LABOUR.

Manchester, Friday, Nov. 29th.

In another portion of this day's paper will be found a report of a case of "breach of contract," heard in the Borough Court of Manchester. The complaining parties were Messrs. Pauling, Henfrey, and Co., the case the magistrates decided that the master have followed, as a matter of course. They would have had to mount the tread-wheel with the felon and the thief. Nothing but a cry of "serve 'em right!" would have been heard on one hand, and a sullen feeling of mixed consternation and vengeance, arising from a strong sense of injustice, on the other. As it is, the "master" class have been taught that they cannot "cannot-struck the law" with impunity; and the workers have been inspired with confidence and determination to rely on the law, and to seek for the law's protection.

A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE POWER-LOOM WEAVERS OF MANCHESTER was held in the Carpenters'-hall, on Wednesday evening last, to take into consideration the steps to be taken to induce Mr. Morris of Oldfield-lane to give the same price as the other masters in the town. Mr. Wm. Ashton was called to the chair, who opened the meeting by reading the placard calling them together, and called Mr. John Kuttall to move the first resolution—"That it is the opinion of this meeting that there is only one great obstacle standing in the way of a general advance in the Power-Loom Weaving department—viz., the opposition of Mr. Morris to the just demands of his weavers. This meeting, therefore, pledges itself to support those weavers that are out, and all who will come out until such time as

to take an additional hand in each vessel, to prevent any being thrown out of berth, should the men's demands not be acceded to. The apprentices, of whom more than two hundred are already on shore, will, of course, be thrown upon their masters' hands. The demands of the men are for increased wages and shorter voyages. The present rate of wages is, men fourteen shillings a week, and mates sixteen. They want this to be advanced two shillings in each case, and the time of absence to be limited to one month. The majority of the owners seem inclined to grant them this, but others are averse to all concession. The general opinion, however, is, that "the owners must give in." The reasons assigned are, that this is the most profitable part of the year, that "all hands" are in the strike, and that the men of other places are not called to the particular kind of fishery in which the inhabitants of Barking are engaged. One thing is certain, that if the strike continues long the loss to large owners will be very great.

MEETING OF MECHANICS, MILLWRIGHTS, &c., OLDHAM.—On Monday last, an unusually well-attended meeting of the mechanics, millwrights, engine makers, moulders, and smiths of Oldham and the neighborhood, was held in the Hall of Science, Horsedge-street, for the purpose of taking into consideration certain affairs connected with those Trades. Mr. Robert Robinson, from Manchester, was called to the chair. He remarked that it was evident, from what had been done in Oldham and other towns, that the masters were making an attempt to crush the rights of industry; and it behoved the five trades who had been called together on this occasion to bestir themselves to put an end to the grievances they were labouring under. Their employers, in discharging the men with "quittance papers" which prevented their getting employment elsewhere, except under certain conditions, had in view to compel the operatives to stop in a particular locality, and also to prevent their getting higher wages. The unjust regulation he had pointed out was what they chiefly complained of at present; for on any one having a shop he must have a quittance paper, on which was stated the amount of wages he had received, the cause of his discharge, and full particulars about him; and if the man had left on account of lowness of wages, there was no

AGENTS AND BOOKSELLERS

Will please to notice, that orders for the *Star*, and advertisements, must be addressed as under:—

"FEARGUS O'CONNOR, Esq.,
Northern Star Office,
340, Strand, London."

Remittances, whether by Bank or Post-office Money-orders, must also be addressed in the same manner: and the orders made payable to Mr. O'Connor. Post-office Orders must be payable at the Charing-cross Branch Office. Attention to these instructions will prevent disappointment and save much trouble.

CORRESPONDENTS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Are requested to send their communications, addressed—

"MR. JOSHUA HOBSON,
Editor Northern Star,"
340, Strand, London."

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TIME OF PUBLICATION.

The *Northern Star* will be printed so as to be despatched in time to reach all country towns on Saturday morning, where it will arrive in due course by the London mails. A LATER EDITION will be printed to reach the country on Sunday morning, and a later still for sale in London on Sundays. Parties in the country wishing to have the later editions, will please to be particular in saying so.

Monday, 2s. 6d. Missionary fund:—Manchester, Carpenters' Hall, 5s. The following resolutions were

It is convenient, for this project, that the *Star* relocated to London almost exactly in the middle of its 15-year print run, giving it a sense of symmetry. Historians of the movement should see this period, between the second Chartist petition and Plug Plot riots of 1842, and the final monster meeting and petition of 1848, as a turning point. The role of the *Star*, as 'Labour's organ' changes too. Consequently, in this chapter I will focus on the *Star's* relocation and rebrand, from the years 1843-1845. Feargus O'Connor's weekly editorial, this time taking on the new heading of *Northern Star and National Trades Journal*, seeks to provide a rationale

for the uprooting of the paper, almost anticipating the barrage of questions from correspondents. In outlining the future of the *Star* in its new home, he assures readers that,

> The principles of the *Star* will be -- the Six Points of the People's Charter, name and all : the only difference will be the substitution of entirely new type, and no change of conductors. The price of the *Star* on Saturday next, the 30th instant, will be fivepence. And if I am asked the reason why, my answer is, because less I will not pay. Increased rent, increased salaries, and other improvements alone would justify the rise; while I do not think that one reader of the *Northern Star* will object to bear his fair proportion of the burden of supporting his own cause. If this was not necessary to secure me against ruin, the *Star* against failure, and the cause from the consequences of two such calamites, I should not have proposed it: and the only apology that the reader will require is, that it is indispensable. The price of the *Dispatch* and of the *Weekly Chronicle* is six pence. The *Northern Star* shall be a better paper than either.[3]

O'Connor's claim that 'the only difference' would be the type was doomed to fail. Within a year Joshua Hobson left the paper and returned to Huddersfield, while George Julian Harney took over his editorship title and prioritised international news, in line with his interests. The first issue from London, published on the 30th November 1844, replaced the 'Chartist Intelligence' front-page matter with 'Trades' Movements', cementing its rebrand as a 'Trades Journal,' as opposed to a 'General' or even a 'Chartist' paper. Furthermore, O'Connor exploits the relationship between the *Star* and its working readers in defending his price hike, by noting the increased operating costs within London, placing the responsibility for the continued survival of the *Star* onto its readership. In comparing the *Northern Star* to the *Dispatch* and *Weekly Chronicle*, both of which were progressive in their politics but not nearly as devoted to the Charter as the *Star*, O'Connor reminds his readers of how lucky they are. From 1842-3 O'Connor had lost over £3,500 on his attempt at a Chartist daily, the *Evening Star*, which was based in London along with O'Connor.[4] O'Connor's framing of this as an immense personal sacrifice, calling upon the reader to use some of the self-sufficiency and independence so advocated by the *Star's* self-help ethos, is striking from a gentleman leader. Nonetheless, O'Connor publicly commits to a reasonable wage for the *Star* staff, demonstrating the difficult economic relationship between production and consumption of commodities within the labour movement, having already advocated for exclusive dealing and careful consideration of the beneficiaries of spending money.[5]

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[3] 'To the Fustian Jackets, Blistered Hands, and Unshorn Chins, *NS,* 23/11/1844, p. 1.
[4] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 242.
[5] Peter Gurney, 'Exclusive Dealing in the Chartist Movement,' *Labour History Review* 74: 1 (2009), pp. 90-110, p. 98.

The uniqueness of the *Star* was not lost on O'Connor: even at seven years old, the *Star* was one of, if not the longest-running radical paper:

> No man has ever heard me puffing the *Northern Star* or recommending it in preference to any other paper : but after seven years of bustle, battle, and struggle, I now invite you to rally round those principles of which the *Northern Star* shall be the unflinching advocate. You will henceforth find your old friend in its new sphere to be everything that the lover of justice and freedom could desire.[6]

Anthropomorphising the paper as a 'friend' and 'advocate' not only signifies the *Star's* role as space for dialogue, but gives it principles, and ensures it is seen as one of their own within the Chartist movement. The continuation of the name, *'Northern Star'*, in spite of its move geographically south, not only ensures consistency for readers who cannot be 'constant subscribers,' but differentiates it from other (failed) Chartist papers including the *Evening Star,* and Bronterre O'Brien's *Southern Star* (1840). 'Chartism', Dorothy Thompson writes, 'had always combined political demands with attempts to bring about practical improvement in the lives of its members and supporters.'[7] David Goodway has speculated that the reason for the *Northern Star's* move to London was 'the need of the Executive to direct the agitation from the country's seat of government,' but the rebranding of the *Star* was not necessarily necessary along with this.[8] The *Star's* rebrand to 'National Trades' Journal' on top of the move to London gave it opportunity to improve on the agitation for improvement of everyday lives; it leaned away from debates of physical force to politics of respectability and the self-improvement ethos that would come to define the Victorian period as a whole. As stated, in this chapter I will conduct an in-depth analysis of the *Star's* rebrand, focussing on the years surrounding it, in order to evaluate the impact of its new locale and changing strategies for the Charter. Using headlines and recurring column types, I will analyse the changing makeup of the *Star's* content, from gardening advice to advertising, to illustrate the role the *Star* played in promoting a culture of self-improvement within the Chartist movement, which culminated in O'Connor's Land Plan.

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[6] 'To the Fustian Jackets, Blistered Hands, and Unshorn Chins', *NS*, 23/11/1844, p. 1.
[7] Thompson, *The Chartists* (1984), p. 300.
[8] David Goodway, *London Chartism, 1838-1848 (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 60.

1. ‘Leeds’ to ‘National’

The Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser, on its launch, firmly asserted itself within the Leeds press community. Its offices on Market Street, just off Briggate, doubled as Joshua Hobson’s publishing office and printing office. It was around the corner from the offices of the *Leeds Mercury* and *Leeds Times* , while the *Leeds Intelligencer* was around another corner on Commercial Street, next-door to the Leeds Library.[9] Alice Mann, who ran a radical publishing and bookselling shop with her sons, was based on Duncan Street, while the Stamp Office was on Basinghall Street, adjacent to the financial and legal quarter of the city (see Fig. 23).[10] By including the location of Leeds in the name, the *Northern Star* asserted itself as a worthy competitor with the other three Leeds newspapers, each of which also published weekly, on a Saturday morning. As we have seen, the *Star* distinguished itself from its Leeds neighbours by being a radical newspaper, for a radical community, but straddled both definitions of ‘Leeds’ and ‘Radical.’

[9] Thomas Haigh, *A General and Commercial Directory of the Borough of Leeds* (Leeds: Baines & Company, 1839), p. 415.

[10] Alice Mann published and sold several Chartist almanacks, as well as general radical tracts. Chase, *The Chartists: Perspectives and Legacies* p. 121, 125. For details of her shop and location, see Haigh, *A General and Commercial Directory*, p. 132 and p. 417.

Figure 23: Leeds publishing network (excl. Stamp Office).[11]

Image key

Pink: *NS* office

Yellow: Alice Mann's newsagency

Green: *Leeds Mercury* office

Blue: *Leeds Times* office

Orange: Leeds Intelligencer office

Purple: Leeds Library.

Leeds lies approximately halfway between Edinburgh and London, and was thus an ideal middle ground for correspondence from the two metropoles, and yet the *Star* had a specific Leeds identity. This occupation of space in central Leeds, as a geographical crux of the country and within the Leeds publishing and information community, suggests ways that the everyday life of the paper, printers, and editorial staff shaped the paper, and its collection of news and intelligence. Its move to London in 1844, approximately halfway through what would become

[11] Ordnance survey map of Leeds [Yorkshire 218], 1846-7, published 1852. National Library of Scotland. <https://maps.nls.uk/view/102344959> [Accessed 20/03/2020]

its fifteen-year print run, invites us to consider mobility and the re-assertion of identity and space. In this section I will explore the *Star's* definitions of 'Local and General Intelligence', how these headings were used to classify 'local', 'general', and 'foreign' information, and its relevance and newsworthiness to its Chartist readership, across the country. Its London publishing office, at 340 Strand, was some distance away from where it was printed in Great Windmill Street, just off the theatre district and the future communist politics of Soho, with whom George Julian Harney was already well acquainted. The publishing office was up the road from Fleet Street, the newspaper capital of London, and radical contemporary, publisher, and bookseller John Cleave's office on Shoe-Lane, as well as the infamous Punch Tavern (see Fig. 24). This physical proximity to the journalism hub of central London, as well as the influx of ships along the river Thames, created a new community of news and newsworthiness for the *Star*, particularly its increasing focus on international news under the temporary editorship of Joshua Hobson and then George Julian Harney.[12] What is striking about the rebrand that accompanied the geographical move is the redefinition of the *Star* from a 'Leeds' paper to a 'National' one, in spite of London's geographical distance from the Chartist heartlands of the north of England.

Figure 24: The *Northern Star* offices and the London radical landscape.[13]
Image key:

[12] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 242.
[13] From Middlesex XVII Ordnance Survey Map 1868-1873. National Library of Scotland. <https://maps.nls.uk/view/102345964> [Accessed 30/03/2020].

Green star: *NS* publishers

Pink star: *NS* office

Blue star: John Cleave's publishing and bookselling shop

Yellow star: Land Plan office

Orange circle: Punch Tavern, nearby the *Punch* offices.

Local Intelligence

When we think about the immediate locale and surroundings of the *Star's* offices, first in Leeds and then in London, we think about where it is not only physically, but ideologically situated. The *Star*, as a newspaper, is a point of reference for its readers, and the geographical points of reference will obviously influence this. The newspaper, as a medium, enables the transgression of space, and remediation of information: the 'Leeds' *Star* remediates London news back to its readers from afar, and vice versa following the move to the metropolis. When we define terms such as 'Local Intelligence', a standard newspaper heading for the time, the question begs, 'local to *whom*?'. Is local relative to the *Star's* readers, or to itself? The very definition of 'local' comes further into question when the *Star* rejects its Leeds identity and rebrands as a 'National' paper. The relationship between the periodical and locality is an important one, as Linda Hughes observed, likening the Victorian periodical to the Victorian city, 'defined by multiple centres, not only financial and theatre districts but also neighbourhoods that flourish, decay, or change character with waves of movement in and out...'.[14] When considering the

[14] Linda K. Hughes, '*SIDEWAYS!:* Navigating the Material(ity) of Print Culture', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 47:1 (2014), pp. 1-13, p. 2.

Star's ideas of 'local' intelligence, the contents of the column, like a city, are shaped by the events and activities of its inhabitants. During the *Star's* residence in Leeds, the majority of 'local' intelligence pertains to crimes and accidents specific to the regions named, usually within Yorkshire. An issue from early 1843, around 18 months before the *Star's* removal to London, reported a variety of incidents from the previous couple of weeks in Leeds:

> ## LEEDS
>
> **'RINGING THE CHANGES'--**On Tuesday last, a man named Thos. Good (who had been remanded from Monday) was placed before the magistrates at the Court House, on a charge of attempting to defraud various tradespeople, by the old trick of asking for change for half-a-crown, and on two shillings and a sixpence being given to him, suddenly throwing, or appearing to throw, the money down again, and requesting to be favoured with all sixpences. This trick he had tried in several instances, but in none of them he succeeded, our Leeds people being fortunately 'too far north' for the trickster. [A]nd he ultimately got into the hands of policeman Ourthwaite.
>
> **CONVICTION UNDER THE CHIMNEY SWEEPERS' ACT.--**On Tuesday last, Wm. Holgate, chimney-sweeper, residing in Cryer's Yard, North Town End, Leeds, was charged before Messrs Goodman and Pawson, at the Court House, with having employed a lad under twenty-one years of age in sweeping a chimney.[15]

Amongst reports of 'stealing of wearing apparel,' 'horse stealing,' drownings, and infanticide, the *Star* includes the details of a local man whose suicide has left his wife destitute, as well as a 'trickster' who had attempted to con local businesspeople. Each of the reports contain a great deal of personal details, including specific addresses of those involved, setting the scene for the *Star's* Leeds readers and warning them of crimes in the particular area. While this may be standard for the reporting of local news, the *Star* was not only for Leeds residents but for people active in the Chartist movement nationwide, adding local character, and situating itself as part of a regional community affected by such incidents. While there were, especially following the *Star*'s move to London, different editions of the paper (including Scotland, 'Town' and 'Country') 'Policeman Ourthwaite' arresting the 'trickster' is named, foregrounding his position in the community for a national audience, as is his charge. The relationship between the *Star* and the Leeds community at this point suggests that such public naming and praising is intentional. The 'Conviction under the Chimney Sweepers' Act,' as it relates to child labour laws close to the interests of the Chartist movement, is relevant both to the activist community and residents of Leeds. Meanwhile, the report on 'Thomas Good' not only puts the interests of

[15] 'Leeds', *NS* 06/05/1843, p. 3.

'tradespeople' first, but expresses pride in the town, the slang expression 'too far north' both referring to the shrewd intelligence of the trickster's attempted victims, and the geographical location of Leeds being in the north of England. The *Star* is firmly situated within this community not only through the specific details of the names and addresses of all the individuals referenced in these news stories, which would have some relevance to local readers, but referring to the clever inhabitants of 'our Leeds people', the personal pronoun encasing the *Star* within this geographical collective. The paper is formatted, just as after the 'Chartist Intelligence' column was introduced, for readers to 'filter' their reading to within 'Local & General' intelligence and choose their location from the headings. Commencing in 1844, following the departure of William Hill, the paper took a different approach to these items of specifically local interest, rebranding the column as 'Accidents, Offences, Inquests, &c.'[16] Not only does this particular title change contribute to the demise of the *Star's* 'local' identity, but it narrows the focus of the information. Amusing local stories, even within the broad theme of crime and police arrests, drift to the wayside of the *Star's* 'intelligence' agenda. Headlines become standardised, without puns or embellishment, reflecting the serious nature of these incidents, such as 'Destructive Fire at Hoxton,' 'Fatal Accident at the Windsor Theatre -- Windsor, Tuesday Evening,' and 'The Weather in Glasgow - Fatal Accident' in December 1844.[17] The articles report what is going on, provide an overview of the incident, but furthermore how incidents are resolved, holding relevant services, from fire to police, accountable. Further to this, the London *Star* adds, on the 30th November 1844, a new column for 'Metropolitan Police Intelligence,' focusing specifically on crimes committed and resolved within London. As these features change over 1844, the *Star* is able to assert its new geographical identity as part of the metropolis, no longer one of those 'too far north' in Leeds.

General Intelligence

'Local' and 'General' intelligence, for the formation of the column, are always grouped together, creating a distinction between the two categories while also suggesting a relationship between them. While 'local' intelligence is defined within the *Star* as that relating to a specific geographical location, 'general' intelligence is, as the name suggests, far vaguer. This contains news not only from other geographical locations, outside of Leeds, but miscellaneous

[16] 'Accidents, Offences, Inquests, &c.', *NS,* 13/01/1844, p. 2.
[17] 'Accidents, Offences, Inquests, &c.,', *NS,* 24/2/1844, p. 5.

information irrelevant either to regional policing, crime, or weather, or to the Chartist movement in general.

News from outside of Leeds in the 'Local and General' intelligence column tends to be the more extreme, usually incidents leading to loss of life, and thus 'newsworthy' for the *Star's* national readers prior to the move to London. Issues such as freak weather events, or shipwrecks, are considered. For example, lodged between notices about 'The Glasgow Unemployed', 'Accident at Sea', and 'Appalling and Fatal Accident', is the following report:

> A BIRTH IN THE SNOW
>
> A few days since, a young woman named Janet Campbell, wife of Robert Bain, resident at Trastlemore, Strathcaldale, was on her way to her father's, who resides at Farr, accompanied by her sister and a young man named Angus Gordon. [S]he felt the pains of labour, and Gordon immediately started off to Kirtomy to procure assistance and a conveyance, leaving the woman and her sister behind. The snow at this time was lying deep on the roads, and it was with the greatest difficulty a cart could travel over it. When the man got back again with blankets, &c., and a bed to place the woman upon in the cart, he found her lying in the snow in the middle of the road, having being delivered of a fine boy about a quarter of an hour previously! -- *John O'Groat's Journal*.[18]

The report, a reprint of news from a local Scottish periodical, illustrates not only the *Star's* participation in the 'scissors and paste' method of news circulation, but presents this 'intelligence' as unusual information, or what would now be considered human interest. While notices of shipwrecks and loss of life, as reported elsewhere in the very same column, may be of personal relevance to readers who work in similar trades, the report of a birth in heavy snow is 'newsworthy' by the contrasting irrelevance. It is, simply, interesting and affecting, not necessarily 'intelligence' on which readers' plans or everyday lives will be effected. Furthermore, the inclusion of the specific details from the *John O'Groats Journal*, including the naming of all parties involved in the incident, and the location where it happened, mirrors the *Star's* practices of local news reporting, further transmitting the specifics of the birth of Campbell and Bain's 'fine boy' to a far wider audience, sharing Angus Gordon's heroism to all. By contrast, the earlier headline of 'The Glasgow Unemployed,' reprinted from the *Glasgow Chronicle*, is of obvious interest to the Chartist public as a matter of labour and the conditions of the working classes, the *Star* having previously reported on industrial unrest in Glasgow, especially the Glasgow Cotton Spinners trial, back in 1839. These kinds of 'general' news, both of everyday relevance to a specific working-class audience and of 'extraordinary' significance is standard for the *Star* prior to its removal to London. The regional specificity of

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[18] 'A Birth in the Snow', *NS,* 25/2/1843, p. 5.

Leeds within the title, suggests an element of miscellany that is not permissible for a 'National' journal. 'Local & General Intelligence' and what would become 'Tit Bits' are merged together, miscellany fused with intelligence. Later in 1843, a series of 'extraordinary' foodstuffs are reported on, ranging from unusually large fish and lobster found by a fisherman and shopper, respectively to 'gigantic hollyhock'[19] and 'extraordinary' cabbage found by farmers, with their measurements provided for readers to accurately visualise.[20] The *Star* seems to, perhaps unwittingly, have invited such news, with the first in this 'extraordinary' series involving a 'Large mushroom':

> A perfect monster of a mushroom has been brought to us during the week for inspection. It was gathered by Mr. Thomas Cookroft, publican, of Call-lane, Leeds, and driver of the Leeds and Redcar coach. It grew in a field within very short distance of Redcar. The monster measures thirteen inches across ; and no less than thirty-eight inches in circumference.[21]

The suggestion that the mushroom was delivered to the offices of the *Star*, thus warranting inclusion in the week's intelligence, suggests the *Star's* close and personal relationship with Leeds, and foreshadows the narrowing in focus prior to the move to London. The mentions of specific streets in Leeds, and Cookroft's coach route are specific, personal details, which readers of these areas would understand. If items such as a 'monster' of a mushroom are newsworthy, the *Star's* definition of intelligence occupies a liminal position between 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary', applying 'newsworthiness' to whatever it deems fit. Following the establishment of the 'Accidents, Offences, and Inquests' column, the *Star* repurposes these short, 'extraordinary' interest reports to another column, 'Tit Bits', a patchwork of miscellany, and confined to this specific section. Linda Hughes argues that reading a periodical sideways, in her case the serialisation of *Our Mutual Friend*, the story 'moved horizontally from advertisement to literature to advertisement, […] illuminating the web of discursivity through which the serial functioned.'[22] By taking her suggestion to read a periodical 'sideways', we can see that the layout of the *Star* before and after the move to London changes. While 'Local and General Intelligence' usually occupied a space next to 'Literature and Reviews', on pages three or four, suggesting a miscellany page, this kind of 'intelligence' could 'patch up' empty gaps in the paper, sometimes appearing without a new heading next to Chartist Intelligence. The

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[19] 'Gigantic Hollyhock', *NS* ,15/7/1843, p. 3.
[20] 'Extraordinary Cabbage', *NS,* 28/10/1843, p. 3.
[21] 'Large Mushroom', *NS,* 01/07/1843, p. 3.
[22] Hughes, 'Sideways!', p. 7.

structure of the *Star,* as a periodical, changes drastically between 1843 and 1844, becoming less of an intellectual patchwork and gains a rigidity to its formatting.

Foreign Intelligence

1844 was a turning point in the *Star's* geographical outlook. Rather than remaining 'inward facing', focusing on its established community of readers, contributors, and known meetings, the *Star* began to look outward. Where previously, significant movements would eventually be afforded their own headings, in the run-up to the London move the *Star* began to ascribe 'Foreign Intelligence' greater importance.

From September 1843 the *Star* established a dedicated column for Irish political news, usually focussed on the movement for Union Repeal, led by O'Connor's parliamentary nemesis, Daniel O'Connell. This contained information separate from 'Local & General' intelligence that covered England, Wales, and Scotland; and 'Foreign' Intelligence. The first instalment of the column, on the 2nd September 1843, matches the format of the other 'Intelligences', with articles covering,

> REPEAL IN THE WORKHOUSES
> THE ARMY AND THE REPEALERS
> THE LAST MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENT
> EFFECTS OF THE ARMS' BILL
> THE MURDER OF LORD NORBURY
> ATTEMPT TO SHOOT
> ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE[23]

It is the layout and priority of material in this column that is of significance here, with articles pertaining to the Parliamentary Union Repeal debate listed first, as prime importance, before scaling down to parliamentary and then 'Accident, Offence, and Inquest' news. For the *Star*, the Irish news to be prioritised is political. Over the course of the year the *Star* expands its Irish news selection, differentiating between 'Irish Intelligence' and 'Irish Movements'. Just a year from 'repeal in the workhouses', Irish repeal becomes front-page news, as the House of Lords debate on Irish repeal is reported at length under the column 'The Irish Movement', given pride of place next to the *Star's* masthead.

This emphasis on specific kinds of news, and the separation of 'political' from 'general', is also applied to 'Foreign Intelligence'. Prior to 1844 'Foreign Intelligence' only

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[23] 'Irish Intelligence', *NS*, 02/09/1843, p. 4.

sometimes appeared under its own header, usually patched in between and around other blocks of news or miscellany. Unlike headed columns, it was not signified clearly as 'need to know' information, but worked to fill blank spaces. One example, from March 1843, foreshadows this move, as it distinguishes 'Foreign Movements' from 'Foreign Miscellany' for the first time. London, as capital city, was a headquarters for 'numerous left-wing exiles' from Europe, whose influence must have been felt.[24] This sharpens the activist focus of the *Star*, a far cry from the 'extraordinary' vegetables of previous days.

> **FRANCE**
> THE THRONE IN DANGER! --The *Reformé* contains statements which show that the conspiracy detected in the 7th Regiment of the Line at Paris had numerous ramifications.
>
> **PORTUGAL**
> PROGRESS OF DESPOTISM.--We have accounts from Lisbon by the Peninsular steamer to the 22nd of April, where public affairs remained nearly in the same state.
>
> **FOREIGN MISCELLANY**
> THE SHAME OF AMERICA.--In the *Vicksburg Daily Whig* of the 5th ult., among other advertisements of goods offered for sale, are the following :--'A very likely negro man, aged twenty-six ; 200,000 feet of seasoned lumber, fifty acclimated slaves.[25]

The 'movements' to which the *Star* refers are active and current, suggesting continual updates on the political state of the countries named. Lucy Brown, in her study of Foreign news in British newspapers, notes that 'the bulk of the foreign news came not from independent investigation, but from sources in the capital city, or the city where the resident correspondent was stationed'.[26] The bulk of Brown's research on foreign correspondence comes from sources later in the nineteenth century, but it is helpful to consider the role of international radical networks in the *Star*'s foreign news reporting. Iowerth Prothero states that a circle of exiled French radicals in London, 'initiated moves towards an organisation of foreign radicals', including Polish and Spanish refugees.[27] They befriended notable Chartists including former *Star* correspondents Bronterre O'Brien and Dr. Peter McDouall, and became involved with the Chartist movement. These relationships were both personal and political: receiving news from

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[24] Henry Weisser, 'Chartist Internationalism, 1845-1848,' *The Historical Journal* 14: 1 (1971), p. 50.
[25] 'France', 'Portugal', 'Foreign Miscellany', *NS* 04/03/1843, p. 4.
[26] Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 215.
[27] Iorwerth Prothero, 'Chartists and Political Refugees,' in *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England,* ed. by Sabine Freitag (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), pp. 209-232, p. 216. See also Fabrice Bensimon, 'The French Exiles and the British,' pp. 88-101, in the same volume.

friends and family back home by letter became literal 'foreign correspondence', and these radical networks seem to fit the definitions of (radical) foreign 'intelligence', where foreign 'miscellany' would come from a scissors-and-paste approach to other London-based papers, as the capital city was more likely to receive international news first. The focus starts in Europe, with the other colonial powers of France and Portugal, indicating a kind of shared experience between activists in Britain and those in other imperial cultures. Meanwhile, the 'miscellany' described in America is not the 'tit-bits' elsewhere in the columns, of passing interest or amusement, but emphasises the barbarism of advertisements for the sale of enslaved people, alongside lumber, as part of a shopping list of objects rather than people. The labelling of the slave trade as 'Shame' is the *Star's* own description, adding their input. The *Star's* 'international' outlook is not restricted just to Britain's neighbours in Europe, but to the colonies also. Advertisements and features about emigration to the U. S., Australia, and New Zealand increase from 1844, suggesting a Chartist diaspora. Not only are some of these spaces former and current penal colonies, but they represent the opportunity for Chartist workers who feel short-changed at home to get a head start in accruing property and fortune abroad. Furthermore, the transportation of Chartists such as John Frost and William Ellis to Australia and Tasmania remains in constant memory: 'Foreign intelligence' enables readers at home in Britain to keep up-to-date with the political conditions of their martyrs.

George Julian Harney, inspired by the revolutionary ideals of France, demonstrates a keen interest in international as well as domestic politics, going on to form the Fraternal Democrats with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whose meetings begin to make appearances in the *Star's* pages in September 1845. Harney, argues Joan Allen, already had

> a large circle of friends from among the European émigré community, […] [and] many, like Engels who first visited him at the *Star's* offices in Leeds, were pressed into service as writers and commentators on international affairs.[28]

Not only was the *Star* drawing its attention further outwards, but getting this information directly. As we have seen in chapter four, the *Star* cites its sources; with any information copied and pasted from other regional periodicals clearly attributed. Harney's leadership of the *Star* from 1844-45 heralds a geographical turn in Chartist activism, complementing O'Connor's Chartist Land Plan. In the purchase and occupation of land at home or abroad, as with the North

[28] Joan Allen, '"The teacher of strange doctrines": George Julian Harney and the *Democratic Review*, 1849-1850,' *Labour History Review,* 78: 1 (2013), pp. 67-86, p. 72.

American Land Agency, done co-operatively, working class winners must think about land more generally. It is telling that the *Star's* second issue from its new London base, on the 7th December 1844, has the front page almost entirely occupied by 'Foreign Intelligence,' and the first meeting to meet the eye is that of the 'Bradford Tropical Emigration Society'.[29] This new focus on international news has an element of performance, also, broadening the *Star's* dedication to 'self-improvement' and education, enabling working-class readers, like the landed gentry, to think more widely and, literally, more 'worldly'. The *Star's* rebrand from 'Leeds' to 'National' suggests that the *Star* is no longer based in Leeds and looking only as far as the rest of the country, but is a worthy participant in *inter*national discussions. While it was no longer geographically a '*Northern' Star,* its output shows that it remained heavily shaped by its surroundings.

2. 'General' to 'Trades'

Although the move to London accompanied a rebranding of the *Northern Star*, it sought to maintain a space within radical traditions. The *Star* had always been a periodical for the working classes and endeavoured to continue this. The renaming of the paper from being a 'General' paper to a 'Trades' journal, then, must be considered part of this. The Chartist movement was emphatically situated within labour movements and an ideology of workers' rights as human rights. As defined as the 'working' classes, the Chartist movement sought to demonstrate in capitalist terms their right to the franchise they were denied. I argue that the *Star*'s rebranding from 'General' to 'Trades' paper can be seen in two ways: firstly a specific narrowing of focus away from news, or 'general' intelligence, focusing instead on Chartist, labour, and related issues. Secondly, we can see this as the way the *Star* defined its readership community. Unlike other Chartist periodicals, such as the *English Chartist Circular,* or *The Charter*, the *Northern Star* had never asserted its purpose as a Chartist paper, or even a labour-movement or radical paper, through its name or subtitle. Its original subheading of 'Leeds General Advertiser', as seen previously, explicitly situates it within the local periodical culture of the *Leeds Times, Leeds Intelligencer,* and *Leeds Mercury*. By asserting itself as a 'Trades' Journal' in 1844, the *Star* explicitly targets working class, labouring readers, as well as foreshadowing its contents. It furthermore distinguishes the *Star* from other self-proclaimed 'National' periodicals. The *Star* redefined its brand within the parameters of labour and

[29] 'Bradford Tropical Emigration Society', *NS,* 06/12/1844, p. 1.

economics: the first issue printed from London, in November 1844, foregrounds the Trades' Movements column on the front page, just as 'Chartist Intelligence' had been launched on its front page following the establishment of the National Charter Association in 1840. 'Trades' becomes an umbrella term, under which O'Connor could establish and fortify support for the Chartist Land Plan by encompassing trade unionism and agricultural labour under one heading. In this section I will explore the *Star's* redefinition and specification of its readership community, and the relationship between the *Star*, its readers, and trades activity.

Births, Deaths, and Marriages

By removing the association with Leeds from the title, the *Northern Star* was able to confidently assert itself as the 'National' 'organ of Chartism', a solidification of its attitudes and aims from the very beginning of its print run. We can see this as a redefinition not only of its content, the production side of things, but its readership community by whom it was consumed. As we have seen, the *Star's* Chartist identity was reflexively defined by its readers, not only out of ideological necessity but in order to keep the paper financially afloat. By rebranding itself from a 'General' paper, the *Star* asserted that it was no longer (if it ever had been) for a general audience, but for an audience of Tradespeople. Not only does this engage with the Chartist movement's long radical history of working-class politics, but by 'trades' instead of, say, 'workers' or 'labourers', this new title evokes groups rather than individuals, and a level of training and skill necessary for such work. While the *Star's* aims for the Charter were of inclusivity in the extension of the franchise to working men, I argue that this rebrand enabled a sense of exclusiveness, a performance of skill and tradition in line with self-improvement culture that demonstrated the movement's followers were publicly respectable.

Previous work on the Chartist movement has commented on the Births, Deaths, and Marriages column of the *Star*, at least partly because of its comedic value. Announcements like the births of 'More Young Patriots,' demonstrate the everyday fabric of Chartist lives, and individuals families' dedications to the cause: as Chase noted, 'who can resist smiling at the thought of Fanny Amelia Lucy Ann Rebecca Frost O'Connor McDouall Leach Holberry Duffy Oastler Hill Boden, whose birth was registered at Birmingham in 1842?'[30] That said, this

[30] Chase, '"Resolved in Defiance of Fool and of Knave"?: Chartism, Children, and Conflict', in *Conflict and Difference in Nineteenth-Century Literature,* ed. by Dinah Birch and Mark Llewellyn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 126-140, p. 127.

demonstrates the perceived importance and tradition of the Chartist movement by its followers. In reporting these in the *Star*, the line between permanence and ephemerality becomes blurred, whereby the movement and, by extension, the *Star*, literally became the life legacy of ordinary people. Unlike other Leeds, or even general periodicals, the reporting of births, deaths, and marriages updated every week is never a regular feature of the *Star*, but instead appears sporadically. One particularly full instalment, from May 1843, appears to be catching up on the life events of the last few weeks, featuring 16 items, including the following:

> MORE YOUNG PATRIOTS
> David and Sarah Green, of Northampton, had a child lately registered in the name of Frederick Emmett Green.
> Registered at Plymouth, on the 24th March, Robert Emmett, second son of John Thomas Smith, news-agent, of Plymouth -- the first son being called Henry Vincent O'Connor.
>
> MARRIAGE
> On the 10th inst., at our Parish Church, by the Rev. Goerge Hills, lecturer, Joseph Teale, Esquire, to Catherine, only daughter of John Upton, Esquire, all of this town.
>
> DEATHS
> On the 8th inst., after a painful illness aged 57, Mary, the wife of Mr. Benjamin Rushton, of Ovenden, near Halifax. She was a true patriot, a good neighbour, a tender mother, and a faithful and dutiful wife.[31]

The majority of these instances are recent, with the issue being released on the 13th May, and reporting events from the 8th and 10th, both of fairly local individuals. While the new Mr and Mrs. Teale are from Leeds, Mary Rushton is still within the West Riding, demonstrating a local connection and one assumes, fewer delays with posting the news to the *Star's* offices in Leeds. It is unclear whether the *Star* is catching up on the previous weeks' reports of births or whether a letter from Plymouth would have taken six weeks to arrive in Leeds. Nonetheless, this demonstrates reader relationships, with the *Star* as the periodical of choice in which to report such occasions. Furthermore, each individual has a connection to the Chartist movement, justifying their inclusion in the paper and occupation of space on the page, with Mary Rushton first and foremost a 'true patriot', while 'Robert Emmett,' a fairly standard-seeming name, is younger brother to the more obviously Chartist Henry Vincent O'Connor Smith. Both the new 'Robert Emmett' and 'Frederick Emmet' seem to be named for the Irish nationalist Robert Emmet, described by the *Chartist Circular* upon the anniversary of his death as 'the young, the

[31] 'Births, Deaths, and Marriages', *NS,* 13/5/1843, p. 5.

ardent, the devoted 'Son of Erin!'.[32] Such reporting is standard for the *Star's* births, deaths, and marriages announcements, if not usually this many in number, at least in style and length until this point. Even as a 'Leeds General' periodical, the *Northern Star* still required a certain cachet in order for personal news to appear. At times this connection was more personal than political: just months prior to editor William Hill leaving the *Star* in 1843, he reported upon the death of his father. Expecting to be on trial for his radical activities, Hill wrote an editor's letter, in which he details information about the trial gleaned from O'Connor's own letter to the *Star's* readership, and notifies his 'Hull friends' to whom he is parish minister of his expected whereabouts for the week. The letter, dated 'Thursday, Feb. 16th' is accompanied by an admittedly 'rare' post-script dated the Friday morning, and encased in the traditional black border for mourning:

> He was in his 72nd year. I left him "toddling about the house" in his customary manner yesterday, after our frugal noon-day meal, when I came up to the office to write my letter to you. I had finished it, and the paper had gone to press but a very short time, when a messenger arrived in a breathless haste to summon me. I ran into the street, leapt into the first coach I saw, and bade the coachman "drive for life" ; he did so but vainly; I was too late to catch his dying breath : it was gone. He was a corpse in his chair. […] The poor old man often wept at the approach of the trials […] it preyed hard upon his mind […] and I doubt not that he adds another to the long list of murders by the devilish system.[33]

Hill's postscript is intensely personal, detailing the events of the day, the moment he received word to come home, and his relation to the *Northern Star*. The message gives readers an insight into the workings of the paper, the system of creating it and the timeline by which it is sent to press, echoing the 'notices to correspondents' imploring readers to send their meeting reports on time. He directly addresses the readers, noting that he had come to Leeds just to communicate with 'you,' the direct personal pronoun establishing the readers' position in relation to Hill, the *Star*, and his father. This creates a sense of intimacy between Hill and his readers, his action-packed description of the coach journey home and the sight of the 'corpse in his chair' almost invites readers along, as if they too are seeing Hill's dead father. Hill concludes his postscript by furthering this intimacy, establishing himself on a level field with readers and imprisoned Chartists, by placing the responsibility for his father's death on the 'devilish system' through which the 'Veteran Patriots' and Exiles' Widows and Children' have

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[32] ''Memoir of Robert Emmet,' *Chartist Circular,* 1 (02/08/1839), p. 532. For more on Robert Emmet and his relevance to the Chartists, see Ruan O'Donnell, *Robert Emmet and the Rising of 1803* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2003), p. 194.

[33] 'Another "STRIKE PLOT!" – To the People,' *NS* 18/02/1843, p. 5.

lost family and friends. Although, as a clergyman, Hill is culturally middle-class, the loss of his father, framed through the emotional turmoil of Chartist political campaigning, situates his experiences with those of his working-class readers, exacerbated by the opening of the account with the detail of a 'frugal' meal. The sense of urgency in Hill's account, through the dynamic descriptions of 'breathless haste,' 'run[ning],' to the 'first' coach feels literary, novelistic. This urgency, again, in relation to the life-and-death nature of the event should evoke not only sympathy, but empathy from readers. The personal loss for Hill, through his intimate connection with the *Star*, and thus the Chartist movement, justifies the account, which is deemed as newsworthy for the Chartist public even though Mr. Hill Sr. has seemingly no relation to the Chartist movement. On the same page, detailed in 'births, deaths, and marriages,' is a notice of the death of 'Mr. John Hill, late a grocer and tea-dealer in Barnsley, and father to the Rev. William Hill…' detailing his address at Barstow-street, Leeds.[34] This not only defines the relevance of Mr. Hill's death to a Chartist readership, but to a Leeds-based readership too.

In 1844, the *Star's* reporting of births, deaths, and marriages enters a steep decline, at a rate of one or two every few weeks, at times petering off for weeks at a time. The first instalment of the column following the *Star's* move to London, on 14th December 1844 is one of the last reports of ordinary people's deaths, squeezed into half an inch at the bottom of the last page. One such example is the death of Joseph Killingbeck, which notable to the *Star*, and therefore its readers, as 'a strenuous advocate for the People's Charter, a constant reader of the *Northern Star*, and much persecuted for his [principles]'.[35] Compared with the first deaths reported in January 1845 of extraordinary individuals, 'BURNS' 'BLETHERIN' 'JAMIE', and Sir Henry George Grey's death contains the following commentary:

> We have to announce the death of the Hon. General Sir Henry George Grey, brother of Earl Grey, who expired on Saturday last, after a protracted illness, at his residence in Hertford-street, May-fair. The deceased was the third son of the late Earl Grey. In August, 1812, he married Miss Charlotte Des Voeux, only daughter of Sir Charles Des Voeux, Bart., by whom he does not leave any issue. The colonelcy of the 13th Dragoons becomes vacant by the demise of the gallant general, the pay and emoluments of which amount, according to the late return, to £1,083 18s. [Nice pickings!][36]

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[34] 'Deaths', *NS,* 18/02/1843, p. 5.

[35] 'Joseph Killingbeck', *NS,* 14/12/1844, p. 6. The last word of this sentence shows up in digital facsimiles as 'princi' with no full stop. I am unsure if this is a scanning error by the British Library, or a printing error by the *Star*.

[36] 'Sir Henry George Grey', *NS,* 18/1/1845, p. 5.

The detail given to Joseph Killingbeck is brief but relays his importance as a member of the Chartist community: by contrast, Sir George is defined by his importance to the aristocracy, all of whom are named, the family tree constructed before readers' eyes. The significance of his death is relayed in terms of the high society in which he moved, the 'vacancy' of his colonelcy apparently open to those who apply. The sarcastic tone is confirmed by the editorial commentary enclosed in square brackets, suggesting this to be a fine income for those who could reach such a position. The remark that the *Star* has to announce the death suggests a lack of agency behind the decision, and a self-awareness that it is not representative of the 'Trades' community which the *Star* explicitly asserts itself to be a part of. With the exception of very high-status Chartists, deaths of ordinary individuals are not reported or detailed following the move to London; the only figures who garner such attention from the *Star* must be of 'National' importance. With a renewed focus on 'Trades' as an audience, rather than 'General' readers, the performative aspects of self-improvement and social hierarchy, rather than being disrupted by the *Star*, become enshrined as a matter of life and death.

Trades' Movements

The changing definitions of notable individuals through the *Star's* 'births, deaths, and marriages' column casts a disparity over the assertion of being a 'Trades' paper. To see the extent of this, however, we must explore the evolution of 'Trades movements' within the paper. The period surrounding the *Star's* removal to London, 1843-46, has been largely recognised by historians of the Chartist movement to be a quiet one, by contrast to the rest. This seems to be reflected in the *Star's* sales figures, which Mussell notes, 'was a respectable 12,500 [by the end of 1842]; however, in 1843 there was a sharp fall to around 8,700, a figure below that of the early issues of the *Star*', and potentially a factor in O'Connor's decision to move the paper to London.[37] The loss of nearly a quarter of its sales was naturally news for concern, but not necessarily reflective of a wider decline of Chartist activity.

Chase argues that 'Harney and Hobson were reduced to padding out the *Northern Star* with general and foreign news, book reviews, and, in 1843-44 particularly, detailed coverage of 'the colliers' movement'.[38] However, the number of items in 'Chartist Intelligence' did not fall into as steep a decline: while some geographical areas were virtually absent from the

[37] Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007).
[38] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 243.

column, and the attendance of meetings exaggerated or vague, the pages of the *Star* were filled. From January 1844 the items of Chartist intelligence do fall into a decline, but through the reporting of the Colliers' movement, as well as the 'Condition of England Question' column, the *Star's* engagement with trade issues is foreshadowed. The 'Trades Movements' column is established in February 1844, becoming a regular feature of the *Star* until August 1848, after which it was renamed 'Trades Intelligence.' The introduction of 'Movements' into the *Star* is significant because it demonstrates continuous activity, a sense of progression. The focus of the Colliers' Movement was to seek some independence from the proposed Master and Servants' Bill, which enabled colliery owners to control large aspects of their workers' lives, including, Chase notes, 'provision of housing, the administration of local government and justice; and the availability of employment opportunities outside the mine.'[39] This agitation, writes Christopher Frank, was 'the first organized and large-scale national working-class expression of discontent with the master and servant law, beginning the tradition of trade union opposition that ultimately led to the repeal of penal sanctions for breach of contract in 1875.'[40] The *Star's* reporting on the Colliers' Movement reached its peak in February 1844, with 39 individual items in the column, spanning multiple pages of print, presumably to ensure that later information was included in the edition as they went to press. As trades' support for the miners against the proposed bill built up until April 1844, the *Star* launched its 'Trades Movements' column: a formal recognition of the necessity of these interlinked and overlapping movements and their relevance to the Charter, and to the Chartist community. The relationship between Colliery owners and magistrates was of deep concern to their workers and to Chartist principles, as an excerpt from February 1844 illustrates:

> MORE TYRANNY OF THE COAL KINGS AND MAGISTRATES IN DEBRYSHIRE--Two men were this morning, Wednesday 21st, been sent to Derby Gaol for six weeks. The master made a particular request that Alsop should have three months. The magistrates enquired what he had done in particular? They stated he was the first man that commenced the Union at this place. The magistrate seemed to think this was a little too much of a good thing ; he thought if that was all they had against him six weeks each was sufficient. What think you of a worthy magistrate's son telling these poor men when they are only asking for bread that they deserve a bit of cold lead, or a few round of shot being sent among them? What would be said if these poor Miners had said of their tyrants? [41]

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[39] *Ibid.,* p. 243.
[40] Christopher Frank, *Master and Servant Law: Chartists, Trade Unions, Radical Lawyers and the Magistracy in England, 1840–1865* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 61.
[41] 'More Tyranny of the Coal Kings…', *NS*, 24/02/1844, p. 5.

The imprisonment for trade union activity, and the specific request for extra punishment for this action, justifies the space within the column, evoking outrage and a shared radical history, a new generation following the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The connection, drawn between the *Star's* readers and the imprisoned Trades Unionists, enables them to make a personal connection between their broadly Chartist principles and these individual movements. The notion of martyrdom, whether by death in service or imprisonment, is a further connection with the Chartist agenda. While the majority of Trades' Movement and Colliers' Movement items follow the standard format of meeting minutes, including transcriptions of speeches, applause, and attendance, the dangerous conditions of pit work meant that Colliers' Movement items laid bare safety issues and working conditions, as argued by the Miners Association in 'Colliers' Movements' of September 1843:

> We risk our lives and you your money to dig from the bowels of the earth a commodity on which it may truly be said the existence of Great Britain as a nation depends, it is not too much to request that the price of that article shall be such as to give ample remuneration to both the labour and capital employed. The public as consumers reap the benefit, without so much as soiling a finger in the dangerous undertaking of raising an article indispensably necessary to their comfort and existence.[42]

The relationship between labour and capital is made clear, as well as the responsibility for miners' lives. By publishing the resolution, the *Star* recognises the significance of the Miners' Association's work. If they are to maintain the line that labour is the wealth of working people, the miners are extracting coal from the 'bowels of the earth', emphasising the dirt and labour of this natural commodity, literally powering the country. Upon the *Star's* first issue at their new office in London, 'Trades' Movements', previously spread through the middle of the paper, was moved to the front page. While throughout 1845 it did not always stay there, most likely due to Harney's preference for foreign news and O'Connor's weekly letter to readers on current events, this seems an intentional marker of the *Star's* trades-focused attitude. The reporting of Trades' Movements not only promoted unions within individual trades, but promoted solidarity between trades' as well. The abolition of the Colliers' Movement column in favour of a column shared between all Trades disputes from the autumn of 1844 highlights the importance of co-operation and solidarity between issues, and shared agitation for the Charter. Furthermore, this combined with the inclusion of trades' periodicals, such as the *Miner's Advocate*, in the 'Literature & Reviews' column demonstrates a dedication to Trades

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[42] 'Colliers' Movements', *NS,* 16/09/1845, p. 8.

issues, from one progressive periodical to another as an example of solidarity. Finally, it serves as a performance of self-improvement culture, with breadth of knowledge of trade and economy evidence of a wider cultural understanding which would deserve enfranchisement.

By supporting unionisation not only within, but between trades, the *Star* could widen its readership base, and thus the potential support for its agenda. As we have seen, the formation of the Chartist Co-Operative Land Society in 1846 is undeniably the focal point for the *Star* for the remainder of its print run. Tom Scriven, writing on the moralistic philosophy behind the Land Plan, defines its objective as 'the rebalancing of the labour market. The intended mass-migration of urban workers to the countryside would deplete the population of surplus labour in industrial regions, forcing wages to set at their "natural" level.'[43] How O'Connor got the *Star* to that stage, I argue, is through this renewed focus on labour and labourers. By including not only trades such as miners and mariners, as well as the manufacturing trades of the textile industries of the midlands, north of England, and Scotland, agricultural labourers from throughout the country could count themselves among the target readership of the *Northern Star and National Trades' Journal*.

Agriculture and Horticulture

The 'Agricultural Column' (shortly afterwards renamed 'Agriculture and Horticulture') emerged in the *Star* in late November 1844, following the move to London, and remained part of the paper for around a year. Usually situated alongside 'Literature & Reviews' and 'Tit-Bits', the column seems to be part of the *Star's* self-improvement drive; this placement linked it with leisure and education rather than Trades' Movements or any of the intelligences. It is the imagery of the Land Plan that is important to the *Star*: while rhetoric of the Trades' Movements column focuses on the injustices of working conditions, the Agriculture and Horticultural column creates an image of growth, power, and agency. The Land Plan was a utopian project, after all, the defining feature of this utopia being the independence and autonomy that many working people lacked in their existing trades. Dorothy Thompson rightly noted that 'the Plan served to hold together a movement which otherwise might have split sooner into a variety of tendencies', trade unionism included.[44] By owning land, a family or group could furthermore raise their financial profile to qualify for the franchise, and thus

[43] Scriven, *Popular Virtue* (2017), p. 115.
[44] Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartists,* p. 303.

participate in existing elections, so that they might improve conditions more widely, eventually extending the franchise in line with the Charter. O'Connor's Land Plan, can be seen as an ideological project for the elevation of working people which would not only allow them independence, but the creation of a new legacy. The Land Plan would create, for the first time in perhaps a long time, first-generation farmers who were self-taught from books and writing. The periodical nature of the *Star*, furthermore, was perfect for sharing agricultural lessons in a way that may have been more accessible than O'Connor's work, *Management of Small Farms* (1843), although this was heavily advertised in the *Star* too. The regularity of the column enables week-by-week, seasonal instruction, and furthermore planted the idea of agitation around the land and the practical workings of such a project in readers' minds:

> LARGE FARMS v. SMALL FARMS--WHICH ARE THE BEST? -- Next to the enormous holdings of great proprietors, we may trace the unsatisfactory state of the agricultural districts to the very large farms. It is not because a man is discontented with his labourer's condition, and reckless enough to undertake a small farm without either ability or capital to make the most of it, that such a farm would be given to him. The result, of course, is difficulty and degradation--a wasting of the land, and a hideous aspect of struggling pauperism. But if better care were taken--if it were known that a character for knowledge and economy, and general good conduct, accompanied by a certain amount of means, such as thrifty labourers under favourable circumstances might accumulate--if it were known that, these things being preparatory, the possession of a small farm at a reasonable rent might be expected to follow, *then* it appears to us that a great amendment of the general condition of the agricultural labouring class might be expected to follow. *Thus* we think (and thus only, as it appears to us), may the foundation of a powerful, intelligent, agricultural community be laid.[45]

This article, extracted from the *Morning Post*, accompanies brief guides for 'The Greenhouse,' 'The Flower-Garden', and 'The Kitchen-Garden', from *Bell's Weekly Messenger*. The reprinting of such articles in the *Star* does not necessarily assume the capabilities of readers' domestic spaces to contain small farms, but encourages readers to think about home-grown food, and self-sufficiency that became entangled in Victorian self-improvement culture. The idea of a 'debate' between Large and Small farms, as though many of their working-class 'trades' readership had a choice between the two, is less of a dialogue in the radical pamphleteering tradition, but demonstrates the potential for O'Connor's Land Plan and the means of creating a mass working-class landowning community who could not be ignored. Self-education is the means of making a success of such small farms, advocating the

[45] 'Large Farms vs. Small Farms…', *NS,* 07/12/1844, p. 5.

'knowledge and economy' of already 'thrifty labourers' as a perfect set-up for such a new plan of society. The flattering and optimistic tone of the article is strengthened by its being written not by Feargus O'Connor for the *Northern Star*, which might be too obviously paternalist propaganda, but for the *Morning Post*, and reprinted in the *Star* as a novel idea relevant to its labouring readers. Over the course of 1845 'Agriculture and Horticulture' is comprised of instructions for 'FIELD-GARDEN OPERATIONS', extracted, as acknowledged every issue by way of introduction,

> from a DIARY of *Actual Operations* on five small farms on the estates of Mrs. Davies Gilbert, near Eastbourne, in Sussex ; and on several modern farms on the estates of the Earl of Dartmouth at Slaithwaite, in Yorkshire, published by Mr. Nowell, of Farnley Tyas, near Huddersfield, in order to guide other possessors of field gardens, by showing them what labours ought to be undertaken on their own lands.[46]

The provision of such a lengthy and detailed introduction to the column gives the column clout as an actual, trusted source of advice, and essentially advertises Nowell's publication for readers to buy for themselves. The inclusion of examples from the north and south of England suggests the universality of such tips for different types of soil, climate, and terrain, all conveniently contained together within the pages of a trades' periodical. The column is variously updated with seasonal information, as well as regular updates on scientific advancements; including various recipes over Autumn 1845 for different types of manure, including their merits and pitfalls. Given the criticisms of O'Connor from mainstream periodicals, it seems surprising that this proliferation of manure talk was not made fun of elsewhere, but perhaps the aforementioned reduction in circulation enabled the *Star* to fly under the radar of its critics. The devotion of such space in the pages of the *Star* to horticultural guides thus foregrounds the Land Plan prior to its official founding in 1846. It is no accident that instead of 'Field-Garden Operations' or even 'The Kitchen-Garden' as the column title, the *Star's* editorial team use the trade terms, 'Agriculture and Horticulture', enshrining them as industries in their own right, relevant to a Chartist readership, and ripe for mass mobilisation as a newly independent and unionised agricultural community.

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[46] 'Field-Garden Operations', *NS,* 16/05/1845 p. 7.

3. 'Advertiser' to 'Journal'

The *Northern Star's* unique contribution to the Chartist press, as we have seen, was the printing of news as defined by the Six Acts (1819). However, neither its initial launch nor its rebrand in 1844 addressed this directly: the evidence was contained across the eight pages of content. That said, the *Star* originally launched as an 'Advertiser', suggesting its income was partially derived from advertising matter, as well as implying the promotion of material and the dissemination of news. In this section I will explore the impact of the *Star's* redefinition from 'Advertiser' to 'Journal' following its relocation to London. Both present-day and contemporary definitions of 'advertiser' and 'journal' in the OED suggest that an 'Advertiser' periodical is simply one that contains advertisement and promotional material, while a 'Journal' is a periodical 'containing news or dealing with current matters in any particular sphere.'[47] I argue that the *Star's* definition of such terms is not so fixed: in rebranding to the 'National Trades' Journal' the *Star* focuses on specifically trades information, the term 'Journal' giving it a new focus and direction, suggesting a more pointed degree of selection of the news it publishes. The advertising content of the *Star* certainly does not diminish following its nominal change from 'Advertiser'. On the contrary, the *Star's* weekly average number of advertisements rises from 8.8 in 1843 to 14.4 in 1845, (see fig. 25) with a marked increase around the time of the *Star's* move to London. Whether or not this was due to higher operating costs in the metropolis, including rent and wages, as this move was furthermore accompanied by a ½*d* price rise per issue, it is still a significant change. No longer a self-proclaimed 'Advertiser', the 'Journal' advertised more heavily than ever before. In this section I will explore the advertising content of the *Star* in-depth, not in terms of Chartist branding, as has been ably done by James Epstein and Paul Pickering, but in terms of production and consumption of advertising content in the *Star*.[48] The redefinition of the advertising or journal status of the *Star* suggests a change in the *Star's* community of readers. While an 'Advertiser' suggests the notice-board function discussed earlier in the thesis, bringing like-minded people together to agitate for the Charter, the *Northern Star* as a 'Journal' contains a strategy of activism, and this includes consumer power. The *Star*, in changing its advertising content,

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[47] 'Journal,' OED Online (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) <https://oed.com/view/Entry/101731?rskey=zNUa8a&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [Accessed 10/05/2020]

[48] See James Epstein, 'The Lion of Freedom' (1982); Paul Pickering, 'Chartism and the "Trade of Agitation"'(1986)

makes clear the relationship between economic and social issues surrounding the enfranchisement of working men.

Figure 25: Table showing total advertising items per year (excluding advertorials, i.e. Parr's Life Pills song) and average per issue.

Year	**1843**	**1844**	**1845**
Total ads	452	421	738
Avg. ads per issue	8.86	8.21	14.4

Everyday advertising

Advertising represents the fabric of everyday life, from what readers need to what they want to what designers and shopkeepers want them to need and want. While other studies of periodical advertising have focussed heavily on constructing an implied reader, I argue that the *Star* uses advertisements, both as an 'Advertiser' and a 'Journal', to construct strategies for activism. The everyday life of readers must be catered for, and it is no surprise that, as was typical of the time, the majority of ads in the *Star* were for medicines and topical treatments. Tom Scriven has convincingly argued that the Chartist press played a part in 'the democratisation of medicine' in the early 1840s, noting that, 'these enterprises were not simply palliatives, but sought to overcome the effects of demoralisation by realigning individual bodies with the natural laws broken by the aristocracy and capitalists.'[49] It is convention within Chartist historiography when introducing the *Northern Star* as a primary source, to draw attention to the proliferation of advertisements 'for Old Parr's Life Pills (as used by William Hick of the *Star* Office)'.[50] The majority of advertisements, even within those ads for medicines, were 'Parr's Life Pills' or 'Frampton's Pill of Health', which appeared almost without fail in every single issue. While there certainly would have been a financial benefit to the *Star* in generating revenue from advertising sales, the advertisements of medicine were supported by former physician and Chartist leader Peter McDouall, and, as Scriven notes, 'medicine was perceived most importantly as a direct means of improving the working class'.[51] If the *Star's* political agenda was broadly for fairer working and living conditions across social

[49] Scriven, *Popular Virtue* (2014), p. 112.
[50] Stephen Roberts, 'Who Wrote to the *Northern Star*?' (1995), p. 55.
[51] *Ibid*, p. 114.

classes, the faithful consistency of medical advertisements must be seen as part of this agenda. Not only this, but the advertisements of over-the-counter, or postal-order medicines to consume in the domestic space must be seen as an assertion of independence, self-administering medical help within restricted economic means. One issue of the *Star*, from early 1843, shows page two covered in advertisements for medicines, from 'Kerman's Celebrated Golden Packets of Specific Medicines' to 'Parr's Life Pills' to the 'Cordial Balm of Syriacum'. Ads for 'purifying specific pills', used for the treatment of venereal disease, gonorrhoea, and syphilis within the paper might suggest the politicisation not only of sexual health but of sexual freedom, even amidst criticisms of the new Bastardy Laws which demonised unwed mothers but not the fathers.[52] However, it could also be part of access to medicine as an opportunity for independence within the Chartist family, treating children whose parents had been infected. Judith Walkowitz notes that, 'infants under one year old accounted for thirty of fifty-four reported deaths from syphilis in London during the first six months of 1846'.[53] This, Walkowitz notes, was not even accounting for parasyphilitic deaths among adults.[54] One interesting feature of several of these advertisements is their sheer length, accompanied not only by likely overpromising claims from the manufacturers for Frampton's Pill of Health to cure a wide variety of disorders, from headaches and giddiness of 'persons of FULL HABIT' to the 'depression of spirits, dulness [sic] of sight, and nervous affections' of 'FEMALES', while addressing 'MOTHERS [that] they are confidently recommended as the best medicine during pregnancy; and for children of all ages they are unequalled.'[55] This appeals to the household economy of *Northern Star* readers. What is special, however, about 'Parr's Life Pills' is the sheer volume of personal testimony their advertisements carry. While many instances of the adverts come with the supporting testimony of Chartist poet William Hick, of the *Star's* office, praising the 'great good your pills are doing in Leeds and its neighbourhood,' including 'aged mill people', the ads are typically a whole page column in length.[56] One such testimonial, part of the patchwork of such glowing reviews that comprise the whole ad, regales to readers that,

> I find myself so far relieved that instead of daily, nay hourly, suffering from that dreadful complaint, nervousness, with its attendant miseries, I am restored to my former good

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[52] Schwartzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement,* p. 56.
[53] Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 52.
[54] *Ibid*, p. 53.
[55] 'Frampton's Pill of Health', *NS,* 08/02/1844, p. 2.
[56] 'Parr's Life Pills, *NS,* 07/01/1843, p. 2.

health ; my nerves are strong – the giddiness and swimming in my head are totally removed, and I am now able to attend regularly to my trade.
I am, Gentleman, your obedient Servant,
THOMAS PATTINSON, Painter.
N. B. I shall be glad to answer any enquiries respecting the good the pills have done me.[57]

The inclusion of a working man, whose recovery thanks to Parr's Pills enables him to 'attend regularly to [his] trade' sets an example to the *Star's* working readership. While 'nervousness' is sufficiently vague to the twenty-first century reader to encompass all manner of maladies, the emphasis on the constancy of suffering, configured in terms of 'hourly' industrial time as related to his work is not aspirational but relatable to working readers. The accompanying note, in the style of readers and correspondents, almost dares readers to question or criticise his testimony. The review, through drawing attention to the passage of time, emphasises the everyday nature of such advertising, and its relation to everyday, normal life. These are so interspersed that Old Parr, not content just with clearly marked advertisements, occasionally appears in other sections of the paper, including within 'Tit Bits' and 'Local & General Intelligence.' One such instance, beside 'A Mad Woman' and beneath 'A Laughable Occurrence' reprinted from the *Liverpool Journal*, breaks into song:

SPRING TIME IS COMING

The spring-time is coming -- old age at the door
Looks out with delight o'er the woodland and moor;
The young ones are sporting like wild mountain deer,
And the village games now on the fresh green appear.

The spring-time is coming -- be choice in your food.
Let your health be regarded, by cleansing your blood;
Would you still against sickness successfully war,
Then choose the Long Life and the Pills of Old Parr.[58]

The use of song not only mimics the Chartists' own use of songs in maintaining the radical tradition of ballads, but the use of natural, woodland imagery speaks to the nostalgia for a pre-mechanised, pre-industrial age at the heart of Chartist-adjacent campaigns such as the Ten Hours Act. The seasonality of spring, using agricultural imagery of youth, with the 'fresh

[57] 'Parr's Life Pills', *NS,* 25/02/1843, p. 2.
[58] 'Spring Time is Coming,' *NS*, 18/03/1843, p. 3.

green' grass growing, creating a sense of air, space and freedom. Furthermore, it taps into O'Connor's aims in the early 1840s to prime the *Star's* readership, and the Chartist community more widely, to subscribe to his Land Plan, creating a nostalgic vision for the future. The copy not only participates in radical literary tradition through the ballad form, the evocation of 'wild mountain deer' is furthermore reminiscent of Burns' folk poetry, adding weight to the supposed extreme old age of 'Old Parr'. The rhyming of 'war' and 'Parr' in a Scottish accent adds weight to this theory.[59] In doing so, the purveyors of Parr's Life Pills present their product as part of a Chartist life. While it does not carry the same weight as specifically 'Chartist' branded products such as blacking or breakfast powder, it purports to level the playing field (or village green) of aging, health, and lifespan between the classes. The self-improving nature of such available medicines provides an improving 'antidote' to the merely amusing 'tit-bits,' making such columns instructive as well as amusing.

Leisure time and Sunday plans

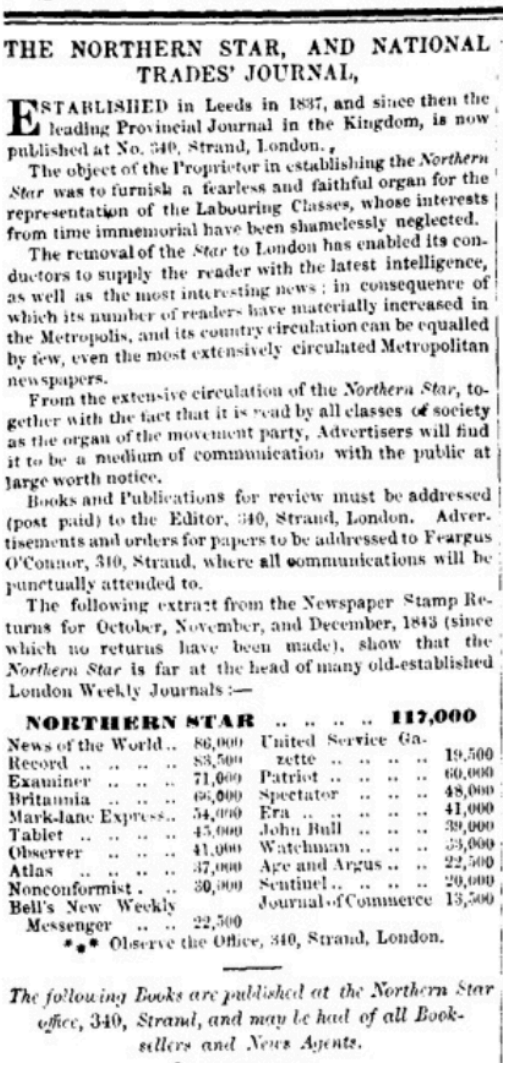
As we have seen, the *Star's* participation in literacy and self-improvement culture included the reporting and promotion of schools, meetings, and libraries. In addition to literature and reviews, the *Star* frequently advertised literary works, building relationships with radical booksellers across the country, from James Green of Birmingham to John Cleave and Abel Heywood of London.[60] Further to the establishment of a radical canon in the 'Literature & Reviews' column, tracts and essays written by Chartists were advertised in the *Star's* pages alongside works by Voltaire and Thomas Paine. A regular advertisement column in 1845 for 'WORKS PUBLISHING BY W. DUGDALE,' located conveniently near to the *Star's* London office on the Strand, boasts, among other publications, a re-issue of 'THE MYSTERIES OF PARIS,' a popular French social-problem novel published serially from 1842-43. Dugdale boasts that,

> [a]ll is faithfully and fully translated. […] [One publisher] pretends to omit everything offensive. That man must have a diseased and prurient imagination, who can see anything offensive in this work.[61]

[59] I am grateful to my friend Emma Bulloch for lending her Largs accent to a reading of this poem.
[60] See Paul Pickering, 'Chartism and the "Trade of Agitation"' (1991). See also Stephen Roberts, ed., *The People's Charter* (London: Verso, 2003), pp. 19-35, p. 25.
[61] 'Works Publishing by W. Dugdale', *NS,* 06/07/1845, p. 2.

The advertisement of such texts not only demonstrates the auto-didactic nature of the *Star's* readership, but a European outlook, even within the radical canon. Dugdale's defence of this novel, in attacking another translator as 'diseased and prurient' turns the tables on the moralising judgement of literary critics of the day. The *Star* furthermore advertised *itself* with some regularity in 1845, alongside patent medicines and other texts for publication. Under the heading 'THE NORTHERN STAR AND NATIONAL TRADES JOURNAL', the notice would open with a short introduction to the paper's founding in Leeds before comparison of its stamp sales figures with its contemporaries, including the *News of the World*.[62] (See fig. 26)

Figure 26: The *Northern Star's* self-advertisement, 'The Northern Star' 06/07/1845, p. 2.



THE NORTHERN STAR, AND NATIONAL TRADES' JOURNAL,

ESTABLISHED in Leeds in 1837, and since then the leading Provincial Journal in the Kingdom, is now published at No. 340, Strand, London.

The object of the Proprietor in establishing the *Northern Star* was to furnish a fearless and faithful organ for the representation of the Labouring Classes, whose interests from time immemorial have been shamelessly neglected.

The removal of the *Star* to London has enabled its conductors to supply the reader with the latest intelligence, as well as the most interesting news; in consequence of which its number of readers have materially increased in the Metropolis, and its country circulation can be equalled by few, even the most extensively circulated Metropolitan newspapers.

From the extensive circulation of the *Northern Star*, together with the fact that it is read by all classes of society as the organ of the movement party, Advertisers will find it to be a medium of communication with the public at large worth notice.

Books and Publications for review must be addressed (post paid) to the Editor, 340, Strand, London. Advertisements and orders for papers to be addressed to Feargus O'Connor, 340, Strand, where all communications will be punctually attended to.

The following extract from the Newspaper Stamp Returns for October, November, and December, 1843 (since which no returns have been made), show that the *Northern Star* is far at the head of many old-established London Weekly Journals:—

NORTHERN STAR	**117,000**		
News of the World ..	86,000	United Service Gazette	19,500
Record	83,500	Patriot	60,000
Examiner	71,000	Spectator	48,000
Britannia	66,000	Era	41,000
Mark-lane Express ..	54,000	John Bull	39,000
Tablet	45,000	Watchman	33,000
Observer	41,000	Age and Argus	22,500
Atlas	37,000	Sentinel	20,000
Nonconformist ..	30,000	Journal of Commerce	13,500
Bell's New Weekly Messenger	22,500		

*** Observe the Office, 340, Strand, London.

The following Books are published at the Northern Star office, 340, Strand, and may be had of all Booksellers and News Agents.

[62] The *News of the World,* edited by John Browne Bell, 'entered the field of mid-Victorian, mass-circulation Sunday papers on 1 October 1843. It was aimed at the same lower-middle-class and working-class readership as *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper,* and sold for 3*d* like its competitor.' John Kofron, 'News of the World', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 451.

Alongside this were extensively reviewed advertisements for the editorial team's other works, on sale both 'at the *Star* office and all Booksellers and News Agents', alongside other Chartist commodities, contributing to the everyday consumption of Chartism as literature and as self-improvement.[63] Other works advertised include the complete publication of 'Chamber's Philosophy Refuted'; or 'The Employer and the Employed' by Feargus O'Connor, previously serialised in the *Star*; one volume 'neatly bound in cloth, [of] "A Practical Work on Small Farms"', also by O'Connor. Also advertised is Arthur O'Connor's 'State of Ireland,' as well as 'portraits of popular characters' previously given away to *Star* subscribers.[64] Finally, former editor William Hill's 'FIFTEEN LESSONS on the ANALOGY and SYNTAX of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, for the use of adult persons who have neglected the study of Grammar.'[65] The latter ad was, as Janette Martin writes, not uncommon at all, with tracts on grammar particularly important for Chartist speakers.[66]

While the practice of the *Star* advertising itself in its own pages seems a poor marketing decision, the advertisement of the *Star's* office as a publishing network and bookselling business in itself makes not only financial sense, but builds a sense of community similar to the one it had Leeds. The extensive reviews the *Star* prints of 'Small Farms' and 'Fifteen Lessons,' making this collective advertisement the largest on the page, is emblematic of the *Star's* agenda for Chartist self-improvement. As a literate and literary movement, the express promotion of gardening and grammar demonstrates to critics the independence of the *Star's* working readership. Meanwhile, these advertisement which would enable self-improvement occupy the majority of space on the page, which is in itself a performance of self-improvement. In addition to such improving activities of reading, which could theoretically be done anywhere, the *Star* promoted events such as lectures and performances at theatres. Harking back to the building of specifically 'Chartist Halls' earlier in the 1840s, as space for Chartist activities, the *Star* advocates attendance at galleries as well as other cultural spaces that blurred the boundaries of public and private spaces after its move in 1844. The *Star* had previously advertised lectures on mesmerism at the Leeds Music Hall around Christmas 1843, which,

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[63] Matthew Roberts, 'Chartism, Commemoration, and the Cult of the Radical Hero, c.1770 - c.1840,' *Labour History Review,* 78: 1 (2013), pp. 3-32, p. 13.

[64] Arthur O'Connor, in addition to being a famous Irish radical in the early 19th century, was Feargus O'Connor's uncle.

[65] 'The following books are published at the Northern Star office', *NS,* 25/02/1845, p. 2.

[66] Janette Martin, 'Popular Oratory' (2010), p. 161-162.

Scriven notes, was part of a trending interest in mesmerism among Chartists from 1842 onward, arguing that, 'the *Northern Star* was also increasingly fascinated by the medical implications of the practice, reporting in detail on an operation on a squint performed under mesmerism.'[67] Although the *Star* did advertise talks and written works on mesmerism throughout the 1840s, these focused on the content of the material, and lacked regularity. By contrast, in December 1844, the *Star* announced that

> Hitherto we have not treated of matters theatrical in the *Star* ; not that we were blind to the necessity of so important and attractive a feature of London journalism, but that, hardly settled in our new *locale* we have had so many matters to occupy our time as to prevent us paying attention to this one in particular.[68]

Significantly, these reviews appear in every edition of this issue of the *Star*, both in and out of London. By accepting the 'necessity' of theatre reviews and advertisements within the metropolis, the *Star* commits to featuring this aspect of London life going forward. Martin Conboy argues that post-*Northern Star* 'popular journalism' was 'predicated on leisure rather than active political involvement [which] also shifted the focus of the popular towards a consumerist attitude to news and its relationship to entertainment.'[69] I argue that the *Star* was complicit in this change, combining consumerist leisure activities for its working-class readership with political activity. Furthermore, the variety of material included in the section which is later retitled 'Public Amusements' varies from pantomimes at Christmas to displays at the Adelaide Gallery to lectures at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, recommending to readers that,

> At this festive season, when so many are in search of enjoyment, it becomes the duty of the public journalist to point out to his readers those places where may be found rational amusement and pleasing novelty. [A]ll kinds of amusement are to be found in the lectures on Chemistry, National Philosophy, and other branches of science.[70]

While 'theatrical matters' may be enjoyable, the *Star* reminds readers of its 'duty' to improve its readership, once again ensuring that its working-class readership is not seen to be overly idle, or, indeed, having too much fun. Furthermore, the *Star's* team as 'public journalists' are enmeshed in this improving agenda, demonstrating that it is not the sole responsibility of the working-class reader to improve themselves, but the joint responsibility of the *Star* to ensure

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[67] 'Mesmerism', *NS,* 03/12/1843, p. 3. See Scriven, *Popular Virtue* (2017), p.120.
[68] 'The Theatres', *NS,* 26/12/1845, p. 5, emphasis original.
[69] Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: SAGE, 2002), p. 80.
[70] 'Public Amusements', *NS*, 04/01/1845, p. 8.

that such educational opportunities are advertised to them. The education and improvement of the working classes is the *Star's* primary agenda as a newspaper, in order to prove to those in power their worthiness of the franchise. If the *Star's* readers can occupy these middle-class leisure spaces, making evident the disparity of the conditions between them, fact must overturn class prejudice. We see the *Northern Star* using advertising for activities and events; politicising leisure, as the next stage in its drive to self-improvement of the working classes and the gaining of the franchise.

Long-term plans and legacy

The extension of the franchise to working men, the primary end goal of the Charter, was obviously a long-term plan. The extension of the franchise would not only be a generational win, benefitting the working-age activists who made up the bulk of the movement, but would have a legacy. It is this multi-generational vision of a new future which, I argue, was the ultimate agenda represented by the *Star's* advertising, especially from 1844 onwards.

As we know in hindsight, the Land Plan was O'Connor's ultimate plan for the Chartist movement. Integral to this plan was the language of familial and domestic bliss, describing a future in which working people were independent, safe, happy, and, most importantly, enfranchised. The act of smallholding, furthermore, might finally push some Chartists into ownership of property worth over £10, thus enabling participation in the franchise under its current conditions, creating change from within the existing system. We also know from hindsight that such a plan was doomed from the beginning as Dorothy Thompson noted, 'a deliberate policy was pursued by Parliament and the courts of excluding the possibility of a popularly-owned and controlled organisation of smallholders.'[71] The publication of 'Small Farms' by O'Connor was one step in priming the *Star's* readership for this plan, as was the proliferation of advertisements for it. While, for the most part, the *Star's* front page was free of advertisements following the introduction of 'Chartist Intelligence' in mid-1840, one of the few exceptions to this new state of priority was the promotion of 'Small Farms', which appeared in several instances on the front page. For around a month from July to August 1843, an advertisement for 'Small Farms', two columns' width, appeared right beneath the *Star's* masthead. In addition to being quite literally embedded within Chartist intelligence, it is centre-

[71] Thompson, *The Chartists*, p. 303.

page, working in conjunction with the reports sent by the *Star's* Chartist community to represent the *Star's* agenda, with O'Connor as leader. (See fig. 27)

Figure 27: 'Small Farms' front page advertisement, 1843 (05/08/1843, p. 1.).

The Northern Star,

AND LEEDS GENERAL ADVERTISER.

OL. VI. NO. 299. SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1843. PRICE FOURPENCE HALFPENI Five Shillings per Quarte

'CHESTER.—CARPENTERS' HALL.—A dis- upon the propriety of amalgamating the land with the agitation for the Charter took place rge ante-room of the above Hall, on Sunday n last. The attendance was numerous and ble, and the whole business was conducted greatest harmony. Several persons having ed their opinions, the subject was adjourned her discussion on Sunday next, the chair to be t half-past two o'clock in the afternoon.

IE EVENING of the same day, the large Hall nsely crowded in every part by a highly- ble audience. The proceedings commenced numerous and efficient choir singing a Char- mn; after which, Mr. O'Higgins's letters to Elliot were read from the *Star*. During the the most breathless attention pervaded the sembly, only interrupted by expressions of pest sympathy for a people subjected to the ted persecution and heartless cruelty so vividly yed by Mr. O'Higgins. The Chairman then

THIS DAY IS PUBLISHED, PRICE SIXPENCE EACH,

NOS. I. AND II. OF A

PRACTICAL WORK

ON THE

MANAGEMENT OF SMALL FARMS;

Giving full Instructions respecting Rotation of Crops, Management of Cattle, Culture, &c.

BY FEARGUS O'CONNOR, ESQ.,

FARMER AND BARRISTER.

Also, now on Sale, in Two Numbers, at Fourpence each, the

"STATE OF IRELAND," written in 1790, by ARTHUR O'CONNOR. A compendium of Irish History, and a more correct Account of the Grievances of that Country, than any that has appeared upon the subject.

Cleave, London; Heywood, Manchester; Hobson, Leeds.

BACUP.—Mr. Bairstow lectured in th tion Room, on Friday week, and advised to unite in one bond of union. The talent gave great satisfaction, and the meeting highly gratified.

ON TUESDAY last Mr. E. P. Mead lect same room to a crowded and attentive "On the Falsehood of the Pulpit."

NORWICH.—The Chartists of this lo given their opinion as to the necessity and of a National Conference on the 5th of S and call upon their brethren throughout t to take steps to make it what it ought representation of Chartist National wi augur great good from its deliberations, continued, and ended, in the proper spirit.

LONDON.—CLERKENWELL.—The Char locality, at their meeting on Monday last, a ing and approving the report of the Lond Committee, nominated four persons as c the forthcoming Conference, viz.: Messr

Indeed, if we consider this move by the *Star* to displace advertising from the front page and replace with Chartist news, something that was largely uncommon in British newspapers until the 'new journalism' of the 1870s onwards, we might not only see the Chartists as creating the concept of 'front-page news', but the advertisement for 'Small Farms' being in itself 'front-page news'.[72] Following the opening of the Chartist Co-Operative Land Society, events such as the 'NOVEL EXCURSION TO BRIGHTON...' advertised in the *Star* in the summer of 1845, for four shillings per person, not only assert space in the *Star* for healthy and instructive leisure; emphasise Brighton as a 'beautiful and salubrious town', but equally stress the right of working people to occupy such spaces.[73] Advertisements for the Land Society place emphasis on the affordability of the scheme, specifying that, 'shares cost £2 10s each, which may be paid in instalments of 3d, 6d, 1s or upwards every week.'[74] The placement of the ads on the page, alongside 'forthcoming Chartist meetings', again, cements the scheme as part of the long-term Chartist agenda.

[72] See Joel H. Wiener, 'How New was the New Journalism?' (Ed.) Joel H. Wiener, *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism, 1850s to 1914* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), pp. 47-71, p. 51.

[73] 'Novel Excursion to Brighton', *NS*, 19/07/1845, p. 4.

[74] 'Chartist Land Society', *NS*, 17/05/1845, p. 5.

A later advertisement for the Land Society, in September of that year, reminds subscribers that,

> the only two things required to secure the triumph of Labour's battle are, union among the working classes, and undeviating honesty and punctuality on the part of those who have the management of their affairs.[75]

This advertisement, in contrast with the others, places emphasis on the responsibility of the working class to better their lot, as opposed to inviting them to do so independently by presenting the opportunity, whether by advertising books or prioritising flexibility and economy in the prices for land society membership. The pointed assertion of 'undeviating honesty and punctuality' is loaded with passive aggression, making an example out of an unjust and disorganised government. The Land Plan, during the late 1840s and into the 1850s, is later termed 'Home Colonization'. This draws attention not only to the issues of the British Empire, including the use of Australia as a penal colony for the punishment of political prisoners including their own Chartist martyrs, but by reclaiming power from the British state to realign national identity in terms of radical politics and land ownership. Although O'Connor and the *Star* discouraged emigration to the colonies, in 1844, following the *Star's* relocation the number of advertisements for emigration schemes and ship tickets rise drastically. Recurring advertisements for schemes such as the 'North American Land Agency' [NALA] use the language of O'Connor's plan to encourage further colonisation of America and Canada, with America already heralded as examples of republicanism and radical demographic potential within the Chartist press, especially by John Cleave and Bronterre O'Brien. The NALA addresses the *Star's* readership directly, noting that

> especially to the Emigrant of the poorer class ; for on arriving at his port of debarkation, he has found himself, generally speaking, with little or no money, and no friends to assist him in procuring work, or even to point out in what part of the Province he would be most likely to obtain it, -- while he who possessed some little capital has met with similar difficulties, in making choice of a location.
>
> [T]he great body of our emigrating population is composed of persons having no capital whatever. He must search for his Land in a country, to the localities of which, its soil and seasons, he is a perfect stranger ; and when selected, however judiciously, he must live upon his own resources until the ensuing harvest. He must erect his own log house, clear and fence his land, wasting valuable time, and spending much of his already too scanty capital unprofitably, from inexperience in the work he has undertaken.[76]

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[75] 'Co-operative Land Society', *NS,* 06/09/1845, p. 4.

[76] 'North American Land Agency' *NS*, 09/11/1844, p. 5.

The Land Agency paints a sorry picture of colonial emigration, especially for the working classes to whom such schemes were marketed, with an emphasis on waste and the issue of precious resources also highlighted by the *Star* in reports of the destitute 'widows and orphans' of imprisoned Chartists. The convenient emigration of working-class people to the colonies was a neat and tidy ending to fiction of the period, including Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), with no consideration of the real difficulties of doing so. This Land Agency effectively offers a package deal which would include a ready-built log house, land, tools and provisions upon arrival at their new home, costing a minimum of £59 10s for a single man, and instead of promising a new life of independence and self-sufficiency, as other advertisements might, outlines the difficulties of emigrating with no knowledge of what is needed. The Agency presents an option that is expensive but easy. Once again, we must consider the placement of the advertisement, which occupies two columns' width and occupies the middle of the page, disrupting the layout of the columns around it. This jarring and unusual placement catches the eye of the reader, and furthermore draws attention to the articles nearby. On the left-hand column, a section of 'Tit-Bits' includes an article on 'Emigration to the Tropical World' as advocated by J. A. Etzler, 'urging the formation of a society on the principle of joint-stock companies', similar to the Chartist Land Plan but with a focus on the health-giving benefits of tropical countries, Etzler's own utopian vision.[77] These schemes, importantly, would enable working-class readers to escape the problems of wage-slavery and regain the independence and domesticity of a bygone agricultural age. However, they did not address the issues of the franchise that the Chartist Land Plan would circumvent, instead further complicating issues around Chartist internationalism and the Chartist diaspora. What these schemes had in common with the Chartist Land Plan, (and thus why, I argue, they featured in the *Northern Star)* was the shared culture of self-improvement, creating a legacy of change for future generations.

Conclusion

The *Northern Star's* relocation from Leeds to London signalled not only a change to the structure of the Chartist movement, but within Victorian culture more generally. This case study of the *Star's* rebrand is helpful for considering the *Star* not only as an 'organ' in terms of the content of the paper, but as a material object, too. David Goodway referenced the

[77] 'Emigration to the Tropical World', *NS,* 09/11/1844, p. 6.

physical proximity of the *Star* and Executive to parliament in his consideration of London Chartism. Place, he notes, could be a defining factor within the movement, stating that,

> such was the extent of [meetings in specific venues] that it became commonplace for a locality to become known not by its district but by the sign of the hostelry at which it met: the Whittington and Cat locality, King of Prussia, Brassfounders' Arms.[78]

The *Star's* rebrand reflects the strength of regional and national identity for its public image. The change from a close and intimate relationship with readers and the local community within Leeds, as evidenced by the specific details of human interest within 'local intelligence' to a 'national' journal, reporting more heavily on foreign news, is striking. The relationship between the textual space occupied within the *Star*, by 'local' intelligence, and the *Star's* geographical surroundings changes with the move, suggesting the strong influence not only of different radical networks but the influence of location on the contents of the paper. With the move to London, the capital is redefined as the capital of Chartism, moving physically away from the previous Chartist strongholds in the north of England. Furthermore, the expanded variety of material covered in the paper, not only 'local' or even 'Chartist' intelligence but miscellanies and public art activity foreshadows the rise of the miscellany periodical from the 1850s onwards: the historian should see the *Star* as part of a trajectory in Victorian journalism from the early unstamped radical papers to *Tit-Bits* at the *fin-de-sieclé*.[79]

In specifically establishing a focus for the *Star*, now explicitly a 'Trades' periodical instead of a 'General' one, the paper suggests a blending of issues. 'Trade' issues are now explicitly political, with the knowledge of the *Star* as the Chartist paper actively linking trades' disputes with the franchise. Specific 'trade' issues, especially around pay and safety, are configured as issues of humanity, designed to evoke sympathy from different industries, under the shared umbrella of labourers against capitalists. 'Trades' becomes code for the class divide. Even the self-improvement culture of the Chartist Land Plan, by which participants could acquire land to meet the property qualification of £10, is framed in the linguistic register of labour. Suggestions and recommendations for growing food for a kitchen garden is instead

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[78] Goodway, *London Chartism (*Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 2002), p. 59.

[79] *Tit-Bits*, launched in London in 1881 by George Newnes, was a penny weekly aimed at upper-working and lower-middle classes, and soon reached circulation figures of 500,000. Newnes 'claimed to have formulated the idea of providing brief eye-catching stories when reading a piece about 'A Runaway Train' in the *Manchester Evening News.*' Zsuzsanna Varga, 'Tit-Bits', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 630.

branded as 'Agriculture and Horticulture', using the trade terms to emphasise the laborious nature of food production, and, therefore, self-sufficiency.

The change from 'Advertiser' to 'Journal' suggests a more serious and focussed approach to the discussion of trade and labour issues, yet the number of advertisements works inversely to this declaration of intent. While it is highly likely that the *Star* relied on the extra advertisement revenue in order to keep afloat in a much more expensive city than Leeds, it is also suggestive of the uses of the *Star*. The movement of 'Advertisements' to the second page literally embeds them within the paper, unlike bound periodicals whose advertisements would appear on external wrappers, cementing them as part of Chartist culture.[80] The reason for this is most evident when we consider the politicisation of medicine and access to healthcare, with repeated advertisements for medicines not only financially supporting the *Star* but reminding readers of the medicines available to them. Conversely, advertisements for self-improving leisure activities, such as shows at the London theatres, are more time-sensitive, but encourage participation in wider popular culture and thus, by association, minimise the cultural (if not financial) barriers to attendance at lectures and shows. The self-advertisements of the *Star* and of the Land Plan, finally, place the *Star* at the centre of a national Chartist economy, encouraging readers to make the most of any disposable income for short, medium, and long-term plans for improvement. The rebranding of the *Northern Star*, as well as its move to London, thus signified a specific vision of a future for Chartists and Chartist ideas.

[80] Laurel Brake, 'The Longevity of "Ephemera,"' *Media History*, 18: 1 (2012), pp. 7-20, p. 11.

Conclusion: The *Northern Star* and activist legacy

> So here we are once more face to face with jolly old Christmas, the King of Winter-- the only king we Democrats consent to acknowledge, always excepting that many-headed sovereign, THE PEOPLE.
>
> Alas! To thousands Christmas will this year bring neither jollity nor delight [S]till greater numbers of the working class in a state of beggary, will find the Christmas of 1847 a cheerless return of that anniversary on which, in other and happier days, they feasted, laughed, danced, and kissed beneath the mistletoe; and gathered from each other[']s happy hearts and eyes balm for the sorrows that had been, and hope and energy to arm them against the troubles of the future.[1]

Christmas Day of 1847, the final issue of the *Northern Star* considered in this study, contained its traditional 'Christmas Garden' in lieu of the usual Poetry and 'Literature & Reviews' columns. Burns and Coleridge are cited, situated between commentary on the contrasting privilege and want of the social divide, evoked as part of the Chartists' radical literary canon, before the issue introduces work from new radical poets with which to ring in the year 1848. The editor makes full use of festive imagery, contrasting the nostalgia of a family scene from 'happier days,' defined by 'hearts and eyes' as a source of nourishment and care. The 'balm' of 'happy hearts' is enough to soothe pain, the *Star* not even contrasting this picture with anything: it is assumed that the reader understands the absence of even a bleak picture represents the extent to which 'wretched outcasts' have nothing. The description of this warm image is negated from the beginning, creating a shadow of the 'jollity' and 'mirth' which Christmas will not bring to those 'in a state of beggary'. The *Northern Star* continues the Chartist agenda as a tool for agitation and community-building, foregrounding the acts of affection between people in this homely description; and further creating a sense of intimacy between writer and reader through the shared pronouns 'we Democrats,' aligning their political interest in 'that many-headed monarch, THE PEOPLE'. The anonymous authority of the 'editorial we' is not used to separate editor from reader, as the contrast of 'we' and 'you' might be in other direct notices; but instead to align them through a shared cultural experience. The *Star's* Christmas issue not only creates a sense of community between writer and reader, but makes full use of its ephemeral nature to create this community feeling at a shared moment, dating it to this particular Christmas. Furthermore, this column tells us that for the *Northern*

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[1] 'Christmas Garden', *NS,* 25/12/1847, p. 4.

Star and its readers, culture, politics, and class consciousness were all intertwined, as the imagery of Christmas traditions were politicised in that particular moment of increased homelessness and economic recession.

The *Star* was, from 1837-1847, a Chartist newspaper, in which all 'newsworthy' material became politicised. This study has, in contrast to previous scholarship, defined that reader-writer relationship as reflexive, a two-way interaction. While historiography of Chartism has focused either on the *Star's* reports of local meetings, or the literary outputs of its readers and staff, this thesis has systematically studied the *Northern Star* column by column to isolate its political agenda within the culture of the Chartist movement, and its use as a tool for community-building and activist strategy. This thesis has elucidated the nuances of such meetings in the way that the paper was constructed, enabling future research to account for temporal shifts in the *Star*'s agenda for the Chartist movement. In the remainder of this conclusion I will explore the final years of the *Northern Star*'s print run not covered by this study, explain the relevance of the *Northern Star* within the radical historical canon, and suggest new directions for research in Chartist periodical studies.

1848-1852

From 1847 onwards the *Northern Star* declined, first in sales and then in scope. While 1848 was a momentous year for the movement, it is broadly seen in Chartist historiography as a last hurrah.[2] The *Star's* sales figures dwindled to just 5,000 in 1848 while the third petition of the movement, presented to parliament in conjunction with the 'Monster' meeting of 1848 at Kennington Common, London, comprised just under 2 million signatures, this was less than half of the estimate of 5.75 million attested by Feargus O'Connor, and still less than the 3.3 million signatures of the 1842 petition.[3] The years 1848 to 1852 of the movement became dominated by the contestation of public space. Queen Victoria had been removed to the Isle of Wight by her ministers out of fear for her safety, while special constables were hired for the Kennington Common meeting, fearing violence from the attendees. Two weeks following the meeting (10th April), an advertisement-like notice appears on the front page of the *Northern Star* of the 22nd April, under the heading, 'THE CHARTER AND NO SURRENDER!' The

[2] See Keith Flett, *Chartism After 1848* (Monmouth: Merlin Press, 2006); Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts, eds., *The Chartist Legacy* (1999); Roger Swift, 'Urban Policing in Early Victorian England, 1835-86: a Reappraisal', *History*, 73 (1978), pp. 211-237, p. 234.
[3] Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007).

six points of the Charter are described, with a notice informing readers that the *Star* will belatedly include abridged reports of meetings excluded from the previous issue due to the reports from Kennington. It concludes, 'let enemies of Chartism read the contents of the following columns, and remember that, / "THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE IS THE VOICE OF GOD!"'[4] The reports are organised by locality, comprising the majority of the front page. This editorial notice, emphasised by the insertion of a manicule at the beginning, suggests an attitude of furious hope, directing energy into the activism of the future. The notice does not only address the *Star's* Chartist readers, but their 'enemies' too, capitalising on the fear that politicians inferred from the mass meeting. However, without another petition on the horizon, and the Land Plan no longer taking subscribers, this energy dissipates. Following concentrated campaign efforts in several regions during the 1847 General Election, Feargus O'Connor became MP for Nottingham as a member of the National Chartist Association as his 'close friend, the wealthy stockbroker, Thomas Allsop, meanwhile provided him with the property qualification required to take up his seat.'[5] Thus, there was finally a Chartist in parliament, which meant that reform from within was, at least, a possibility.

The *Northern Star* underwent further editorial changes from 1848 up until its closure in 1852. Ernest Jones, sub-editor and legal correspondent for the *Star*, as well as editor of O'Connor's Land Plan periodical, *The Labourer,* was arrested in June 1848 and imprisoned until 1850.[6] George Julian Harney stayed on at the *Northern Star,* though his editorial decision to increasingly focus on news from Europe over 1848, 'owing to his intimate concern regarding the coming revolutions,' culminated in a public argument in the pages of the *Northern Star* in March 1849.[7] Peter Cadigan wrote that Harney 'was finally refused space [due to their differences of opinion] in the *Northern Star* in May 1850 and resigned editorship.'[8] Harney's participation in the Fraternal Democrats had increased, according to correspondence between himself and Friedrich Engels, and with this he established a new paper, *The Red Republican* (June-November 1850), which would go on to publish the first English translation of the

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[4] 'The Charter and No Surrender!', *NS,* 22/04/1848, p. 1.
[5] Stephen Roberts, 'Feargus O'Connor in the House of Commons, 1847-1852,' in *The Chartist Legacy,* ed. by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts (Woodbridge: Merlin Press, 1999), pp. 102-118, p. 105-106.
[6] John Saville, 'Jones, Ernest Charles (1819-1869),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15000> [Accessed 21/08/2020].
[7] Frank Gees Black and Renee Métivier Black, 'Letter 79: Footnote 1', in *The Harney Papers,* ed. by Frank Gees Black and Renee Métivier Black (Assen: Van Gorcum and Company, 1969), p. 62.
[8] Peter Cadogan, 'Harney and Engels,' *International Review of Social History*, 10. 1 (1965), pp. 66-14, p. 71.

Communist Manifesto.[9] Former Leeds pressman William Rider then assumed the editorship of the *Northern Star*, who published the paper out of the same office as previous publisher Dougall McGowan. It was also at this point that the Land Company was 'winding up,' having only successfully rehomed 264 out of over 70,000 allottees.[10] The *Star* was by mid-1851 condensed into 16 pages at half the previous size, printed smaller type in order to fit the same amount of content in, and thus much more difficult to read.[11] The *Star* continued to change hands, becoming the *Star* (neither 'Northern' nor 'Southern') in early 1852. The *Star of Freedom,* launched by Harney, Chartist poet Gerald Massey, and William Linton, rebranded 'Chartist movements' to 'Democratic movements,' with 'Chartism' as a category within this heading of the paper. This new *Star*, made visibly different with an illustration of a star in the centre of the heading, combined with the new smaller size of the paper highlights the radical connections with the tradition of Radical unstamped papers which the *Star* had helped replace. Harney had grown distant from O'Connor over their differences regarding international affairs, while O'Connor aimed to gain support from the middle classes in Britain. Furthermore, former sub-editor Ernest Jones and new editor Gerald Massey had, by 1852, come to blows over attitudes to co-operative movements as a means for improving working-class lives. Jones, argues David Shaw, believed that 'small individual co-operative associations would only divert attention from, and weaken efforts towards full democratic political achievement,' while Massey was heavily involved in the Working Tailors' Association, seeing co-operation as part of a strategy espoused by the *Star* previously.[12] Feargus O'Connor was no longer involved with the *Star* by this point. A notice on the front page of the final issue of the *Star of Freedom*, dated 26th June 1852, entitled 'Mr. Feargus O'Connor', simply states,

> No perceptible change for the better has been reported by Dr. Tuke, to have taken place in the state of this unfortunate gentleman to Chiswick, where he is not placed under anything like the restraint experienced in the House of Common. He lives liberally, is

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[9] See *The Harney Papers*, letters 80 (Feargus O'Connor to George Julian Harney, 06/01/1848, pp. 62-63), 81 (Feargus O'Connor to George Julian Harney, 20/08/1850, pp. 64), 251 (George Julian Harney to Frederick Engels, 19/03/1849, pp. 248-50), 252 (George Julian Harney to Frederick Engels, 28/03/1849, pp. 250-251), 253 (George Julian Harney to Frederick Engels, 28/03/1849, pp. 251-252). See also Joan Allen, '"Teacher of Strange Doctrines"' (2013).

[10] Chase, *Chartism* (2007), p. 196.

[11] The *Star* had, from 1837 to this point, always been an eight-page broadsheet, each page measuring 41 x 59 cm, or around A2 size in today's terms. By contrast, the *Star of Freedom* measured just 29 x 41 cm, or A3 size today. Mussell, 'NCSE: *Northern Star*' (2007).

[12] David Shaw, *Gerald Massey: Chartist, Poet, Radical, and Freethinker* (n/a: Buckland Publications, 1995), p.63. See also Miles Taylor, *Ernest Jones, Chartism, and the Romance of Politics 1819-1859* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

> permitted to drink wine, plays considerably at billiards, but still talks wanderingly and acts erratically. --*Daily Paper*.[13]

O'Connor, having 'struck two fellow members in the Commons, was arrested and confined to the Palace of Westminster' in early 1852, and, was now confined to an asylum suffering from mental illness likely due to tertiary syphillis.[14] The notice of his declining health is only four sentences long, but on the front page of the *Star*, sandwiched between items reporting the Edinburgh 'Strike of the Plasterers' and 'SALARIES TO COLONIAL BISHOPS.' Through this small notice, O'Connor is physically situated between class outrage and a labour movement, although the reprinting of material from a *'Daily Paper'* suggests that nobody running the *Star* was in contact with O'Connor, his doctor, or any of his relatives. He died in August 1855.[15]

The readers of the *Star* were declining from 1848, as evidenced by dwindling sales figures, to less than 2,000 per week in 1851, while the reduction in size of typeface cannot have made the experience of reading the material in its pages any easier.[16] We might therefore consider this last third of the *Star's* print run not only as a flattening of Chartist activism (at least on a national scale), but the bridge between the *Star's* heyday of widening access to literacy and news, and the abolition of stamp duty for newspapers, which was passed on 30th June 1855. Chartist activism, as we have seen with the proliferation of literary and educational strategies within the *Northern Star,* overlapped with agitation for Newspaper Stamp repeal as part of a wider goal for the improvement of working-class lives. Martin Hewitt has observed that one national pressure group, the 'Newspaper Stamp Abolition Committee' (formed 1849) worked with trades, including the London Compositors' Society in establishing a 'network of local secretaries' throughout Britain and Ireland.[17] O'Connor, along with the Chartist conventions of England and Scotland in 1849-50, supported the group, with Harney arguing in the *Star* in 1850 that 'the repeal of the taxes on knowledge [was] necessary to remove the drag of an uneducated people on progress towards reform.'[18] Hewitt notes that Chartist support for

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[13] 'Mr. Feargus O'Connor', *SoF*, 26/06/1852, p. 1.
[14] James Epstein, 'O'Connor, Feargus Edward (1796?-1855), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 2nd edn. (2009), web <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20515> [Accessed 20/08/2020.]
[15] Epstein, *Ibid.*
[16] David Shaw, *Gerald Massey* (1995), p. 72.
[17] Martin Hewitt, *The Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), p. 17.
[18] Hewitt, *Ibid*, pp. 16-17.

this repeal was couched in 'ultra-radical' language.[19] Certainly, the repeal of the taxes on knowledge would remove the barriers to entry which made the *Star* more expensive, in order to legally publish news. I have therefore posited that the *Northern Star* was a Chartist paper from 1837-1848, but a reform paper thereafter. Chartism was diluted into a variety of different types of agitation, including trades' movements and newspaper stamp repeal, where it had previously drawn strength by association from these different branches of political activity. The *Star*, and its vision for Chartism, lost focus with these wider changes.

Thesis summary

This thesis has argued that the *Northern Star* newspaper was established as a discursive space for the construction and maintenance of Chartist networks in Britain. Such networks were created around ideas of 'Chartist' identity, applicable to individuals and groups, as well as products and behaviour. Through systematic analysis and close readings of the *Northern Star's* columns, I have argued that in order for the *Star* to survive, its definition of this 'Chartist' identity was constructed, through a dialogue between consumer and producer. These radical communities were differentiated from other political reform movements, as well as other literary communities and focussed on a specific vision of political enfranchisement as a means by which working-class lives could be bettered.

If Chartism was the first literate expression of working-class politics, the *Northern Star* must be recognised as a fundamental pillar on which Chartist literary culture was built. In addition to circulating *news*, which differentiated it from previous unstamped papers and even some of its own explicitly 'Chartist' contemporaries, the *Star* published poetry submissions, and literary reviews, participating in a collegial professional literary landscape. Its 'Readers & Correspondents' column enabled readers to create associational networks outside of the pages of the *Star*, while also sharing ideas and receiving credit and public recognition for these. The shift in news reporting from 'Local and General' news through to 'Chartist Intelligence' completes this circle of citizenship. The *Star's* readers were able to participate in politics, if not the franchise, through 'noticeboard' discussions as correspondents, while specifically 'Chartist' intelligence asserted their lives and political activity as important and worthy of national notice. 'Literature and Reviews,' furthermore, offered readers a kind of literary citizenship, through access to excerpts of more expensive periodicals and books they might

[19] Hewitt, *Ibid*, p. 18.

otherwise not be able to afford, as well as 'improving' materials by which readers could demonstrate their deservedness for the franchise. Advertisements, including notices of emigration and land schemes, additionally, demonstrated that even working-class readers had power in where they spent their money. The *Northern Star*, as a paper for sale, participated in early Victorian commodity culture while also critiquing industrial capitalism.

Chapter one has introduced the heading of 'Readers & Correspondents,' a system by which individual readers could gain a kind of political citizenship through the 'public sphere' of the newspaper, while the absence of original letters enabled readers to maintain a sense of privacy when needed. While previous studies of the *Northern Star* and, in particular, Feargus O'Connor's life have observed his correspondence with the paper, I have argued that O'Connor himself became a 'reader and correspondent' of the *Star* during his imprisonment. This allowed him to create a sense of solidarity not only with his radical colleagues, the 'veterans' who had also been incarcerated for their political activity; but also solidarity with his fellow readers. His 'correspondence' from behind bars not only manipulated the rules of publicity and privacy but was subject to mediation by the editors of the *Star*. This feeling of solidarity and shared experience created communities as much as it fuelled class tensions. My analysis of 'Readers & Correspondents' in chapter two, exploring self-identity and definition through the use of pseudonyms, helpfully bridges historiographical gaps in reader pseudonyms during the early Victorian period, specifically in terms of radical politics. This chapter shows that a shared linguistic register, including labels such as 'patriot,' and 'democrat', or qualities such as 'teetotal' and 'radical' could construct an individual pseudonym recognisable to the individual, with the understanding that these are admirable qualities within the *Star's* Chartist readership community. The isolation of this column of the *Northern Star* allows us to see how the *Star's* readers, and, by proxy, Chartists, saw themselves. While such analysis can only highlight a small subsection of the general population, or even the Chartist population, the remediation of reader-generated material by editors had to be done in such a way for the *Star's* 'constant subscribers' to continue their patronage. Building on previous work by Paul Pickering, I have furthermore highlighted the ways that such identities or descriptors were attached to commodities including the *Northern Star*, creating a Chartist economy. This process reminded both readers and middle-class critics that spending power could be a secondary means by which industrial capitalism was threatened and the franchise achieved.

The *Northern Star* did not only occupy a space within radical or Chartist networks, but within the Victorian media landscape, too. In my third chapter, focussing on the establishment

of the 'Chartist Intelligence' column, I situate the *Northern Star* within spectrums of 'local' and 'national' papers, as well as 'mainstream' and 'radical'. The establishment of a specific column for 'Chartist' intelligence is evidence of an increased focus on Chartist strategising, with smaller local organisations comprising a national body of Chartists, all with the goal of agitating for the Charter. The *Star*, furthermore, situated its specific (O'Connorite) Chartist vision within a wider network of reform movements, identifying shared focuses with Temperance and Co-operative movements (by which the Exchequer could be weakened through participation in a Chartist economy), while entrenching class warfare through vocal critiques of middle-class slave trade abolitionists and corn-law repealers. Such class inequalities were exemplified through access to cultural engagement. My fourth chapter explores the 'Literature & Reviews' column of the *Star* as a means by which working-class readers were able to access texts from more expensive periodicals, enabling working-class readers to 'elevate' their literary tastes, while simultaneously removing one area of difference between working- and middle-class readers. The *Star's* increasing emphasis on 'improving' periodicals, I argue, is performative, the public recommendations of educational literary material demonstrating the seriousness with which education was taken by readers and highlights the implicit role of the Chartist movement in Newspaper Stamp repeal agitation. This, furthermore, would strengthen a 'Chartist economy' and demonstrate ability to participate in the franchise on a level with middle-class voters, with cultural products viewed as a kind of capital along with labour. The *Northern Star's* move from Leeds to London, and accompanying rebrand, in 1844, demonstrates the extent to which these Chartist communities evolved and adapted through new strategies of activism. I have argued, in chapter five, that the *Star's* strategy for attaining the Charter relied on a shared sense of class solidarity across trade groups, with trade union movements another means by which its readers could attain a kind of citizenship. The increasing focus from local issues to European, American, and Australian issues, suggests that the *Star's* readership communities spread further due to emigration and geographically expanded radical political networks. Furthermore, this 'National' journal and international outlook, combined with effort towards the Chartist Land Plan, is evidence of a strategy within Chartist activism to meet qualifications for franchise through the roundabout acquisition of land. This also had a performative aspect, demonstrating 'Chartist' values of self-sufficiency and independence which overlapped with Victorian self-improvement culture more broadly. Overall, this thesis has highlighted the Chartist movement's widespread use of selected activist strategies, including political pseudonymity, exclusive dealing or consumer

boycotts, the moralisation of leisure reading, and the configuration of labour and cultural participation, as well as trade union affiliation as capital.

The strategies which I have identified have continued to be used by activist movements in Britain throughout the twentieth century until the present day: LGBTQ* bookshop 'Gay's The Word' offered reading space for the formation of 'Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners,' (LGSM, now 'Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants,') encouraging co-operation between LGBTQ* activists and striking miners in the 1980s; the 'Fashion Revolution' movement established in 2013 produces an annual 'Transparency Index' for sustainably-sourced and ethically-made clothing in response to 'fast fashion' retail giants; while politically radical pseudonyms are reimagined as screen names on Social Media, the political register now reconfigured as hashtags such as #BlackLivesMatter on a global scale.[20] While the *Northern Star* was still a product which relied on editorial mediation and consumer interest to exist, Social Media has replaced it as a more open format. The continuation of such strategies suggests that the methodologies established in the pages of the *Star* are, indeed, effective. Continued co-operation and solidarity between the National Union of Mineworkers and LGBTQ* activists, for example, resulted in the passing of a vote at the 1985 Labour party conference to support LGBTQ* issues as party policy.[21]

Future directions

This thesis offers the most comprehensive exploration of the *Northern Star* newspaper to date. Previous studies of the *Northern Star*, most notably James Epstein's articles on 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star,'* have elucidated important details of the personal and professional relationships between the *Northern Star's* staff, as well as those relationships with other Chartist leaders including William Lovett, John Collins, and Henry Vincent. This thesis, by contrast, has explored the relationships between writer and reader, marrying historical approaches on Chartist regional and ideological communities with literary and linguistic methodologies to uncover how the *Star* was constructed as a newspaper.

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[20] Diarmaid Kellier, 'Solidarity and Sexuality: Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners 1984-85,' History Workshop Journal, 77. 1 (Spring 2014), pp. 240-262. See p. 246. 'Fashion Transparency Index', *Fashion Revolution* (2020)
<https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/> [Accessed 24/08/2020.]
See Jelani Ince, Fabio Rojas & Clayton A. Davis, 'The social media response to Black Lives Matter: how Twitter users interact with Black Lives Matter through hashtag use,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40:11 (2017), pp. 1814-1830.

[21] Kellier, p. 256.

For reasons of accessibility and convenience, many scholars of Chartism and Victorian periodicals more broadly are making use of digitised archival material. However, this is not in itself a digital humanities research methodology. My research, instead, has drawn upon the digitised formats of the primary data available to me (in the form of the digitised *Northern Star*) to create a corpus of the 'Readers & Correspondents' column that is fully searchable. This not only allows the representation of typographical features, including bold or italic type, or capitalisation, to be represented within digital text files, but represents clearly the ebb and flow of the column in terms of word count. For example, I can definitively state the number of mentions of Feargus O'Connor in the 'Readers & Correspondents' column within the ten-years pan of my study. My research in chapters one and two has built upon both Epstein's understanding of O'Connor's involvement in the *Northern Star*, and Gareth Stedman Jones' identification of a 'language of Chartism' in terms of key words or qualities. This corpus, as one output of my doctoral research, could be expanded to include the last five years of the *Star's* print run in order to elucidate how O'Connor is represented in this column throughout the *Star's* lifetime. This would become especially interesting for the year 1847, following his election as MP for Nottingham, and onwards, as the proprietorship of the *Star* changed hands. A sudden drop in mentions of his name, or in subjects of discussion, could be a starting point for research on the immediate legacy of O'Connor and the *Northern Star* in the 1850s. Alternatively, the column could be cross-referenced with lists of Chartist Land Plan subscribers, or Mark Crail's Chartist Ancestors Databank.[22] This might further identify the individuals behind initials or more creative pseudonyms whose letters were printed in the *Star*, allowing historians a fuller idea of the demographics behind the movement and insight into the everyday life of a Chartist. The corpus, furthermore, might be used as a resource to compare the political language and interests of the *Star's* 'Readers & Correspondents' with those of the *Leeds Times*, or G. W. M. Reynolds' papers. This would bridge our understanding of the semantic fields and use of language by different reform movements in the early Victorian period.

This thesis, furthermore, goes some way to redressing the balance of scholarship on the 'New Journalism' of the 1870s to the *fin-de-siécle* within Victorian periodical studies, to highlight the innovations made in news reporting and mass literacy in the early Victorian period. I have demonstrated the marketisation of literary and review culture in the *Northern*

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[22] Mark Crail, 'Chartist Ancestors Databank,' *Chartist Ancestors* (2009-) <http://www.chartistancestors.co.uk/chartist-ancestors-databank/> [Accessed 25/08/2020.]

Star as unusual within the Chartist periodicals, contributing to the body of scholarship on 'scissors and paste' review journalism; as well as highlighting the use of miscellany, or 'tit bits' as snippets of political news and entertainment prior to the eponymous magazine *Tit-Bits* established by George Newnes in 1881. Scholars including Martin Conboy draw a line of influence from the *Northern Star* as newspapers presented an 'idealised voice of the working people,' through to *Reynolds' Weekly Newspaper* in the 1850s and then *Tit-Bits*.[23] I assert that the *Northern Star* was not only a 'universal press' in that it enjoyed unusually high circulation figures for a radical paper; but because it included such a variety of material, the likes of which would come to be adopted by Sunday papers following in its wake. The *Star* was undeniably political, and thus, even news, 'local' or 'general' intelligence, advertisements, and reviews within it became politicised by association. The *Star* was not only a precursor to 'popular' newspapers such as Reynolds' because it was popular with readers, but because they participated in the construction of the paper, through letters and sending reports of meetings. The *Star* was a discursive space in which 'Chartist' identity could be defined and performed aside from physical meetings. This enabled the individual meetings, consumption of cultural products, and promotion of 'improving' activities, such as gardening or reading, or materials a degree of mobility, and the occupation of space in the Chartist home. The pages of the *Star* became a kind of liminal platform, bridging the illegal traditions of protest in physical spaces and the unstamped press with a future of mass literacy and, through literacy, public assertion of citizenship. The legacy of this new mobile, discursive space for protest is most clearly evident in Suffragette activism, including the advocation of a new generation of 'physical force' in *Votes for Women* (1907-1918) and *The Suffragette* (1912-1920).[24] However, it has now manifested as Social Media, fusing miscellany with self-publishing and public assertion of identity. My thesis has identified the emergence of activist strategies as employed by Chartist communities in the *Northern Star*. Importantly, I have argued that the reading and writing of the *Northern Star*, as a literary product, was constructed to perform a bold and strategic activist agenda during the height of the Chartist movement.

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[23] Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Britain: Constructing a Community Through Language* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 3.

[24] Jane Chapman, 'The Argument of the Broken Pane: Suffragette Consumerism and Newspapers,' *Media History*, 21.3 (2015), pp. 238-251, p. 241-42.

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