

PRELUDE TO PETERLOO: WARRINGTON RADICALISM, 1775-1819

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Right up to its being designated a New Town in 1968 Warrington had always been very much a frontier settlement — on the boundaries of Mercia and Northumbria in Saxon times, between the Grand Duchy of Lancaster and the Earldom of Chester in the Middle Ages, straddling the hinterlands of Manchester and Liverpool and rural Cheshire in later years. Basically a market town with ancillary trades appropriate thereto, it was for ever 'taking off' and being plunged back again into relative obscurity. It had in fact been twice a 'new town' before the 1970s; once in the second century when William Boteler, the fifth earl (1176-1233) had relocated the town centre away from the area around St Elphin's to its present site at Market Gate. Within a few years the experiment had come to an end and Warrington had joined the extensive casualty list of 'failed' new towns of the Middle Ages.

Its marketing role survived however, complementing its other outstanding feature, its geographical and strategic importance as the highest crossing point of the River Mersey. It is this latter factor which accounts for all the fighting in and around the town in the Civil War period. This was a turning point in Warrington's development in two ways: it marked the emergence of a strong body of Protestant Dissenters of the Presbyterian, later Unitarian, persuasion — Robert Yates, minister of St Elphin's was one of the ejected of 1662 — and also a major shift in landholding away from exhausted royalist supporters, the Irelands, Booths and Leghs, into the hands of rising families, some Dissenting, but many, including the Blackburnes, Pattens, Pages and Lyons, Anglican and Tory. Particularly was this true of the

northern (Hume) environs of the town and its eastern outskirts along the Manchester Road, where major industrial development was soon to take place. These twin factors were operative in a number of Lancashire towns: Rochdale is a particularly good example.

Right at the start of the eighteenth century there was yet another all-too-brief industrial boom time when Thomas Patten established his Bank Quay Copper Works which rose, made an enormous fortune for its owner and enabled him to build the magnificent pile which is now the Town Hall and then folded suddenly leaving scarcely a trace behind. With its chronically ill-balanced and haphazard economy Warrington whose population had nevertheless doubled from 3500 in 1600 to about 7000 in 1760 was by the latter date really no more than an overgrown village with a predominant and persistent marketing function (flocks of sheep were still being driven to market through the main streets of the town as late as the 1930s) and an inchoate and unstable industrial base which boomed when the country was at war and demand for sailcloth for the Royal Navy was high, but in peace time contracted back to its traditional components: clothing, pin-making, fustian-cutting, brewing and tanning. Administrative control was shared between the Lords of the Manor, the Blackburnes of Orford Hall, and the parish vestry. The local Establishment was wholly Anglican and Tory but was repeatedly challenged at two rather different levels, from the increasingly rational Presbyterians of Cairo Street chapel and from disgruntled local tradesmen who rightly suspected the Manorial Court of imposing market regulations and tolls to its own monopolistic advantage.



A View of the (TOWN) of Warrington from a HOUSE near Wharfedale Quay.

Warrington from the south bank of the Mersey: mid-1770s.

The founding and development of the Warrington Academy (1757-86) brought with it an interlude of social peace, a sudden irruption of Enlightenment into a harsh and backward environment which somehow forced the Establishment into a half-churlish, half-admiring client relationship to a proud, assured Liberal Dissent.

Socially and culturally the latter assumed predominance for a brief period when, according to Donald Davie, Warrington 'became the intellectual, if not the emotional centre of the kingdom'.¹ Its academic reputation was complemented by the genteel charm of the residences of its patrons and tutors around the Academy itself, while the houses of Dr Thomas Barnes and Dr Thomas Percival on Sankey Street, with their long gardens and maze-like orchards, covered the whole of what was to become later on the central business district of the town. The Academy utilised the resources of a newly established printers, the Eyres Press, to publish its tutors' works (and others' too, notably John Howard's *State of the Prisons*) — and the Eyres Press, with its reputation for daring speculative literature, was to survive the Academy by a good ten years.



The House of Dr. Enfield.
ACADEMY COURT.



The House of Dr. Percival.
ACADEMY COURT.

The Establishment, the 'junta', as it was later on to be known, made up of the local Anglican clergy, the Boteler Grammar School, the Lords of the Manor and other landowners plus their associates in trade and manufactures, fitted in as best they could. The Rev Edward Owen (1727-1807), a Welshman of obscure social origins, headmaster of the Boteler and rector of the parish, experienced a feeling of inferiority in the presence of these clever, cultured Dissenters, and his discomfiture was made worse by the ridicule heaped on him on both social and academic grounds by a fellow Churchman, the Rev Thomas Seddon. (Even so he was glad enough to have his Grammar published by the Eyres Press and his translation of the Latin Poets of the Silver Age praised by Gilbert Wakefield, the ex-Anglican turned Unitarian, then on the staff of the Academy.)²

Even the mighty Blackburnes were sucked willy-nilly into the Academy's orbit. John Blackburne who died aged 96 in 1786 was through his friendship with Linnaeus an obvious confrère of the learned Dissenting élite: even more so was his daughter Anne (1740-93), an eccentric botanist of some distinction and a friend of Gilbert White of Selborne.³ Yet even before the Academy collapsed through indiscipline and bankruptcy in 1786 there were signs that this brief period of social harmony among the educated, monied classes was drawing to a close.

In 1775 the resentment of the local community, especially of those persons engaged in trade, burst into flame in a controversy made all the more memorable in that for the first time there was a local press at hand to print the pamphlet literature of the opposing sides. Blackburne and his fellow grandees, the Pattens, Lyons, Borrans and

Leghs, had a point in their determination to get rid of the noisome butchers' stalls which cluttered up Bridge Street, rehouse them in the Cornmarket in a building to be erected by public subscription, provide lighting for the town and an urgently needed Court of Requests for the settlement of small debts. The whole scheme, according to the Rev Edward Owen, the promoters' official spokesman, would be 'a necessary piece of elegance in the growing state of this spirited and industrious place'. Furthermore John Blackburne would himself surrender his prescriptive rights in the Bridge Street shambles and personally invest £500 in the project.

This was not enough to allay the suspicions of the radical traders who found a spokesman in one of their number, Roger Topping: a Court of Requests would soon become an instrument of tyranny for oppressing the industrious and mulcting the poor and would quickly be followed by the building of a gaol for those found guilty therein; the butchers (few of whom could produce written title to their stands) would be dispossessed without compensation, while the Bridge Street area would become shopless and deserted. The pamphlet war which started on 16 January 1775 and was by February degenerating into personal abuse at least led to the controversy being settled by a compromise: a parliamentary Bill was to be drawn up by Walter Kerfoot, the Warrington lawyer, to promote a Court of Requests and other useful schemes, while the butchers won their claim to compensation which was to be provided out of a general assessment of the town.⁴ The hapless churchwardens, soon to be supplemented by additional 'ley wardens' were despatched on their collecting rounds and somehow managed to gather in most of the needed sum.

The events of 1775 were the latest phase of an age-old controversy between the manorial lord and the market traders which in Warrington goes back to the early thirteenth century. Ten years later in the national agitation against the Fustian Tax the town produced a spirited *Address to Parliament* written by Dr John Wright and published by the Eyres Press which predicted the demise of fustian, muslin, calico and cotton manufactures in South-East Lancashire in favour of Ireland, India and the Continent. For the first time in Warrington's rather introverted development joint action was in 1785 taken with Manchester, Salford and other centres of the fustian trade.⁵

Another nation-wide agitation stirred sentiment in Warrington in 1789: that of Dissenters (most of whom seem to have been connected in some way with the Academy which had by this time removed to Manchester) demanding the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. In that year major meetings were held in London, Manchester and Bolton, but on 6 January 1790 a gathering of local representatives in the George Inn at Warrington once again made the standard denunciations of the Acts. This was too much for Rector Owen, despite his friendship with many Dissenters, notably with Dr James Currie, the biographer of Burns. A sermon on *The Dissenters' Present Claims*, published in pamphlet form, marks the end of an era, the sad parting of friends. Studiously moderate in tone it pleads with the Dissenters, 'a liberal class of people', living in 'an age of decency', not to be illiberal, to try to look for an accommodation within the Established Church, and (with an alarmed over-the-shoulder glance at revolutionary France) not to transform their largely groundless grievances into ugly seventeenth-century fanaticisms again.

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The reply of the Rev Joseph Bealey, the new minister at Cairo Street, was sharper. He not only defended Dissenters against charges of malice, republicanism and extremism, but went over to the offensive, lambasting Owen's 'uncharitable insinuation and inflammatory abuse' and asserting the doctrine of natural rights against the corruptions of an artificial society. In angry mood Unitarians met with Independents and Baptists in a larger meeting at Warrington on 26 February 1790 and a local repeal committee was formed with Bealey as secretary and Joseph Ellis as treasurer. But this gathering ended in confusion, for, almost as if Rector Owen's point had been taken, the more timorous orthodox Dissenters (the Congregationalists and Baptists) broke with the more radical and outspoken Unitarians over the latter's anti-Establishment and 'destructive' arguments (which a little later were to earn a majestic reprimand from Edmund Burke himself). Obviously the age of sweet temper and easy relationships was over and the Unitarians were working towards a conflict model of society in which they saw themselves as in the van of urban democracy and civic enlightenment at war with a reactionary and corrupt municipal oligarchy. It would however be several decades before such a power struggle would break out again.⁶

The war years saw the 'Warrington junta' firmly in control. The town suffered privations as did most others in Lancashire. As farmers came no longer directly to market but sold their grain to corn factors who were suspected of all kinds of engrossing, an anonymous local correspondent was loud in his complaints to Lord Holland, a leading Whig critic of the Pitt regime, while Rector Owen wrote that in the town several dealers were boasting of making £5 — 6,000 out of an initial outlay of only £50 ('but this is a mere trifle compared with the immense gains I hear of in other places'), and Richard Hodgkinson, Lord Lilford's agent, wrote of the Warrington poor starving for want of food and clothing; 'an industrious family in full work cannot earn more than half meat'. Yet Warrington in the early 1800s was unaffected by corn riots or by radical activity of any kind. Nor did the movement for peace with France which nationally had received a boost from the short-lived Whig administration of 1806-7 develop here, while unlike the 'prime' cotton regions of Lancashire, the town was unmoved by Luddism.⁷

No doubt this quiescence was due in part to the social composition of the town, the absence of factories as opposed to small-scale workshops, and its dispersed, politically unawakened working class, with a middle class small and insignificant by any standards.⁸ But over all there lay the heavy hand of the junta, interrelated by marriage, engaged in all kinds of commercial enterprises, old and new, and sufficiently nouveau riche itself not to spurn the influx of new blood into its ranks. Thus 'Honest John Watkins', the Ditton-born copper smelter who had made a sudden fortune in that trade received in 1786 from Sir Richard Brooke of Norton a silver cup 'to drink the king's health out of'. In reply Honest John said he would certainly do this and add 'Down with the Rump and long live the Donor'.⁹ In face of this exaggerated loyalism the few monied radicals of Cairo Street chapel must have felt rather like a beleaguered garrison.

Soon there would be a more tangible display of the junta's authority, the colourful pageantry of which would both impress and overawe. The Volunteers of 1798 were offered by all the local notabilities: Lyon, Borron, Eyres, Bover, Greenall, Nicholson, Mather, Fitchett,



The Loyal Warrington Volunteer of 1798.

Glazebrook, Turner. Foremost among the N.C.Os, was the redoubtable John Clare, a typical Warrington entrepreneur of his day, cotton spinner, glass maker, coal agent, rope maker, barge owner, proprietor of Fishyard Croft by the Mersey Mills, ultra-Tory and genuinely believing that Napoleon would attack the town by sailing up the Mersey, a man whose stentorian voice when drilling the 500-strong Volunteers on the ground where Cockhedge Mills were soon to stand and afterwards on Arpley Meadows could be heard all over the town.¹⁰

For Loyalists seeking a more relaxed alternative to a round of drilling and huzzaing there was after 1814 the Warrington Pitt Club whose members could drink, chat and wear an ornate badge specially designed for them by a certain Mr Wyon.¹¹ No local function was complete without the appearance, often with fixed bayonets, of the loyal Volunteers. When for example in 1809 the Jubilee of the old king was celebrated, and a meal of beef and potatoes was provided by public subscription for 800 poor families, the Volunteers marched to church accompanied by a band, and in the evening attended a dinner in the Trafalgar Rooms addressed by John Ireland Blackburne, the Lord of the Manor, himself.¹²

This robust and rather excessive loyalism complemented, perhaps fed, on the distress of the post-War period, a time of acute suffering which constituted the earliest boyhood memory of William Beamont who was later to become the town's first Mayor and its first historian. It is the background to the Mellor-Pilling episode of 1817-18, an all too common, if unusually ugly, illustration of the politics of Repression in the years leading up to Peterloo. Against a background of national agitation for parliamentary reform centred on such leaders as Cobbett, Burdett, Major Cartwright, Orator Hunt and others, there began to circulate in the town in January 1817 a petition praying for universal suffrage and annual parliaments. Hundreds of signatures had already been collected when the petition was snatched from the

collectors in the street by one Richard Burrows who passed it on to Edward Coates who in turn forwarded it to Thomas Lyon junior. This Thomas Lyon (1786-1859) was the son of the deceased rector of Prestwich and nephew of Thomas Lyon senior, property owner and merchant, the presiding magistrate at Warrington who was lying ill with a paralytic stroke (he died a year later), and had, as a bachelor, recently adopted his nephew and signed over to him his numerous business and landed interests. Thomas junior who lived in his uncle's house and had been sworn in as a special constable was only too eager to exercise magisterial authority himself, locked the petition away and when approached by Roger Gaskell, a leading member of Cairo Street chapel who asked for its return, questioned Gaskell's authority and refused to comply with his request.

The thirty-year old Lyon and his friend Peter Nicholson, a Warrington solicitor and fellow officer in the Volunteers, had already acquired some reputation as leaders of a gang of roguish youths who had on one occasion got roaring drunk in St Elphin's churchyard and smashed up the property of a man who had tried to restrain them from ringing the church bells in the middle of the night. They had also gone to Liverpool in 1812 to support the Tories in the election of that year, incurring the hostility of the Whig *Liverpool Mercury* by stuffing copies of that newspaper into the mouth of a cannon and firing them all over the town, and also by secretly removing a lynch pin from the carriage of Thomas Creevy, the noted diarist and Whig candidate, thereby endangering his life.

This time however Lyon had plainly gone too far, for the local reformers having in vain tried to get up a second petition, compiled a strongly-worded formal complaint concerning the recent obstruction in petitioning. This was signed by 359 persons with another 506 on a 'separate parchment'. This was then forwarded to Lord Brougham, one of the Whig leaders in Parliament. He drew it to the attention of the House on 4 February 1817. Brougham, Ponsonby, Wynn and other Whig notables waxed eloquent on the denial of civil liberties implicit in Lyon's action. The reply from the other side came from Mr Wilbraham, one of the members for Lancashire, who dismissed the seizing of the original petition as 'a coarse joke, such as he knew to be common among the lower classes of manufacturing districts'.¹³

Next Lyon, rather inadvisedly, drew up a counter petition, excusing his conduct: he had acted thus because the collectors were threatening public order and had started a hue and cry against Burrows who had arrived breathless and taken refuge in Coates' house. He accepted Burrows' assurance that the whole episode had been a 'joke', and had kept the petition only so that his uncle could institute a full judicial enquiry into the affair. He added that the petition had in any case only been drawn up by 'obscure individuals', and that several persons had later approached him asking for their names to be erased from the document. The lameness of this apologetic seems to have taken even the government party by surprise and incensed the Whigs still further when it came up for debate on 13 February 1817. This time the most the ministers were prepared to say in Lyon's defence was that he had committed no breach of privilege though he was clearly at fault and had behaved 'improperly and injudiciously'. It was ordered that the petition lie on the table.¹⁴

This parliamentary rebuff had apparently no effect on the arrogant heir to the Lyon fortunes who now proceeded to

seek vengeance on two of the humbler supporters of the original petition. Jonathan Buckley Mellor was an ex-domestic servant who had set up a bookselling business at his home at Whittaker's fold, Town End, and Samuel Pilling was a labourer who also sold literature from his house in Back Lane. Both were attenders at Cairo Street chapel. Home Secretary Sidmouth's recent circular authorising the prosecution of persons selling seditious libels suggested to Lyon a promising course of action against these two.



Cairo Street Chapel.

At the end of February he despatched one of his servants, Mary Scholefield, to Mellor's shop to buy two copies of William Hone's *Political Litany* and another, John Scholefield, to Pilling's to purchase another copy of the same 'blasphemous' work. He then retained these books and took no further action till April when the Quarter Sessions had just ended, thus ensuring that the two booksellers, once apprehended, would spend the maximum time in custody awaiting trial at the next Sessions. A parish constable was first ordered to search both sets of premises and seize all seditious literature (the constable's zeal outran his commonsense for among other items confiscated were Bibles, the *Evangelical Magazine* and William Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*). Next Mellor and Pilling were arrested and a period of nineteen weeks' acute suffering began. On the orders of two local landowners and magistrates, Richard Gwyllym and Isaac Blackburne, they spent a few days in chains in the prison house next door to the Workhouse in Mersey Street, and were then sent to the Preston House of Correction and put to forced labour and were finally conveyed, handcuffed to common felons, in an open cart and in foul weather to Ormskirk. Here they were surprised to find themselves represented by a Liverpool solicitor, Charles Morecroft, who had heard of their plight and rushed to their aid. Nicholson, as prosecuting solicitor, was now somewhat perplexed and applied for a writ Certiorari to have the case removed to the King's Bench in London. There the two men, by now reduced to penury, were ordered to appear on their own recognisances at the March 1818 Assizes to be held at Lancaster.

Already however the *Liverpool Mercury* and in particular an anonymous correspondent calling himself 'Citizen' (he may well have been Morecroft) had taken up the case,

opened a subscription on behalf of the two men, and organised a petition to the House of Commons, accompanying their actions by a fierce printed attack on the 'Warrington junta'.¹⁵ The affair was also brought to the personal attention of the Home Secretary who intervened in the judicial process and secured the discharge of the accused. The latter at once returned to their former bookselling activities, advertising for sale in the *Liverpool Mercury* an account of their own case, Cobbett's *Political Register* and the *Black Dwarf*.¹⁶

The echoes of the Mellor-Pilling affair continued to reverberate. Their petition was debated in the Commons on 3 March 1818, Lord Colerane, the Whig spokesman, pleading eloquently on their behalf and emphasising the particular injustice of the proceedings in that Hone, the author of the *Litany*, had already been acquitted three times for the very offence for which the Warrington men were being indicted. This debate however became bogged down in an arid controversy as to whether it was a political or a religious libel which was being considered: the intervention of William Wilberforce in the debate hardly made for greater clarity.¹⁷

When the proceedings were resumed on 21 May the Whigs, this time through Henry Grey Bennet and Sir Samuel Romilly, presented a devastating case. The government was accused on the general point of encouraging an un-British spy system in Warrington and elsewhere, which had lured all kinds of 'creeping animals' to 'come out of their holes'. Specifically in regard to Mellor and Pilling it had resorted to an illegal search of private property; manacled persons not yet found guilty to common felons; placed them before trial in a House of Correction rather than the County Gaol and referred a case which properly belonged to the County Assizes to the King's Bench.

The government had no convincing answer to any of these charges: Mr Blackburne muttered that the sufferings of the two men had been grossly exaggerated — only a 'light chain' had been used and their hard labour had been merely 'picking cotton', while the Attorney General mused that he had in all this affair been if anything too lenient, especially in consenting to the dropping of the charges. The case was pressed to a vote and the Whigs' motion was lost by 73 votes to 17. The moral victory however clearly lay with the Opposition and the two Warrington victims of government repression.¹⁸

The Mellor-Pilling episode which from a local and national perspective is eloquent both of the nastiness of the times and of the zeal with which some were still prepared to defend civil liberties had one curious tailpiece. His public notoriety not merely tempered Thomas Lyon's youthful exuberance but left him permanently chastened, if not unbalanced. Abandoning commercial life altogether he withdrew in 1820 to Appleton Hall which he had just rebuilt for himself and devoted the rest of his life to estate management and the Bench and to bringing up his sons for military careers. Eccentric and reclusive habits developed: he would never travel in a carriage, walking everywhere to his appointments, dreading not merely to be spoken to but even to be seen in public. Even those who turned up for his funeral in 1859 were detained at Appleton Hall: his obsequies were to be like the man himself 'strictly private'. It had needed the events of 1817-18 to effect this startling transformation.¹⁹

Another local magistrate, John Borron, had clearly learnt no lesson, as was shown by an episode in 1819. Following

the Peterloo demonstration Sir Charles Wolseley and Charles Pearson, the radical lawyer, came to Warrington on 25 October to apply for a warrant for the arrest of a member of the Manchester Yeomanry who lived locally and who had sabred and cut a civilian named Hamnett. Their request met with prevarication, and turning up the next day with three witnesses they were set upon not far from their lodgings at the Three Crowns Inn. Their assailants were apparently a 'loyalist' mob which abused them and chased them with mud and dirt out of the town. The local magistrates did not intervene and nothing more was heard of the incident.²⁰

The junta's authority was thus reasserted. Yet for the first time a determined popular radicalism responding to national as opposed to purely local issues had arisen to challenge its dominance. It was the harbinger of a new era and points forward to the transformation of the political scene by the creation of a separate Warrington parliamentary constituency in 1832 and to the successful struggle for incorporation a decade later.

On the real nature of this radicalism it is more difficult to pronounce. Slowly there seems to be emerging a grudging consensus among non-marxist and marxist historians alike on these early manifestations of urban discontent. The Warrington evidence would for example appear to support Craig Calhoun's belief, based on his examination of five towns in South-East Lancashire, that such protest movements were 'deeply rooted in traditional communities of craft and locality. They acted on this social basis, not on the wider one of class': only later does there develop alongside these communities 'less traditional, less communal aggregations of workers within industrial capitalism'.²¹ J.R. Vincent too points out that the Industrial Revolution produced not so much two great antagonistic classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat, as a very large and vocal urban 'free peasantry', small-scale entrepreneurs, property-owning craftsmen and artisans, promoters of petty production and exchange.²² Once again it is for this rather incoherent social grouping that Mellor and Pilling would appear to be the spokesmen.

In the broader context of marxist history writing R.S. Neale points out that E.P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class* can be interpreted rather as the story of the rise of a radical artisanate than of a proletariat, while John Foster's study of Oldham radicalism, though pointing to class-consciousness developing in the mills at an early date, has it quickly arrested and subsumed into a far less class-oriented, liberalised consciousness by mid-century.²³

Once again Warrington, 'the town of many industries', where cotton manufacture (largely for climatic reasons) was small-scale and sporadic, brewing and tool-making were likewise family-run enterprises, and other trades such as fustian-cutting, tanning and pin-making bred a tradition of vigorous independence was remarkably late in seeing the emergence of a proletariat whose class-consciousness overstepped the bounds of purely local grievances.

The political history of Warrington in the nineteenth century has yet to be written. Following another brief period of co-operation in 1830 and 1831 when the cholera epidemic threatened to engulf the town, the struggles of the period — in each successive election after Warrington became a parliamentary constituency in 1832, over municipal incorporation and then for control



Appleton Hall.

of the town council — were between two rival segments of the propertied classes, led respectively by the Greenalls (brewers, Tory and Anglican) and the Crosfields and, until they defected over Irish Home Rule, the Rylands (soap and wire manufacturers, Liberal and nonconformist). Each side rivalled the other in its condescending paternalism.²⁴

It was not until technological changes in the wire industry produced the great expansion of the 1860s and 70s that large-scale manufacturing enterprises appeared and with them great aggregations of semi- and unskilled workers. Even then progressive politics in the town (as much anti-Liberal as anti-Tory) were dominated by Frederick W. Monks, self-made proprietor of the Whitecross Iron Works, bitter rival of the Rylands, Unitarian, Co-

operator and patron of the local Trade Unions. Paternalism, even if of a very different kind, was still a potent factor in the town.

Not till the turn of the century did an infant Socialist movement make its appearance, and the *Warrington Guardian* begin to note the existence of a local branch of the LRC, a small but vocal ILP and a Trades Council. Belatedly when in November 1903 Fred Stott became the town's first Labour councillor, in March 1904 Joseph Ball was elected Borough Auditor and the following month another ILP supporter, Mrs Wilkinson, secured a place on the Board of Guardians, the alarm bells began to ring in the committee rooms of the two major political parties. Class-based politics of a sort had emerged at last: eighty years previously they are hardly visible.

NOTES

1. D. Davie, *A Gathered Church* (1978), p.123.
2. J. Kendrick, *Profiles of Warrington Worthies* (Warrington, 1853), 'Edward Owen'; Warrington Reference Library (hereafter W.R.L.), W. Beamont, Notes on Kendrick's Worthies, MSS 48.
3. For Anne Blackburne see S. Partager in *Warrington and District Archaeological and Historical Society Newsletter*, (hereafter *Newsletter*), Number 2 (1978). This strange lady may have been the original of Sheridan's Mrs Malaprop.
4. W.R.L., Pamphlets on the Court of Requests, 1775, MS 9005.
5. John Wright, *Address to Parliament on the Late Fustian Tax* (Warrington, 1785).
6. See G.M. Ditchfield's accounts of the repeal campaign in *Transaction of the Historic Society of Lancs and Cheshire*, CXXVI (1976) and *English Historical Review*, LXXXIX (1974); E. Owen *A Sermon on the Dissenters' Claims* (Warrington, 1790); J. Bealey, *Observations on Mr Owen's Sermon* (Warrington, 1790); J.E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace* (1982), p.12f; J. Seed, 'Gentlemen Dissenters: The Social and Political Meanings of Rational Dissent in the 1770s and 1780s', *Historical Journal*, XXVIII (1985), p.298f.
7. Public Records Office, HO 42/54; PC 1/3117; Lancashire Records Office, Lilford Papers, DDLi/48; T. Dinwiddie, 'Luddism and Politics in the Northern Counties', *Social History*, IV (1979). The Warrington Manorial Court Book does show however that a hundred Special Constables were recruited during the crisis year of 1816.
8. W.B. Stephens, *Adult Education and Society in an Industrial Town* (Manchester, 1980), Chapter 2.
9. W.R.L., W. Beamont, Notes on Kendrick's Worthies, MSS Letters and Autographs.
10. J. Kendrick, *Some Account of the Loyal Warrington Volunteers of 1798* (Warrington, 1854); W.R.L., W. Mounfield, Newspaper Cuttings, 'John Clare', MSS 5307. The Blue Backs did on one occasion see action: in 1799 they discovered a mob of rebellious Irish conscripts and disarmed them in a skirmish in Lower Bridge Street. For John Clare's brother, William (died 1832), carrier, manufacturer and boatbuilder of Sankey Bridges, see P. Norton in *Newsletter*, Number 7 (1980).
11. S.A. Garnett, 'Pitt Clubs and their Badges', *British Numismatics Journal*, XIX (1927-28), p.217.
12. T. Preston, *Jubilee Jottings* (Warrington, 1887), p.227. Some idea of the atmosphere of the times is provided by a remembered anecdote of Dr Kendrick. Private of the Volunteers: 'I heard a man cursing the king just now. Should I run him through?' Captain Greenwood: 'No, man, you should only have secured (skewered) him'.
13. *The Parliamentary Debates*, XXXV, 4 Feb 1817, cols 211-214.
14. *The Parliamentary Debates*, XXXV, 13 Feb 1817, cols 350-354.
15. *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 Aug. 1817, p.4.
16. *Liverpool Mercury*, 15 Aug. 1817, p.4.
17. *The Parliamentary Debates*, XXXVII, 3 March 1818, cols 741-752.
18. *The Parliamentary Debates*, XXXVII, 21 May 1818, cols 861-874.
19. R. Greenall, *The Time of Visitation. A Funeral Sermon for Thomas Lyon, 28 August 1859* (Warrington, privately printed, 1859). Greenall was the son-in-law of the deceased.
20. Manchester Central Reference Library, Pamphlet Collection, 'Violent Outrage at Warrington', F1819/2k. See also R. Walmsley, *Peterloo, The Case Reopened* (Manchester, 1969), 322.
21. C.J. Calhoun, *The Question of Class Struggle* (Chicago and London, 1982), xi, 236.
22. J.R. Vincent, *Poll Books, How Victorians Voted* (London, 1967), 7.
23. R.S. Neale, *Writing Marxist History* (Oxford, 1985), 151; J. Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution* (1974).
24. See for example A. Russell in *Northern History*, XXIII (1987), 151; P.F. Clarke, *Lancashire and the New Liberalism* (1971), 226-7.