

A DIVIDED MIDDLE CLASS: BOLTON 1790-1850

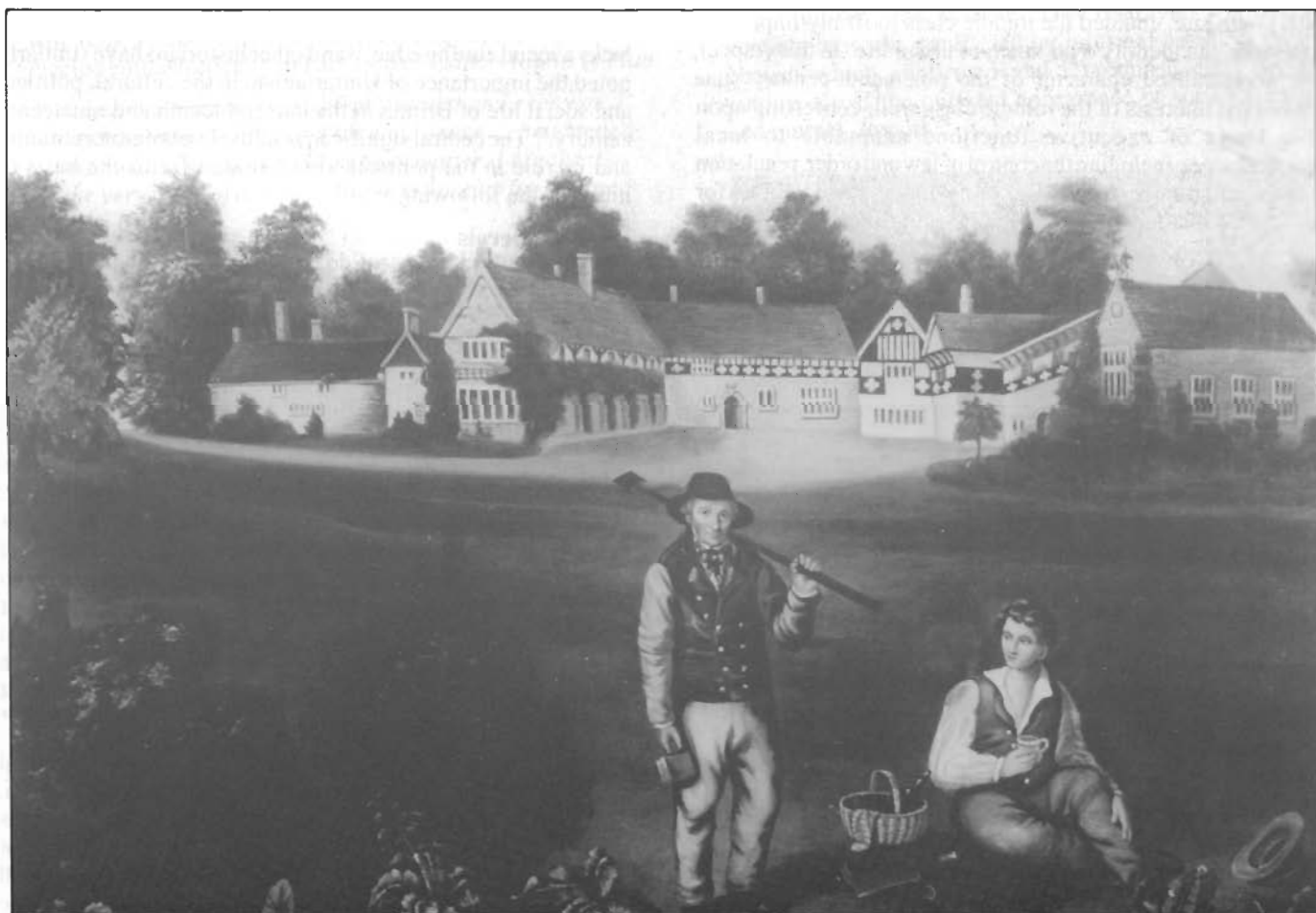
Peter Taylor

The nature of class relations in the Manchester region in the early nineteenth century has received much attention from historians in recent years.¹ Most of this attention, however, has focused on the history of the working class. Comparatively little consideration has been given to the processes involved in middle-class social formation. The internal structuring of the middle class still awaits the kind of detailed attention that has been accorded to working-class structure and culture in much of the discussion on class relations that has taken place since the 1970s. The concentration of much research on the labour-aristocracy thesis and on the restructuring of production relations² is symptomatic of an approach to the study of class relations that has usefully provided a comprehensive account of the social consequences of industrialisation in relation to the broad historical experience of the working class, but which has left us without a similar coherent history of the most powerful class in the region where the factory system and the capitalist mode of production were making their most rapid advances.

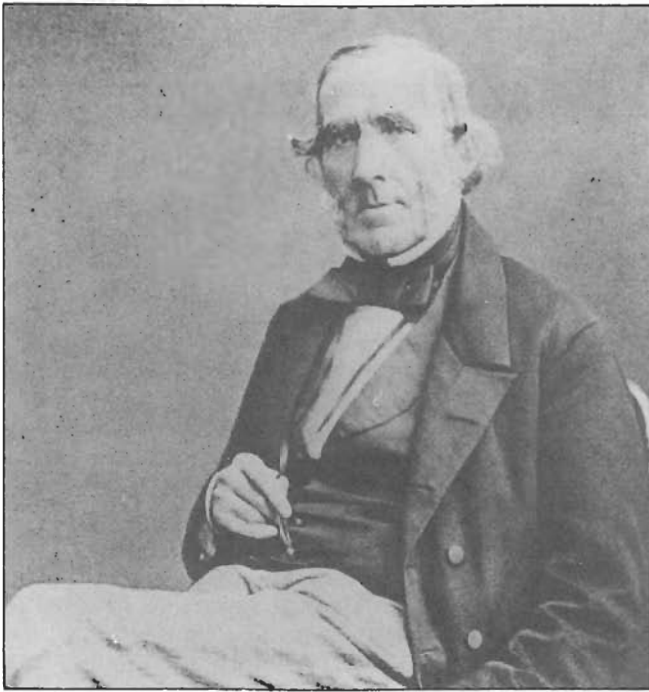
This is not to deny the importance of those works which have gone some way towards documenting the role of the middle class in power relations in the region, such as those of Foster,

Garrard, Howe and Joyce.³ And some of the more recent research on middle-class attitudes and values has now begun to revise the stereotyped depiction of a despotic northern middle class, hidebound by Utilitarian philosophy and the doctrines of orthodox political economy and narrowly obsessed with the pursuit of profit.⁴ But while such representation may be empirically defective, the view that both the character of the middle class and the reality of employment relations in northern towns closely corresponded with the image presented by contemporary critics of the factory system still finds uncritical currency among many historians.⁵ More study on the internal contradictions and complexities of experience involved in middle-class social formation should attenuate this all too frequent recourse to unsatisfactory ideological and psychological delineations of the character and attitudes of the owners of capital and might also contribute towards the provision of a more holistic historical synthesis.⁶

Attention to the internal relations of the middle class of Bolton should thus raise our awareness of the overall progress and nature of political and social change that accompanied industrial development in that town. For while the second quarter of the nineteenth century has been traditionally noted for the bitterness of class relations in an age of economic change, it is significant



Smithills Hall from the south.



Robert Heywood (1786-1868).

that the predominant political rivalry in the town was not that between middle class and working class but one within a middle class divided internally along cultural, kinship, denominational and political lines. The power of the middle class was most clearly evident in the role of political management and in the exercise of its social leadership in the local community. The disposition of power in the nineteenth century, whereby the authority that resided in parliament was devolved locally mainly by the non-compulsory or permissive-Bill procedure, enabled the middle class to firmly imprint its authority and identity over much of urban life. In this respect, the decentralised character of the nineteenth-century state served the interests of the middle class well, conferring upon it a range of executive functions adaptable to local circumstances, including the control of law and order, regulation of the poor, transport facilities, provision of infrastructure for industry, sanitation and public health arrangements. The middle class of Bolton were firmly in control of all the local institutions of authority and power. The local political system was predominantly inhabited by middle-class and petit-bourgeois activists and was certainly not subjected to anything like the degree of working-class control that Foster alleges was the case in nearby Oldham.⁷ But in the 1830s and 1840s internal divisions were sufficiently deep to hinder the practice of a satisfactorily smooth middle-class rule. More often than not during these years, intra-class relations proved to be more important in defining the parameters of class action than relations with either central government or groups lower down the social scale. I have shown elsewhere - as has John Garrard⁸ - how the serious conflict which surrounded the struggle over municipal incorporation and the remodelling of the town's governing institutional network brought paralysis to local government, severely restricting the ability of the town's leaders to cope with mounting social problems in an age characterised by frequent bouts of acute social tension. There is not the space here to reproduce the details of those conflicts. Rather, the more limited purpose of this paper is to suggest that in Bolton at least, middle-class social formation was accompanied by a significant degree of fragmentation. This will be done by outlining the nature of those religious, kinship, cultural and political divisions which proved so disruptive to the exercise of a smooth middle-class rule in the local political system before 1850.

Central to those divisions was the struggle between Church and Dissent which paralleled similar religious tensions in other communities and which was central to much of the political conflict in national and local political arenas for most of the nineteenth century. The 1830s and 1840s in Bolton witnessed an often intense struggle for supremacy in local affairs between the entrenched Tory-Anglican oligarchy and an ascendant group of Liberal Dissenters. As Derek Fraser has said, 'Men who disagreed about the very nature and purpose of existence were natural enemies'⁹ to begin with, and disputes and tensions which were often at heart theological were continually embittered by political disagreements and struggles. In 1838 the *Bolton Chronicle*, the mouthpiece of Bolton Conservatism, defended 'our Church Establishment' as a model of social usefulness, the preserver of religious tolerance and high moral principles and worthy of its privileged position 'as a legal and visible representative of the national faith'.¹⁰ But for local Liberal political leaders religious grievances were an important motivation for political action and the 'ecclesiastical monopolies' enjoyed by the Church were no less unjust than commercial and political monopolies and were 'so potent an obstacle to the intellectual and moral progress of England'.¹¹ The continuing struggle for the redress of Dissenters' grievances found expression in the successful campaign to abolish Church rates in the town in the mid-1830s, while the attempt to end the injustice of the exclusion of Liberal Dissenters from decision making in local government, through the campaign for municipal incorporation which followed, further strengthened the confidence and broadened the political and social outlook of local Dissenters.¹²

The backbone of the efforts of local Dissenters was provided by the families worshipping at Bank Street Unitarian Chapel who exercised an influence out of all proportion to the modest size of the congregation. Asa Briggs has suggested that 'Where Unitarianism was weak in the nineteenth-century Liberalism lacks a social cutting edge'¹³ and other historians have similarly noted the importance of Unitarianism in the cultural, political and social life of Britain in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century.¹⁴ The central significance of the Unitarian community and its role in the political life of Bolton forms the basis of much of the following.

Bolton Liberals

By the 1830s Bolton's Unitarians were in a similar ambiguous situation to the Unitarian congregations at Cross Street and Mosely Street in Manchester. That is, they too were wealthy and well-educated, but nonetheless systematically excluded from those higher offices of local political power that their economic and social roles would seem to command.¹⁵

Among the congregation were many of the leading business families of the town, including the Darbishires, Heywoods, Crooks, Haslams, and Barrows. It could also count among its members the Winders who provided a succession of legal experts for Liberal organisation and administrations, as well as the Quaker Thomassons and the Quaker Ashworths of Turton. Beyond the 1830s the material solidarity of the Chapel community was strengthened with the accession of new wealth such as the Scotts and Potters and the later business success of some of the long established families such as the Harwoods.¹⁶

The strong association between the congregation and Liberal causes owed much to the principles and heterodoxy of man, the power of reason, and the merit of moral and civic duties as a foundation of faith.¹⁷ These imbued this rational form of Christianity with a concern to eliminate irrationality in all spheres of public life, from which came a detestation of the 'aristocratic ideal' and all that it implied in terms of the pursuit of a profligate lifestyle and the maintenance of social

inequalities through nepotism and a corrupt parliament. Moreover, its attachment to certain doctrinal points, such as that of the Trinity, over which it contested the Church of England, made them pariahs in the eyes of many of their neighbours. Indeed, although the Toleration Act of 1689 had permitted worship by Dissenters, it had denied these benefits to any who did not accept the doctrine of the Trinity. It was not until the Trinity Act of 1813 that Unitarians were placed on the same legal footing as other Dissenters.¹⁸

These political implications of religious identity were one factor serving to reinforce the cohesiveness of Unitarian communities, a trait which was perhaps most sharply defined in those congregations which felt the worst effects of the traumas of the 1790s. Gatrell has shown that although wealthy and respectable Unitarians had been able to hold local office in Manchester in the eighteenth century, the semi-persecution inflicted by rival Tories in the loyalist backlash of the 1790s did much to undermine their status, leaving those who professed Unitarianism with a political, social and doctrinal liability into the 1830s. Bolton's Unitarians were subjected to similar hostilities.¹⁹

A Church and King Club was formed in December 1792 with a General Committee of 74 'gentlemen' that actively sought out and persecuted persons suspected of harbouring Republican principles who were considered seditious and enemies of the Crown and country. A combination of propaganda, repression, and a mounting wave of patriotic fervour determined to resist Napoleon Bonaparte, forced radicals and even moderate reformers to operate under cover. But nevertheless, according to Brimelow, 'under the surface there was considerable activity. By varied means copies of the publications of Thomas Paine and other writers were obtained and circulated, exciting no small degree of uneasiness in the minds of the upper classes in the town'.²⁰ Thomas Cooper, a Bolton merchant and Unitarian who took an active part in the reform agitation of the 1790s, reacted enthusiastically to Part Two of Paine's *Rights of Man*:

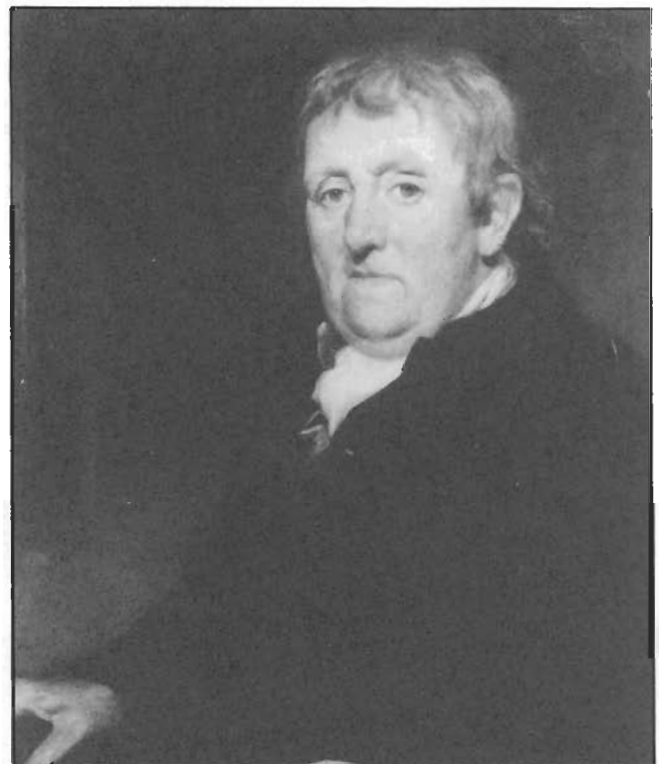
*It has made me more politically mad than I ever was. It is choque full, crowded with good sense ... heightened also with a profusion of libellous matter. I regard it as the very jewel of a book ... Burke is done up for ever and ever by it.*²¹

The Conservative political philosopher Edmund Burke had considered the 'Unitarians were united for the express purpose of proselytism' and aimed 'to collect a multitude sufficient by force and violence to overturn the Church ... concurrent with a design to subvert the State'.²² The religious heterodoxy of Unitarians and their political sympathy with the 'de-Christianising' revolution in France were seen as being connected by the authorities who therefore persecuted them for both their religious and political radicalism. On one occasion the Reverend John Holland (minister from 1789 to 1820) was burnt in effigy in the town centre, and on another he was represented riding a donkey, as chief mourner, to the burning of Tom Paine in effigy together with copies of the *Rights of Man*. His successor Franklin Baker later recalled of Holland:

*His intrepidity in persisting to preach the doctrines of Unitarianism, denounced on all sides as they were as destructive to Christianity and hostile to civil government, drew upon him the frequent remonstrances of many of the more timid of his own friends, besides an accumulation of odium from religious and political opponents. His utter disregard to all opposition, when truth and justice required him to speak and act, rendered him still further obnoxious to the cry of 'Church and King' which then echoed through the country.*²³

This freedom of conscience and sense of equality before God, which was typical in the outlook of many Dissenters, nurtured a strong sense of injustice towards civil inequalities suffered under laws designed to favour the established church. Theological debate thus engendered political struggle.

If the principles and heterodoxy of Unitarian doctrine ensured its connections with Liberalism, then its religious-cultural preferences ensured the elitist and exclusive character of its congregations. It was perhaps the most persecuted sects that erected the firmest barriers to expansionism.²⁴ It was remarked in the Bampton lectures of 1818 that 'Unitarianism is not indeed calculated to become easily a favourite doctrine with the common people' and from an early period the wealthy were disproportionately represented among the congregation at Bank Street.²⁵ In common with the other sects that made up the 'Old Dissent', it was concerned to maintain what it saw as the seriousness of religion, the preservation of regularity in matters of polity and liturgy, and high professional and intellectual standards among ministers.²⁶ For the historian of the growth of religion in Bolton, the 'profound views' held by Unitarians made them 'a select body based on serious discussion'. Successive ministers at Bank Street maintained an excellent academy with a library which contained no less than 1,500 volumes by 1854.²⁷ These traits, together with its lack of conversionist zeal and distrust of 'enthusiasm', clearly distinguished Unitarianism and the Old Dissent in general from newer dissenting movements such as Methodism, which characteristically maintained an evangelical preoccupation with expansion and a relative indifference towards denominational order and formal ministerial training.²⁸ Moreover, although many congregations may have attracted a tail of working-class followers, the ties of religious identity did not detract from their essentially middle-class character. As John Seed has argued, despite the rhetoric of community and brethren, the middle-class character of Unitarian communities was confirmed by informal networks of social contact which confirmed and reproduced class divisions, cutting across the outward appearance of social association and mutual support.²⁹



Peter Ainsworth (1737-1807).

Thus Burke was incorrect when he insisted that the Unitarians were a proselytising denomination. Expansion was by secession and not conversion. The initial growth of Unitarianism had depended on the metamorphosis of existing congregations, in particular the heterodox remnants of English Presbyterian and General Baptist traditions. In 1825, of 80 chapels occupied by Unitarians in the North West, only eight had been built specifically for members of that belief. Bank Street Chapel itself was founded as the first Dissenting Chapel in Bolton in 1672 by Presbyterians, with the foundations of the conversion to Unitarianism being laid between 1729 to 1750 during the ministry of John Buck.³⁰ Expansion was hardly spectacular thereafter. In Lancashire, by 1851, only nine Unitarian chapels had been added to the 26 occupied by the denomination at the start of the century.³¹ In Bolton itself in 1851, Unitarians only provided one place of worship with 614 sittings out of a total accommodation of 36 places of worship with 20,976 sittings. There was a modest absolute increase to two places of worship with 828 sittings by 1881, though Unitarianism failed to maintain its proportion of a total accommodation in the town which then stood at 85 places of worship with 45,017 sittings.³² Moreover, minimal expansion meant that there was little social dilution of the Bank Street congregation. In 1820 the appointment of the Socinian Noah Jones as successor to Holland brought growing divisions to a head and a more theologically orthodox group seceded to form Moor Lane Chapel. At one time they could boast a congregation of more than 300 when Bank Street had only 120, but they got into financial difficulties and as the original doctrinal differences disappeared the secessionists gradually drifted back to Bank Street, Moor Lane Chapel finally closing down in 1843. In 1868 Commission Street Chapel was founded, but even then there was little dilution of the parent congregation, and there was no further expansion until 1899 when Halliwell Road Free Church was established in the northern suburbs of the town.³³

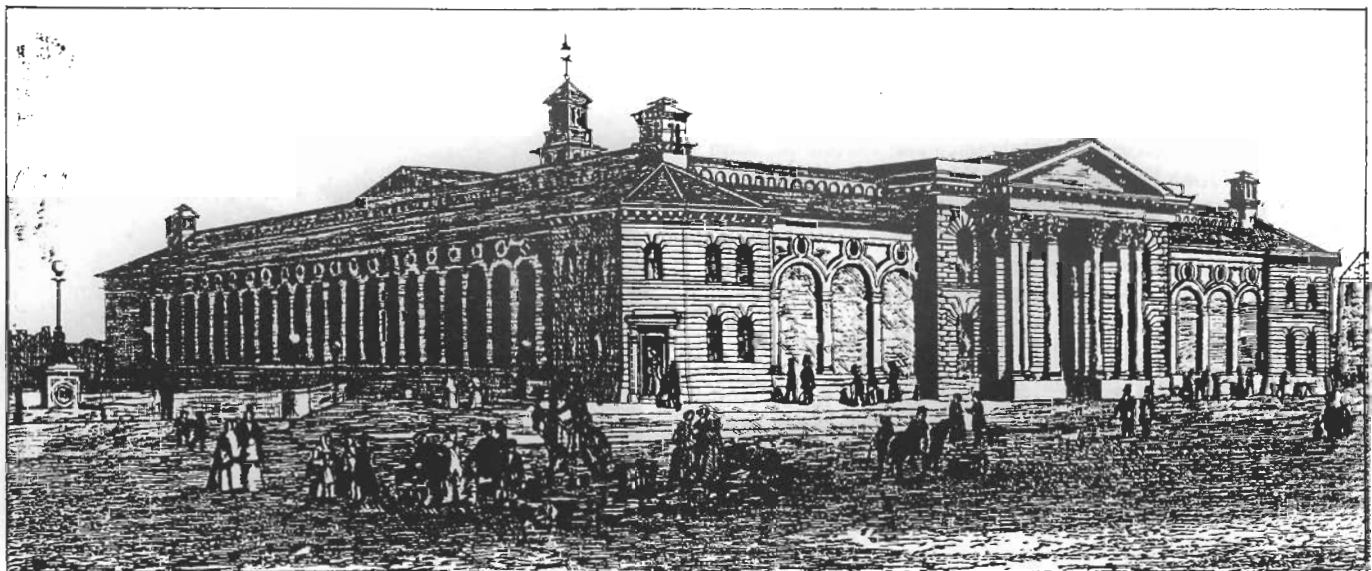
The sense of identity given to the Unitarian community by its business success and political and religious radicalism was further buttressed by a web of extraordinary kinship linkages. According to Gatrell, a similar network of ties was the source of the Manchester Unitarians' greatest strength,³⁴ and this was no less the case at Bolton. A firm impression of the sequences of familial linkages which were built up throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has been reconstructed through a mixture of chapel records, biographical notes (mainly newspaper obituaries and pen-portraits) and Ramsden's survey

of the major Chapel families.³⁵ Thus the Quaker Thomassons were connected to the Quaker Ashworths by marriage in 1793, the latter having a direct family connection to Unitarianism by its links with the Kays. The Andrews were a branch of a London family of Presbyterian stock whose roots in Bolton were established in the 1620s. The family maintained important connections with its Presbyterian relatives in London and built up family linkages in the eighteenth century with the local Unitarian Cromptons, Goodwins, Darbishires and Taylors. Another major sequence of kinship linkage ran through the Hollands, Pilkingtons, Barnes (of Cross Street Chapel in Manchester), Mangnalls, Kays and Ashworths, The leading families of Simpson, Harwood, Taylor and Haselden, among others, claimed direct descent from the marriage of James Smith to Mary Mason in 1776.

A further major sequence centred around the Heywood family which was connected to the Shawcross family of Manchester, to the Haslams who established important business and marriage ties with the wealthy Scotts of Mosley Street Chapel in Manchester, to the Crooks who were intermarried with the Bakers, and to the Harwoods. Moreover, there were connections linking all the major familial sequences together. Thus the Taylors were linked to the Harwoods who were connected to the Barrows. The Taylors were also connected to the Darbishires through the Masons (in 1764 Samuel Darbishire married Mary, daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Taylor (nee Mason) and their youngest daughter married Ashworth Clegg, a wealthy merchant of Cross Street Chapel). The Darbishires were intermarried with the Kays, the Haslams with the Crooks and so on.

These alignments were not invariable, but there were few outcrosses to Anglicanism before 1880. The only Anglican-Unitarian connection of any note was formed from the marriage of Francis Dorning to the cotton employer William Gray in 1804. Their son, the Conservative Colonel William Gray, represented Bolton in parliament from 1857 to 1874. The Dornings were one of the more substantial of the Chapel families, establishing family ties with the Ramsbothams of Cross Street Chapel in 1719 and the Bayleys, also of Cross Street, in 1792.

From the 1850s there was a clear trend towards the development of a more unitary middle-class culture, but the distinction between Liberal-Nonconformist and Tory-Anglican was only gradually eroded and the lines of denominational and political



Bolton Market House.

TO THE
INHABITANTS
OF BOLTON.

A UNIT!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

- Who stole the Calvinist Endowments? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Who, while crying down the Church, refuse to give up the possession of these ill-gotten funds? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Who are endeavouring to get the whole representation of the Country into their own Hands? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Whose object is it by these means to establish *Infidelity*, introduce *Anti-Christianity*, and bring about *Revolution*? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- What *Priesthood* inveigh the loudest against their *Brethren* of any other *Sect* interfering in *Political Matters*? **THE UNITARIAN!**
- What *Priesthood* meddle the most in *Political Matters*, *Spout at Political Meetings*, and neglect their *Spiritual Duties*? **THE UNITARIAN!**
- Who are PERSECUTING the Christian Brethren in GENEVA, and denying LIBERTY of CONSCIENCE in the most shameful manner? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Who are the greatest SLAVE Owners in the World? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Who made the Qualification in the Manchester Police Bill so high, as to exclude the People from having a Voice in it? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- Who have set up an infirm, insignificant creature, the refuse of Liverpool, without talent or knowledge, as a Candidate for the Representation of Bolton? **THE UNITARIANS!**
- And, who, finally, has deserted his *Religious Avocation*, neglected every *Christian Duty*, and polluted his *Hand and Heart* by the scribbling of *False, Malicious SQUIBS*, by the circulation of *Immoral and Beastly SONGS*, and by the Publication of LYING, SCANDALOUS, AND ABUSIVE PLACARDS? **ASK THE PRINTERS!**

FELLOW TOWNSMEN, beware of this wily,
selfish, UNITARIAN FACTION!!!

J. HEATON, PRINTER, BOLTON.

allegiance remained fairly intact until beyond the 1880s.³⁶ It was only by the end of the nineteenth century, for instance, that the Ashworths had all been converted to Anglicanism. In 1834 the Quaker Thomas Thomasson, who proved to be a leading figure in Bolton Liberalism, was converted to Anglicanism after his marriage to Sarah Pennington of Liverpool. The impact of the Crimean War, however, led him to sever his connection and he became a member of the Bolton Free Christian Church. His daughter married the Liberal-Anglican Stephen Winkworth, partner in the cotton giant Cross-Winkworth, but by the 1880s his son, John Pennington Thomasson, hailed as one of the town's greatest benefactors, was among the congregation at Bank Street. George Harwood (1845-1912), elected Liberal M.P. for Bolton in 1895, left the Unitarians for the Church of England, but his cousin John Harwood was perhaps the leading personality in chapel life from the 1870s. Another example of uneven and limited dilution was the Haslam family, one of the most wealthy and philanthropic among the congregation. Ralph Marsden Haslam set up a cotton spinning business with the Tory-Wesleyan William Cannon in 1849, but remained a Unitarian and Liberal in politics. His nephew John Percival Haslam was a Conservative. He retained his denominational allegiance to Bank Street, and is in fact the only Unitarian-Conservative listed among Thorpe's summary of political and religious affiliation of cotton spinning families in Bolton 1884-1910.³⁷

In Bolton, as in other places where Unitarianism was strong, it was this close-knit, wealthy, self-consciously intellectual and rational community that was to provide most of the energy and direction of the middle-class reform movement that escalated in both scope and intensity from 1837. Locally this focused on the campaign for municipal incorporation, which in many respects closely resembled that fought out at Manchester over the same period. Indeed, the initial decision to apply for a charter of incorporation was made by a small clique of Manchester and Bolton notables at a 'private tea party', held at the residence of the Bank Street Unitarian John Dean and attended by Henry and Edmund Ashworth, Heywood, Darbshire, Thomasson and Winder from Bolton, along with Thomas Potter, George Wilson, J.C. Dyer and W. R. Callender from Manchester.³⁸

The campaign for municipal incorporation was closely linked to the rise of Liberal, dissenting politics and might be portrayed as another episode in the struggle between the rising middle class and 'Old Corruption'. Derek Fraser has remarked that for the great Manchester radical Richard Cobden, 'the great political issue of his day was the class struggle between bourgeoisie and aristocracy, between town and county, for the soul of England, and his cause would be served by asserting urban authority through incorporation'.³⁹ Bolton Liberals similarly viewed incorporation as a means of building urban and Liberal influence generally at the expense of High Church authority and Tory power in the Commons. For Thomas Thomasson, Bolton was 'thoroughly a Reform town' and the 'common cause' would be strengthened through incorporation, which was part of the wider battle 'between the people and their oppressors - between the tax-payers and the tax-eaters - between the lazy, useless drones of society, and the patient, industrious producers of all wealth'.⁴⁰ But in local terms the issue was broader. The move to replace Bolton's county-oriented oligarchical nexus of manorial and magisterial authority with a more rational, representative and accountable system of local government is more accurately portrayed as a struggle between rival middle-class groupings. For as the following section on Bolton Tories will show, although Bolton Toryism did have important connections with county Tories, it was at core just as middle class as the small group of Liberal

dissenters who were now challenging it for supremacy in local affairs.

Bolton Tories

Bolton Toryism was an amalgam of landed and industrial interests, the Conservative nexus of county society being well integrated with a substantial semi-rural and urban industrial Toryism. At its head were the aristocratic Stanley, Bridgeman and Egerton families (the Earls of Derby and Bradford and the Duke of Bridgewater). Francis Egerton assumed the role of south-east Lancashire's most prestigious Conservative after he ended a long period of absence and settled on his Worsley estate in 1837.⁴¹ The Stanleys had coalmining interests around Bolton and with the landed Bridgemans had a direct entry into local politics as two of the three co-lords of the manor of Great Bolton. It was these, along with the lord of the manor of Little Bolton, who selected the invariably Conservative senior officials for the Court Leets which, backed by the authority of the county magistrates, controlled the local political system up to the end of the 1830s. Surviving transcripts of the deliberations of the Little Bolton Court Leet indicate that a few Liberals and Unitarians were sworn in, but that the senior officers, the boroughreeves and constables, were invariably Tory-Anglicans.⁴² According to Robert Heywood, the Great Bolton Court Leet was even more partisan:

I stated before the Privy Council that during the last thirty years only one liberal Dissenter has been appointed to the office of Boroughreeve of Great Bolton and he only because he happened to be a wealthy client of the Clerk to the Court Leet. This fact I believe is undeniable and for sometime past such office has been filled by ultra conservatives and hence we may readily suppose what must be the character and conduct of the constables and the rest of the underlings even down to the bellman;



Isaac Dobson (1767-1833).

*every individual will be found of the same order exercising his political influence through every channel more especially upon innkeepers and others during an election.*⁴³

Several of the Liberal Bank Street Families claimed minor landed or humbler yeomanry origins, such as the Morts, Heywoods, Lomaxes, Haslams and Harwoods. Others could trace a considerable pedigree, the Cromptons being able to trace theirs back to 1190, for instance. With few exceptions, however, the higher status local gentry were all Tory. Heywood advised the South Lancashire Election Committee of the Lancashire Reformers' Union (later the National Reform Union) in 1859 'that not much aid can be expected from this district, surrounded as we are by large landed proprietors nearly all extremely Conservative'.⁴⁴ In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the coalowning Fletchers and Hultons were the spearhead of gentry penetration into urban affairs. Members of both families served on the Bolton division of the county magistrates and Ralph Fletcher and William Hulton were part of the Manchester bench that gave the order that led to the Peterloo incident. Fletcher's attitude remained implacable until his death in 1832. Hated by radicals for his zealous promotion of the spy system, he was revered by ultra-Tories and the anniversary of his death was one of the high-points of their social calendar in the 1830s and 1840s.⁴⁵ Hulton went on to play a leading role in Conservative party re-organisation after 1832, and was equally revered as 'the father of Conservatism in South Lancashire'.⁴⁶ The Hulton family dominated the out-township of Little Hulton, which was considered a Tory stronghold until Liberals won all the seats at the inaugural elections to the newly created Local Board in 1877.⁴⁷

The importance of industry in a semi-rural setting for Bolton Toryism went further than the influence of the aristocratic and gentry coalowners. For Bolton stood pre-eminent as a centre of textile bleaching and finishing and most of it was located in the less densely populated out-townships. According to one estimate, there were 3,500 operatives employed in bleaching establishments in the neighbourhood of Bolton in 1837.⁴⁸ All the major employers were Anglican and with the exception of the Liberal Ainsworths, Tory, though even these had been converted to Conservatism by the 1860s. The Ridgways had relocated the centre of their business operation from Bolton to the village of Wallsuches in 1777, thereafter dominating much of the political and social life of the township of Horwich. In 1838 the devotion of Joseph Ridgway to the Conservative cause was perhaps exaggeratedly described as 'without a single parallel in the Kingdom', though he was the major force behind the formation of Operative Conservative Associations in Blackrod and Horwich, the membership of the latter apparently largely recruited from among the 400 strong workforce at Wallsuches.⁴⁹ In 1818 the Ridgway brothers brought in their nephew, Thomas Ridgway Bridson, as a partner. In 1833 the partnership was dissolved and Ridgway Bridson subsequently established T. R. Bridson and Sons as one of the giants of the industry. George Blair came to Bolton from Cumberland in 1804 after having purchased part of the Mill Hill estate. He established a bleaching business to which his son succeeded in 1826. This was Stephen Blair who was an original trustee of Little Bolton, director of Bolton Gas Company and several turnpike trusts, the first Conservative Mayor of the Town Council in 1846 and M.P. for Bolton from 1848 to 1852. The other major firms could trace older lineages. The Ainsworths, who became owners of the Manor of Smithills and its Hall in 1801, had established the Halliwell bleachworks in 1739. The Bradshaw Works was established by James

Hardcastle in 1784, while Thomas Hardcastle founded Firwood in 1803.⁵⁰

Turning to industry in an urban location proper, it has proved difficult to trace sequences of business, family and denominational connections among the Tories for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that is, at the period when their conflict with the Liberals was at its most intense. However, from information taken from a survey of newspaper obituaries and pen-portraits, histories of individual firms, and other minor biographical sources,⁵¹ it has been possible to form an impression of linkages that were established roughly from the late eighteenth century up to about the 1870s. The evidence firmly suggests that the Conservatives represented a cohesive social grouping, though the denseness of connection was not equal to that which characterised the Unitarian cousinhood and major linkages among even long-standing Anglican families were still being formed throughout our period.

The formation of the business partnership of the Anglicans James Ormrod and Thomas Hardcastle in 1798 linked cotton spinning with bleaching, coalmining, and banking, the ties being further cemented by the later marriage of their offspring, Peter Ormrod to Elisa Hardcastle.⁵² Further marriage and business ties extended the Hardcastle-Ormrod linkage to the cotton spinning Crosses, Briggs, and Eckersleys, but it was not until 1868 that they established links with the engineering Hicks by the marriage of James Ormrod to Edith Hargreaves, and only in 1871 did they cement a more distant connection to the machine-making Dobsons through the marriage of the solicitor Thomas Rushton to Emily Ormrod.⁵³ All these families were Anglicans.

Ormrods were the largest cotton spinning firm in Bolton in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, employing over 1,000 workers, a distinction shared by only one other Bolton cotton firm at that time. These were the Bollings, who were also coalowners, Tory-Anglican, inter-married with the clerical Slades, and who also established marriage connections with leading bleaching interests when Edward Bolling married Henrietta Bridson in 1852.⁵⁴ Likewise, the Tory-Anglican cotton spinning Heskeths, who dominated the Astley Bridge out-township, established concrete links with the bleaching Cottrills by marriage in 1877.

Throughout the period under consideration, Bolton's iron and engineering industry was largely concentrated under the ownership of Conservative employers. In 1866 it was estimated that about eleven-twelfths of the industry's six thousand workers were employed by Tories.⁵⁵ Up to mid-century, much of it was carved up between the three major firms of Dobson (textile machinery), Hick (stationary steam-engines), and Rothwell (locomotives). All three were Anglican and maintained close business and social ties. Isaac Dobson, the youngest son of a Westmorland yeoman family which could trace its pedigree back to the twelfth century, migrated to Bolton and set up in business in 1790. His machine-making establishment began on a relatively small scale, with thirty-five employees and a 'gin turned round by one horse' as the only source of motive power. Edward Barlow, the son of a partner in the banking firm of Hardcastle, Cross and Co. (in which the cotton spinning Ormrods and Crosses and the bleaching Hardcastles were also major partners), was brought in as a partner in 1851. By 1860 Dobson and Barlow's were the largest employers in Bolton with 1,600 workers, using steam power exceeding 350 horse power. From 1797 until 1811, Dobson had been in partnership with Peter Rothwell, a wealthy timber merchant (at this time textile machinery was mostly made of wood). Rothwell, an original trustee for Great Bolton,

had important commercial connections throughout Lancashire and was related to many of the early cotton spinners. He was also involved in establishing the Union Foundry in 1801. Rothwell's influence was instrumental in persuading both John Musgrave and Benjamin Hick to cross the Pennines and join him at the Union Foundry. Several other partners were involved in the enterprise at various times, including Dobson, but by 1821 Hick was described as the 'managing partner'. Hick, who had come to Bolton in 1810, became a prominent member of the Pitt Club and moved easily among the social circles of the leading gentlemen and business elite of the town

The urban and industrial side of Bolton Toryism thus represented a distinctive social grouping held together by a solid core of business, political and denominational ties among families who predominantly married into local society and not outside of it. The Tory-Anglican oligarchy and the Liberal-unitarian caucus represented the focal groups of the internal struggle between rival sections of the middle class. Both were small elitist groupings, but could usually draw upon support from lower down the social scale. The latter could sometimes gain the allegiance of other dissenting groups, usually at a less elevated social standing, though perhaps better integrated into



Benjamin Hick (1790-1842).

and neighbourhood. He became a trustee for Great Bolton in the early 1820s, a post he shared with many of his business associates, who were altogether more successful in exploiting the position to further their private business interests than at improving the town's public facilities. By 1833 he had established his Soho Foundry as an independent venture. Musgrave was his first manager. In 1839 Musgrave, a Wesleyan who came to Bolton in 1805, set up in business on his own account in partnership with his son at the Globe Ironworks. The Musgrave family firm subsequently added another foundry and eight cotton mills to their business empire.⁵⁶

the surrounding community. This was not invariable, however, for as with class there was a marked tendency for religion to straddle party lines.⁵⁷ Moreover, the Anglican-Tories could usually claim the allegiance of a substantial group of Tory-Wesleyan employers. The Musgraves have already been mentioned and further notables were the cotton spinning Knowles, Cannon, Taylor, and Marsden families. The Liberals were successful in subsuming the radical petite bourgeoisie that had maintained such a high profile in the local and national political agitations of the late 1820s and early 1830s, but pollbooks show that the Tories were also able to generate

BOLTON FAIR & SHOW OF CATTLE,

OCTOBER 13TH AND 15TH, 1832.

AT a numerous and respectable Meeting of the GENTLEMEN of BOLTON and the Neighbourhood, held at the BRIDGE INN, Bolton, on the 6th of SEPTEMBER inst., for the purpose of devising Measures the best calculated to improve the Cattle Fairs of Bolton:

It was Resolved, That a Society be established for carrying into effect the objects of the Meeting, composed of the following Gentlemen, and be called 'THE BOLTON CATTLE FAIR SOCIETY.'

WILLIAM GARNETT TAYLOR, Esq. The Thorns, President.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

THOMAS RIDGWAY, Esq. Wallenches.
JOHN ASHWORTH, Esq. Bertinshaw.
PETER AINSWORTH, Esq. Smithells Hall.
THOMAS HARDCASTLE, Esq. Bradshaw Hall.
ROBERT ANDREWS, Esq. Rivington.
PETER ROTHWELL, Esq. Sunning Hill.
CAPTAIN KEARSLEY, New Brook House.

ROBERT LOMAX, Esq. Harwood.
WILLIAM BOLLING, Esq. Crompton Fold.
JAMES CROSS, Esq. Mort Field.
THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq. Hill Top.
JOHN HARGREAVES, Esq. Hart Common.
PETER ORMROD, Esq. Chamber Hall, Boroughreave of Great Bolton.

A COMMITTEE WAS APPOINTED OF UPWARDS OF SIXTY GENTLEMEN.

Treasurer, ROBERT BARLOW, Esq. Banker. | Secretary, Mr. JAMES KNOWLES, Bolton.

It was also resolved, That an additional HORSE FAIR be established, and be held on or about the Second Wednesday in every April, and that when the precise Day is fixed upon, due notice will be given.

It was also resolved, That the following Premiums be awarded at the ensuing Horse Fair, which will be held at Bolton on the 15th Day of October next.

For the best Roadster, 7 Guineas. | For the second best, do., 4 Guineas.
For the best Cart Horse, 5 Guineas. | For the second best, do., 3 Guineas. | For the best String of Horses, 3 Guineas.
And that the following Premiums be awarded at the ensuing Fair, which will be held at Bolton on the 13th of October next.

For the best Milch Cow, 3 Guineas. | For the best Barren Cow, 2 Guineas. | For the best Fat Pig, 1 Guinea.
For the best Fat Lamb, 2 Guineas. | For the best Store Pig, 1 Guinea.

Three competent and disinterested Judges, unconnected with the District of the Society, will be appointed to award the Premiums, and to adjust any dispute that may arise.

The Borough of Bolton being situated in one of the most important Commercial Districts in England, there being within Seven Miles of its centre upwards of 300,000 Inhabitants, and numerous extensive Manufacturing, Spinning, Bleaching, Printing, and other Establishments, employing some Thousands of Horses; the Farms in its neighbourhood being principally Milk Farms, consequently causing a great number of Horned Cattle to be in constant demand; and its distance being only 11 Miles from the Towns of Manchester, Rochdale, Haslingden, Chorley, and Wigan, it must be evident that it is the best adapted of any Town in the County, for Fairs for the Sale of Cattle of all descriptions.

THE COMMITTEE WILL DINE TOGETHER ON EACH HORSE FAIR DAY.

By order of the Committee,
J. KNOWLES, Secretary.

NOTICE.—The Judges will commence their inspection of the Cattle precisely at 11 o'Clock in the Forenoon of each Fair Day, and the Premiums awarded will be immediately announced.

Bolton, September 10th, 1832.

BOLTON FAIRS, AND CATTLE SHOWS.

(From the Bolton Chronicle of Sept. 15.)

In our advertising columns will be found an advertisement in reference to the Bolton Horse and Cattle fairs, and by which it will be perceived that an association has been formed for the purpose of establishing a new fair, and improving the others. Of late years the fairs held in this town have not been supplied with good stock to that extent which the importance of the district, as respects its wealth and population, and the improvements in agriculture effected by the neighbouring gentry and farmers, would have led us to expect. It is to obviate this deficiency,—to increase the quantity and improve the quality of stock exhibited for sale,—that the association has been formed; and we think from the numerous and respectable body of individuals of which it is formed, and the extremely liberal manner in which funds have been subscribed, that the objects of the association will be fully effected. The amount of the subscriptions to the present time is about 200*l.*, which will be appropriated to encouraging Farmers and Dealers to attend with stock; and to secure their support, by giving handsome premiums to the best Stock shewn and bona fide offered for sale at the fairs, which will be held in April, July, and October. Competent judges will be appointed by the Committee for managing the affairs of the association, who are to be strangers, and totally unconnected with the society; and whose duty it will be to award the premiums only to such Stock, as is sold or offered for sale in the fairs; and we understand that any

stock having once gained a prize shall be disqualified from gaining a second at any future show; and to guard against impositions, any persons detected in giving false certificates shall forfeit the prize, and be disqualified from gaining a second: and it is further intended, that in the case of Bulls or Stallions being put in competition for prizes, that it shall be a stipulation they shall remain within a district of seven miles of Bolton during the succeeding season. These arrangements appear to be judicious and well calculated to attain the object in view; and we trust that all the originators of the association have displayed so much activity and liberality to promote an object which must tend to the general benefit, that they will be met in a reciprocal spirit by the public. The want of a stimulant to the resident Farmers and Breeders to improve the quality of their stock, and to the dealers to bring into the neighbourhood the means of doing so, has long been felt, not only in this, but in other districts; and the best judges are of opinion that if the public do not afford it in some such a way as the present, that that depreciation in the quality of stock, now so much lamented, will proceed in a degree ruinous alike to the breeder and farmer, and subversive of the general interests of agriculture. Other districts have formed similar associations to the present with advantage to themselves, and also to the interests of agriculture, so that the present proceedings are not merely speculative, but are sure, except all former experience is falsified, to produce similar results in this district.

support among the same social stratum in parliamentary elections at least. Up to mid-century the more populist approach of the Liberals to politics also brought them greater success than the Tories in attracting a base of working-class support, though the latter did begin to make ground in this respect from the late 1840s.

Bolton's manufacturing middle class were thus deeply divided by religion and party. And there were also cultural differences and divisions in aspects of economic policy that should be considered. Many Tory employers shared some of the economic beliefs of their Liberal rivals, but this did not necessarily compromise what was essentially an independent Conservative stance. It has already been shown that the largest employers in all the major industries were Tories. In this environment, Conservatism was totally committed to industrial society and there was little scope for the development of anything like the Tory-radicalism that was a feature of the West Riding, in which Tory paternalists and clerics supported Oastler's anti-Poor Law and Factory Acts' agitations. The Conservative attitude to the New Poor Law was equivocal and Tory mill-owners were among the firmest opponents of factory legislation.⁵⁸ A peculiarity of local manufacturing Toryism, however, was its support for the Corn Laws. The Liberal *Bolton Free Press* was astounded by the protectionist stance of the cotton spinner William Bolling, which 'in this country means a man who does his best to destroy the business of cotton spinning. Why Mr. Bolling should manifest so strong an antipathy to the trade by which he lives, is a problem we cannot solve'.⁵⁹ And Robert Heywood was of the opinion 'that the Corn Laws have proved very injurious' to trade, but 'With regard to W. Bolling, I have little hopes that he will be induced to break from his party though he is perhaps a greater sufferer than any other person being a very large spinner and not upon the most improved principle'.⁶⁰ Bolling's intractability appears to have had little to do with any deep-rooted party instincts. Local Tory manufacturers were generally of the view that the home market was the most important one, that it ought to be protected to ensure social stability, and that it was best supplied by a small number of stable and large producers. Many of them felt that if the Corn Laws were repealed, an already fiercely competitive cotton industry would become subjected to cut-throat competition because 'hundreds of grocers, drapers, druggists etc. who had no right in the cotton business at all, would enter it'.⁶¹ This outlook was, in large part, clearly a reflection of the substantial material situation of local Tory entrepreneurs. Moreover, the fact that Bolton was pre-eminent in the bleaching trade goes some way in further accounting for Tory attitudes. For this industry viewed the home production of manufactured cloth as essential to its well-being. In 1831, for instance, bleaching employers joined with local cotton manufacturers, handloom weavers, and the 'most extensive and respectable spinners' in memorialising parliament to transfer the duty on raw cotton to export yarns as a means of boosting the home trade. And in 1833 all the town's major officers (boroughreeves, constables, overseers, churchwardens), who were predominantly Tory, lent their support to the campaign along with local clergy, magistrates, gentry and Bolling in his capacity as MP.⁶²

Deep divisions manifested at the cultural level too. Robert Poole has suggested that 'Bolton Conservative society was little more than an urban extension of the hunting, shooting and cockfighting world of county society'. This was opposed by a rational reforming culture, influenced by Nonconformist religion and a concern for self-improvement and strongly repelled by wasteful indulgence in unproductive pursuits.⁶³ In the long term, the Conservatives were to benefit from their endorsement of such forms of popular recreation, though a

culture which found room for beer, blood sports and bonhomie often offended the rational sensibilities of Dissenters. In the mid-1830s, for instance, Heywood, complaining that 'certain bleachers' enticed their workers to Conservative Party meetings with gifts of alcohol, bemoaned the fact that teetotalism did not prevail among the working class.⁶⁴

The rival elites inhabited their own distinct social and cultural orbits. A string of loyalist clubs, established in the town from the 1790s, served as a focal point for the leisure activities of leading Tories. Prominent among these were the Church and King Club (formed 1790) and the Pitt Club (1809). Among the membership of both were the town's senior officers, leading industrialists, gentry and magistrates. By 1827 the Pitt Club was in decline, much to the delight of radicals, but the Church and King Club remained in existence until 1837.⁶⁵ The latter ran a library, which in theory at least was inter-denominational until Dissenters were banned in 1829.⁶⁶ This was typical of divisions which split a whole range of new institutions which emerged in the town from the mid-1820s. The *Exchange Newsroom* was established in 1827 as a general library and newsroom on avowedly non-political terms. Among the eighty shareholders were many leading industrialists of all political and religious complexions, including Ainsworth, Ashworth, Barlow, Bridson, Crook, Darbshire, Heywood, Hardcastle, Hick, Ormrod, and Ridgway. But the venture was dogged by divisions from the start and, after suffering from Conservative defections, folded in the early 1830s.

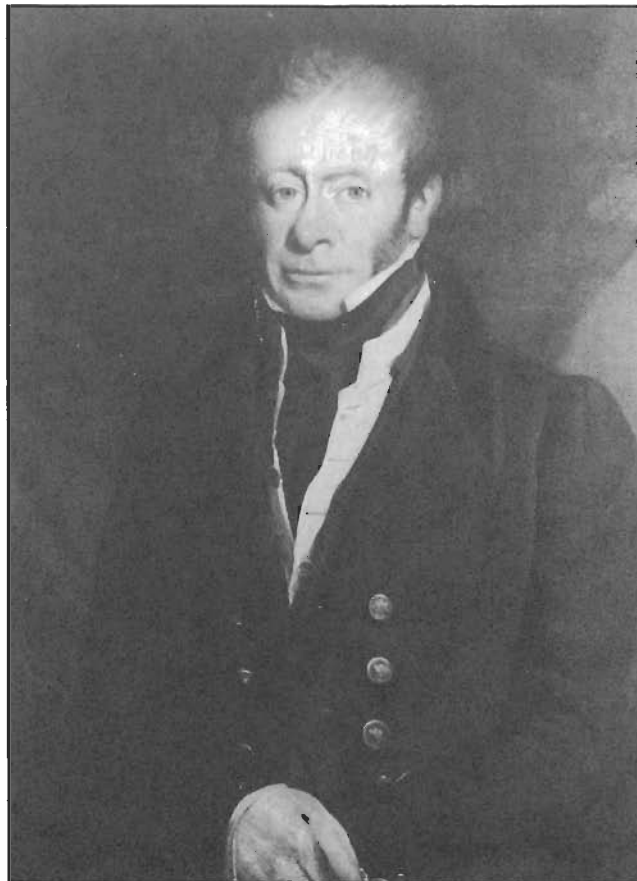
Similar divisions delayed a project to establish public baths - a Tory faction first bringing about the dismissal of the radical architect Greenhalgh and replacing him with their own man, the Liberals then reinstating Greenhalgh after regaining the ascendancy - and killed two early attempts to establish a park. A 'whole string of choral societies and glee clubs were split and destroyed by political argument'.⁶⁷ Robert Heywood resigned from the Bolton Cattle Fair Society in 1832 because of its alleged subservience to the Tory party.⁶⁸ Between 1839 and 1842, both the court leets and the newly created town council claimed the right to preside over official celebrations to commemorate the Queen's birthday. As both sides refused to recognise the legitimacy of the other, entirely separate ceremonies were held.⁶⁹ Soon after its foundation in 1825, the Mechanics' Institute was boycotted by many Tories, allegedly because it was the haunt of radicals. They continued to stay away even when the Conservative T. R. Bridson served as chairman in the 1840s.⁷⁰ Much of this was attributed to the influence of the Vicar of Bolton, William Slade, who also led a Tory faction that sabotaged a plan for an Athenaeum in 1846, after refusing to accept any form of education that was not based on Anglican doctrine.⁷¹

These then, were the divisions which lay behind the often bitter conflict within Bolton's middle class in the early nineteenth century. After the experience of the 1790s, the Liberal, dissenting grouping maintained a relatively low profile until the mid-1830s. Nevertheless, tensions were never far from the surface and demands made on the Canning and Wellington administrations, from both Protestants and Catholics, marked the beginning of a new phase of conflict. In 1827, the Bolton District Association of Protestant Unitarian Dissenters forwarded a strongly worded petition to parliament against 'those degrading laws', the Test and Corporation Acts. Early in 1828 a meeting of the Church and King Club decided to petition against their repeal. Doubts about the likelihood of strong popular support meant that the idea of launching the petition at a public meeting was rejected. It was sent round a succession of selected mills, foundries and factories, but met with a cool reception and apparently received little working-

class support.⁷² A Church and King 'mob' could not be raised in the present political climate, though the question of Catholic Emancipation did arouse some passions.⁷³ But with a hostile source gleefully proclaiming the decline of Orangeism in the town, this time the Church and King Club were careful to operate under the guise of the town's officers and leading magistrates, and a more vigorous petitioning movement claimed 12,000 signatures.⁷⁴

In the 1830s the conflict escalated. Both Tories and Liberals were in favour of the Reform Act of 1832, but clashed over the question of further parliamentary reform thereafter. No member of the Liberal elite appears to have played a prominent role in the successful bid by Dissenters to secure the removal of local church rates in 1833, but their attitudes hardened when it became apparent that the settlement of 1832 was not going to bring an end to the remaining marks of historic inferiority imposed upon Dissenters. In 1836 local Unitarians organised

Although this article has generally maintained that middle-class social formation was a process attended by a significant degree of disruptive internal conflict, the existence of certain impulses that ultimately made for greater class cohesion must also be acknowledged. The struggle for municipal incorporation and the remodelling of the town's institutional network of local government was the focus of much internal strife, but it was through this conflict that both sides negotiated a consensus as to *how* the town should be governed. This was signified by the Bolton Improvement Act of 1850 which established the town council as an effective governing body and the sole multi-purpose institution of local government and which removed those institutional points to power from which the rival elites had frustrated each other between 1842 and 1850. In this respect the local pattern of events supports Derek Fraser's view that the turning-point in the civic history of most towns was not the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, or



William Bolling, M.P. for Bolton, 1832-41.

a petitioning movement in support of a bill to abolish Church rates nationally, the petition from Bolton receiving over 7,000 signatures.⁷⁵ The withdrawal of this bill in 1837 sparked a phase of sustained agitation by the Liberal caucus who shortly thereafter formed the Bolton Reform Association to coordinate their activities. In the first year of its existence the Association petitioned parliament for household suffrage, the ballot, national education, and a charter of incorporation.⁷⁶ The Liberals were ultimately successful in the latter of these objectives, which finally ended their exclusion from the higher offices of local government. But this was only achieved after serious conflict, for the Tories contested the legality of the newly-formed corporation between 1838 to 1842. And as the confirmation of legal status did not mean the automatic displacement of the functions and powers of many of the older governing institutions, serious conflict continued until 1850 as the rival elites used these to hinder each other, bringing paralysis to the process of decision-making in local government.⁷⁷

municipal incorporation for those towns like Bolton and Manchester which were not automatically incorporated by that legislation, but the date of the first Act giving extensive powers to the town council.⁷⁸

Also important was the common commitment to the progress of industrial capitalism, notwithstanding disagreement over the question of the Corn Laws and other issues of economic policy. This was most clearly evident in social relations with the working class. Cotton spinning was the town's leading industrial sector and from an early date all the major employers were members of the Associated Master Cotton-Spinners of Bolton. The cooperation of all the town's leaders was needed to cope with the upsurges in Chartist activity in 1839 and 1842. And the demise of the string of loyalist Tory clubs by the mid-1830s was followed by the rise of new institutions which furthered the process of unification. The borough bench, board of guardians, Poor Protection Society, Benevolent Society and the town council were all important examples of such institutions, formed after 1838, which were largely unaffected

by internal strife and which gave to the middle class a greater sense of shared identity, buttressing the common ideological, social and political determinants of class power and eroding cultural differences. Divisions continued after 1850, but they no longer compromised the effectiveness of middle-class rule. The stabilisation of intra-middle-class relations was signified most visibly in the growth of civic pride. After 1850 both

Liberal and Conservative administrators spent large sums of money on a range of facilities and amenities, including a prestigious Market Hall, a grandiose Town Hall, parks, libraries and sanitation. This provided the middle class with a source of pride and achievement and ensured that the search for power and status was largely satiated in municipal office and the exercise of social leadership in the local community.

NOTES

1. Among the major works, based largely on the regional experience, are J. Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution: Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns* (London, 1974); N. Kirk, *The Growth of Working-Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England* (Beckenham, 1985); P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (London, 1980).
2. Foster, op.cit., ch. 7; Joyce, op.cit., ch. 2; Kirk, op.cit., ch 1-2, and his 'In Defence of Class: A Critique of Recent Revisionist Writing Upon the Nineteenth-Century English Working Class', *International Review of Social History*, XXXII (1987).
3. Foster, op. cit.; J. Garrard, *Leadership and Power in Victorian Industrial Towns 1830-80* (Manchester, 1983); A. Howe, *The Cotton Masters 1830-1860* (Oxford, 1984); Joyce, op. cit.
4. J. Seed, 'Unitarianism, Political Economy and the Antinomies of Liberal Culture in Manchester, 1830-50', *Social History*, 7 (1982).
5. For example, H. I. Dutton and J. E. King, 'The Limits of Paternalism: The Cotton Tyrants of North Lancashire 1836-1854', *Social History*, 7 (1982); Kirk, 'In Defence of Class', pp. 18-32.
6. Similar remarks have been made by S. Gunn, 'The Failure' of the Victorian Middle Class: a Critique', in J. Wolff and J. Seed (eds.), *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class* (Manchester, 1988), pp. 17-18.
7. Foster, op. cit., ch. 3.
8. Garrard, op. cit., pp. 187-194; P. F. Taylor, 'Popular and Labour-Capital Relations in Bolton, 1825-1850', unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Lancaster (1991), pp. 99-120.
9. D. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England: The Structure of Politics in Victorian Cities* (Leicester, 1976), p. 265.
10. *Bolton Chronicle*, 7 April 1838.
11. *Bolton Free Press*, 18 December 1847.
12. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 47-50, 99-126.
13. Cited in J. Seed, 'Theologies of Power: Unitarianism and the Social Relations of Religious Discourse, 1800-50', in R. J. Morris (ed.), *Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns* (Leicester, 1986), p.108.
14. V. A. C. Gatrell, 'Incorporation and the pursuit of Liberal hegemony in Manchester 1790-1839', in D. Fraser (ed.), *Municipal Reform and the Industrial City* (Leicester, 1982).
15. Gatrell, op. cit., pp. 24-29.
16. Bolton Biographical Notes (Bolton Reference Library, arranged in seven bound volumes, the first two being the most extensively used in this article); G. M. Ramsden, *A Responsible Society: The Life and Times of the Congregation of Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, Lancashire* (Horsham, 1985).
17. For example, see *Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, Bi-Centenary Commemoration 1696-1896* (Manchester, 1896), pp. 23-4.
18. Seed, 'Theologies of Power', p.112.
19. *Bank Street Chapel Bi-centenary*, p. 147; Gatrell, op. cit., p. 28, 32-35; Seed, 'Theologies of Power', pp. 131-132.
20. W. Brimelow, *History Of Bolton*. Vol. 1 (Bolton, 1882), pp. 6-10.
21. Cited in E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Penguin edn., Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 121. Cooper is to be found among the 1833 Roll Of Trustees for Bank Street Chapel (see Ramsden, op. cit., p. 15, 83).
22. Cited in Gatrell, op. cit., p. 28.
23. F. Baker, *The Rise and Progress of Nonconformity in Bolton* (London, 1854), pp. 67-68.
24. Thompson, op. cit., p.29.
25. P. N. Dale, 'A Study of the growth of Churches in Bolton during the Industrial Revolution', unpublished Ph.D thesis University College of North Wales (1984).
26. A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914* (London, 1976), p. 40; Dale, op. cit., p. 35.
27. Dale, op. cit., p. 32, 35; Ramsden, op. cit., p. 68.
28. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 40, 51-57.
29. Seed, 'Theologies of Power', p. 133.
30. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 41; Dale, op. cit., p. 32; Ramsden, op. cit., p. 7, 11-12.
31. Gatrell, op. cit., p. 25.
32. *Bolton Journal*, 10 December 1881 (Religious Census of 1881, including comparison with the Religious Census of 1851).
33. Dale, op. cit., p. 32; Ramsden, op. cit., pp. 56-59, 68.
34. Gatrell, op. cit., pp. 25-27; Seed, 'Theologies of Power', pp. 130-31.
35. Ramsden, op. cit., ch. 8 (this is a book aimed at the general reader rather than academic market, but is a useful source nonetheless); Bolton Biographical Notes, op. cit.; W. H. Haslam and F. E. Morris, *John Haslam and Co. Ltd, 1816-1920* (B.R.L., n. d.); Material relating to Bank Street Chapel deposited at John Ryland's Library, Manchester.
36. Bolton Biographical Files, op. cit.
37. E. Thorpe, 'Industrial Relations and the Social Structure: a Case Study of Bolton Cotton Mule-Spinners, 1884-1919', unpublished M.Sc. thesis Salford University (1969), Table 30.
38. H. Ashworth, *Recollections of Richard Cobden, M.P., and the Anti-Corn Law League* (London, 1876), p. 28.
39. Fraser, *Urban Politics*, p. 22.
40. *Bolton Free Press*, 20 January 1838; Taylor, op. cit., pp. 101-102.
41. F. C. Mather, *After the Canal Duke: A Study of the Industrial Estates Administered by the Trustees of the Third Duke of Bridgewater in the Age of Railway Building, 1825-1872* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 320-33.
42. Bolton Archives MLB/2, Transcript of the proceedings of the Court Leet of Little Bolton, 1797-1841.
43. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1838, ZHE/34/4, R. Heywood to Captain Jebb, 24 March 1838.
44. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1859, B.A., ZHE/55/5, R. Heywood to George Wilson, 24 April 1859.
45. According to E. P. Thompson, op. cit., p. 536, Bolton appears to have suffered 'from two unusually zealous magistrates - the Rev. Thomas Bancroft and Colonel Fletcher - both of whom employed spies (or 'missionaries') on an exceptional scale'.
46. *Bolton Operative Conservative Association: Report of the Proceedings at the Meeting of the Bolton Operative Conservative Association held in the Little Bolton Town Hall, June 1st 1836* (Bolton, 1836).
47. *Bolton Journal*, 14 April 1877.

48. J. Black, 'A Medico-Typographical, Geological, and Statistical Sketch of Bolton and its Neighbourhood', *Transactions of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association*, V (1837), p. 177.
49. *Horwich Operative Conservative Association First Anniversary Dinner, 1836* (Bolton, 1836).
50. Bolton Biographical Files, op. cit. The largest firms in the industry have been considered here. A table showing the dates of establishment of those firms from Bolton and District that survived to join the Bleachers' Association Ltd. in 1900 can be found in James H. Longworth, *The Cotton Mills of Bolton 1780-1985* (Bolton, 1986), p. 106.
51. Bolton Biographical Files, op. cit., comprise largely of obituaries and pen-portraits taken from newspapers, especially runs of articles taken from the *Bolton Journal and Guardian*, 1933, and *Bolton Guardian*, 1933.
52. For the Ormrod family history, see *Bolton Chronicle*, 1 July 1871.
53. Bolton Biographical Files, op. cit.
54. *B.P.P.* 1840, Vol.X, *Select Committee on Mills and Factories, 1597* - list of the number of hands employed in the cotton mills of Bolton, supplied by the secretary of the Associated Master cotton-Spinners of Bolton.
55. *Bolton Chronicle*, 7 April 1866; *Bolton Guardian*, 7 April 1866.
56. Bolton Biographical Files, op. cit.; *B.C.*, 10 March 1860 (history of Dobson and Barlow); 'Short Histories of Famous Firms, no.V. Messrs. Rothwell and Co., Bolton', *The Engineer*, January to June 1920; P. W. Pilling, 'Hick Hargreaves and Co.: The History of an Engineering Firm c.1833-1939. A Study with Special Reference to Technological Change and Markets' unpublished Ph.D thesis Liverpool University (1985), pp. 10-12, 27-30.
57. *Bolton Chronicle*, 14 August 1847: Religious Opinions of the Electors Of Bolton. The following is as correct and analysis as can be formed of the religious opinions of those who voted at the late election:-
- | | |
|-----|---|
| 95 | Churchmen voted for Bowring (Liberal) |
| 97 | Ditto Brooks (Liberal) |
| 376 | Ditto Bolling (Conservative) |
| 71 | Wesleyan Methodists voted for Bowring |
| 79 | Ditto Brooks |
| 82 | Ditto Bolling |
| 92 | Independents voted for Bowring |
| 93 | Ditto Brooks |
| 19 | Ditto Bolling |
| 55 | Unitarians voted for Bowring |
| 55 | Ditto Brooks |
| 2 | Ditto Bolling |
| 7 | Independents and other Methodists voted for Bowring |
| 7 | Ditto Brooks |
| 6 | Baptists voted for Bowring |
| 6 | Ditto Brooks |
| 31 | Catholics voted for Bowring |
| 25 | Ditto Brooks |
| 7 | Ditto Bolling |
| 12 | Friends voted for Bowring |
| 13 | Ditto Brooks |
| 1 | Cowardite voted for Bowring and Brooks |
| 7 | Swendenborgians voted for Bowring |
| 9 | Ditto Brooks |
| 2 | Ditto Bolling |
| 9 | Scotch Kirk voted for Bowring |
| 9 | Ditto Brooks |
| 1 | Ditto Bolling |
- There are 421 individuals on the list whose religious opinions cannot be ascertained, or who have no religious opinions at all. Of these, 265 voted for Bowring, 241 for Brooks, 222 for Bolling.'
58. *B.P.P.* 1847, Vol. XLVI, Memorials of the Master Manufacturers and Millowners in the County of Lancaster, with respect to the Ten Hours Bill of 1847.
59. *Bolton Free Press*, 2 January 1841.
60. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1839, B.A., ZHE/35/34, R. Heywood to Thomas Thornley, n.d.
61. *North Cheshire Reformer* (speech of Mr. Thornley), cited in *B.F.P.*, 13 April 1839.
62. *Bolton Chronicle*, 12 February, 5, 26 March 1831, 13, 20 April 1833.
63. R. Poole, *Popular Leisure and the Music Hall in 19th-Century Bolton*, (1982), p. 17; P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885* (London, 1987) chs. 1 and 2.
64. Heywood Papers, Letter Book 1830s, B.A., ZH/26/3/125, R. Heywood to the editor of the *B.F.P.*, n.d.
65. *Bolton Chronicle*, 9 June 1827, 31 May, 7 June 1828, 30 May 1829.
66. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1829, B.A., ZHE/24/3, ZHE/24/4, drafts of letters from R. Heywood to various newspapers.
67. Poole, op. cit., p. 17; R. Poole, 'Leisure in Bolton, 1750-1900' (typescript in B.R.L., a study undertaken for the Bolton Research Award in 1980-81), pp. 198-200; Brown, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
68. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1832, B.A., ZHF/28/33, R. Heywood to the editor of the *Bolton Chronicle*, n.d. The *Liberal Bolton Free Press*, 7 May 1836, attributed great covert electoral power to the Cattle Fair Society.
69. *Bolton Free Press*, 18 May 1839, 30 May 1840.
70. Annual Reports For The Bolton Mechanics' Institution, 1825-1877 (B.R.L., incomplete); reports of annual meetings of the Mechanics' Institution in the *Bolton Chronicle* and *Bolton Free Press*.
71. Heywood Papers, Correspondence 1846, B.A., ZH/42/50, R. Heywood to Noah Jones, regarding opposition of Vicar of Bolton to the proposed Athenaeum: 'From the very first he slighted the Mechanics' Institution and again with the Exchange Rooms, though admitting the 'Church and King' to be only a reading library, he has done his utmost to destroy their usefulness and at the same time rendered the other still more exclusive by refusing to allow any consistent dissenter to be placed on the committee. He has fostered bigotry in every form and exhibited such feelings more particularly on each 5 of November by furiously denouncing the Catholics, encouraging the ringing of bells, shooting, &c., &c.'
72. *Bolton Chronicle*, 9 June 1827, 8 March, 12 April 1828.
73. N. Gash, *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865*, (1979) pp. 138-39.
74. *Bolton Chronicle*, 6 December 1828, 14 February, 21 March, 11 April 1829.
75. *Bolton Free Press*, 11, 18, 25 March, 1 April 1837; *B.C.*, 8 April 1837. The petition gave occupation and residency of the signatories and no person was allowed to sign unless they were a ratepayer.
76. *Bolton Free Press*, 30 December 1837, 17 February, 10 March, 18 August 1838.
77. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 99-120.
78. D. Fraser, 'Municipal reform in historical perspective', in Fraser (ed.), op. cit., pp. 7-8.