LIBERTY, PROPERTY, MATERIALITY; AN HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF PROTEST AND RESISTANCE IN LATER-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND (1763-1814)

One Volume

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Abstract

The later eighteenth century (c.1763-1815) was a period of great social, economic and cultural upheaval in Britain. Drawing on a range of case studies from North-East England and London, drawn together through the life of Thomas Spence, this thesis explores how subaltern individuals and groups experienced, protested against, and resisted these upheavals, not just through public 'flash-points' such as riots but also routinely through quotidian objects and spaces in the everyday.

To investigate case studies of everyday subaltern resistance, this thesis searches beyond elite produced textual accounts, which commonly obscure everyday forms of resistance, and instead pursues a multisource methodology integrating textual, material, and spatial sources. Through the critical examination of these sources in combination, a range of inconsistencies, ambiguities, and exaggerations appear suggesting the presence of underlying hidden tensions, anxieties, and dissent. This thesis then explores how these tensions were materialised in objects and places as component strategies articulating protest and resistance.

Taken individually, the case studies present a series of highly nuanced micro-histories offering important insights into context-specific expressions of protest and resistance in later-eighteenth-century England. When read together, however, they suggest how material culture and space were widely understood, across diverse contexts, to offer important avenues for expressions of protest and resistance at the macro-scale. Between Marsden Grotto, Newcastle-upon-Tyne's Town Moor, Spencean London and the Wilkes and Liberty movement, this thesis demonstrates how subalterns expressed their dissent and demands in common ways through objects, space and place.

This thesis thus opens a new approach to the history and archaeology of protest and resistance, foregrounding subaltern experience and promoting a recognition of the pivotal roles played by material culture, space and place in the articulation of power, protest and resistance.

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List of Institutional Abbreviations and Accronyms.

BL – British Library

BM – British Museum

CW – Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

DUSC – Durham University Special Collections

Fitz – Fitzwilliam Museum

HD – Historic Deerfield

LMA – London Metropolitan Archives

MoAR – Museum of the American Revolution

MoL – Museum of London

NCA – Northumberland County Archives

NML – National Museums Livepool

NPG –National Portrait Gallery

OBP – Old Bailey Proceedings

TNA – The National Archives (UK)

TWA – Tyne and Wear Archives

TWM – Tyne and Wear Museums

V&A – Victoria and Albert Museum

Chapter 1 Introduction

> Every true friend to the glorious cause was sensible that decency and harmony could alone contribute towards its support and the establishment of freedom.
>
> (*Newcastle Journal,* 14th April, 1770 p.3)

The quote above epitomizes the character of most source material relating to later eighteenth-century popular protest; it was written by a gentleman in 1770, published in a local newspaper; the *Newcastle Journal,* and offers a single elite perspective on how popular protest should ideally (according to the writer) be expressed in later eighteenth-century England. A critical reading of this quote, however, reveals evidence of hidden tensions between different methods and techniques of protest and therein between those who may not articulate protest with 'decency and harmony'. This study looks beneath the dominant master narratives, excavating between the lines of elite source material, to explore the variety of ways in which people of different class, ethnicity and gender expressed their protests materially and spatially.

This study offers, for the first time, an historical archaeology of popular protest in later eighteenth-century England (1762-1814). Historical archaeology is a unique discipline integrating the study of primary textual sources with the analysis of material things and spaces. The eighteenth-century textual record concerning popular protest is extensive, but also problematic and incomplete. Few protesters recorded their own accounts of events, and protest movements were largely documented in the context of their attempted suppression by the authorities and in inherently biased accounts written in newspapers, pamphlets, and private correspondence. The result is an all-to-often one-sided portrait, seen through the lens of the establishment and social elite. Yet popular protest was manifested in ways which extended beyond text, and which not only embodied subtexts and hidden meanings invisible to outsiders and opponents, but also actively shaped a sense of collective identity and common cause amongst subaltern protesters themselves. Work by historical archaeologists (explored in section 1.6.3) has led to an increasing awareness of the value of researching the materiality and spatiality of protest (e.g. Beaudry 1989; Beaudry et al. 1991; Hall 1999; 2000). This realization that protest can be studied materially and spatially allows artefacts and landscapes to be considered as areas of valuable source material which, through careful research, can reveal the ways in which people expressed transcripts of protest and resistance in the past.

The focus of much research on historical resistance and protest movements has traditionally been on nineteenth-century contexts (particularly Chartism, Luddism and trade unionism), due

in part to the better availability of source material in contrast to the eighteenth century. A further reason for this traditional focus on nineteenth-century movements is that movements such as Chartism and trade unionism had unifying objectives and motivations and are more easily encompassed within a single study's scope of focus. Eighteenth-century movements were often more diffuse in nature with varying objectives and motivations, and as this thesis will show, even movements seemingly unified in objective were in reality fractured with internal tensions.

A further focus in 'protest history' has been the traditional preference for textual sources over material or spatial ones; a result of the dominance which historians have traditionally held in the study of eighteenth and nineteenth-century popular protest in Britain. This situation has changed in the last twenty years, due in part to an increasing awareness of the important roles of materiality and spatiality in protest movements leading to increasingly interdisciplinary studies conducted by both historians and archaeologists (This development is explored further in section 1.8).

The perceived ephemerality of physical manifestations of eighteenth-century protest has until recently ensured that sustained analysis has not been attempted by British archaeologists, though it is important to note here that research by material culture historians and spatial historians have started to redress this lacuna. As discussed below (sections 1.6, 1.7, 2.2 and 2.5), recent methodological developments by both archaeologists and historians have facilitated better understandings of how protest and resistance were materialised. This work offers new insights into protest and resistance, directly informing the present study.

1.1 Central Research Question

My research focuses on exploring two key manifestations of eighteenth-century popular protest and resistance: artefacts (material culture) and sites (places and spaces). The artefacts I will study comprise things owned and used by protesters, including objects signifying subscription to a protest movement and tools used in the course of constructing a transcript of protest; particularly punch bowls, tokens, pamphlets and jewelry. The sites I study are those in which protesters lived and expressed their dissent and those that also influenced the protesters themselves, through their understood meanings as places. These places range in scale from large landscapes such as Newcastle Town Moor to small sites such as Marsden Grotto or even the interiors of Thomas Spence's shops. When examined in combination with textual sources, the twin lenses of materiality and spatiality enable detailed and innovative interpretations to be made of the ways in which later-eighteenth-century popular protest extended into and was manifested in things and places.

The central research question of this thesis therefore asks "how can such seemingly disparate sources as objects, spaces/places, and texts (among others) be synthesised and studied in combination to develop both more nuanced and more wholistic insights into protest and resistance in later-eighteenth-century England?"

1.2 Research Design

My research centres on exploring materiality and spatiality in the context of protest in later eighteenth-century England; asking how popular protest was articulated and engaged with through the creation and use of artefacts and places. Exploring the objects and spaces of protest adds a new dimension to traditional text led studies, offering insights into how subalterns engaged with and expressed protest in ways which are masked and hidden in elite narratives of protest movements and which are often glazed over in modern scholarship. This thesis is therefore designed, through its case study structure to explore how the better integration of material, spatial and textual sources can allow access to subaltern transcripts of protest in eighteenth-century England.

1.1.1 Aims and Objectives

Table 1. *Aims and Objectives of this Thesis*

Aim 1 To develop a contextual understanding of subaltern engagement with later eighteenth-century popular protest movements.	**Objective 1.1** Contextualise subaltern engagement with later eighteenth-century popular protest within the broader field of protest, resistance and subaltern studies.
	Objective 1.2 Establish a methodology facilitating the interrogation of a combination of historical and archaeological evidences to reveal hidden transcripts of protest in later eighteenth-century material culture and landscapes.
Aim 2 To explore how protest was embodied in material culture	**Objective 2.1** Identify a selection of case study artefacts associated with later eighteenth-century popular protest movements, particularly focusing on Radical Politics.

in later-eighteenth-century England.	**Objective 2.2** Explore some of the ways in which material culture was used within the context of resistance and protest.
	Objective 2.3 Explore how social status and identity was defined and negotiated within popular protest movements through material culture.
Aim 3 To explore how protest was embodied in place in later-eighteenth-century England.	**Objective 3.1** Identify case study landscapes associated with politically motivated protest in later-eighteenth-century popular protest.
	Objective 3.2 Investigate the ways in which these case study spaces were created and maintained as places of protest through use, legal challenge and ownership.
	Objective 3.3 Examine the role and importance of space in facilitating engagement with and expression of protest during the later eighteenth century.

1.2.1 Thesis Structure

The first two chapters of this thesis are designed to address Aim One (Table.1) and its associated objectives. chapter two provides a detailed review of published literature relevant to writing an historical archaeology of popular protest in later eighteenth-century England. This chapter also explains the bricolage methodology employed throughout this thesis in analysing material and spatial aspects of protest in conjunction with textual sources. My approach is particularly informed by the work of Martin Hall (1999; 2000), James C. Scott (1985; 1990) and Katrina Navickas (2015; 2016); who each offer approaches to retrieving subaltern voices where textual, material and spatial sources are disparate. In these disparities exist 'points of vulnerability, places where the heavy, muffling shrouds of domination come unstitched' (Hall 1999:193), spaces where the voices of subaltern protesters can be excavated and recovered.

Chapter's three to six will then consider a series of case studies, each exemplifying and exploring the materiality and spatiality of eighteenth-century popular protest.

Chapter three explores the material culture of eighteenth-century English popular protest through the case study of the Wilkes and Liberty movement, (Aim two, Table.1), employing the methodology set out in chapter two (thereby meeting Objectives 2.2 and 2.3). Similarly, chapters four and five examine the role of space and place in popular protest through researching a series of relevant case studies (thereby meeting Aim three and its associated objectives, Table.1).

Chapter six offers a discussion drawing out the key themes of the preceding chapters, addressed through the lens of Thomas Spence's radical propaganda employed here as a case study. This chapter particularly demonstrates how Spence employed and integrated objects, spaces, texts and speech to spread and share his radical 'plan'.

Chapter seven summarises the findings of this thesis and considers its contribution to both the history and historical archaeology of popular protest. It concludes by highlighting potential new avenues for further research suggested by the present study.

The overall structure, with each chapter offering a different case study, allows this thesis to contribute to several debates in the study of protest and resistance in the later eighteenth century. The case studies in chapters three to six are further designed to demonstrate the efficacy of the methodology which I establish in chapter two and to indicate the potential for reading hidden transcripts in diverse eighteenth-century English contexts. Each of the case studies presented focusses on analysing material and/or spatial strategies or the combination of both. Chapters three to six consider how different categories of objects or spaces were engaged as expressions of protest and resistance. Chapter six on Spence also shows that these material and spatial strategies were most effective when used in conjunction with each other and with texts.

The case study chapters are arranged chronologically; chapter three concerning the Wilkes and Liberty movement (c.1763-1775), chapter four the Town Moor affair (1771-1774), chapter five Marsden Grotto (1780-1790) and finally chapter six the propaganda of Thomas Spence (1775-1814). This chronological progression allows the arguments in this thesis to develop in a structured manner, each new point building upon already exemplified examples or developing themes explored in earlier contexts.

The structure of this thesis is tied together in chapter six through a study of Thomas Spence. Spence is the ideal case study for this as he was born into a poor Scottish Presbyterian family in Newcastle in the early-1750s, his mother a stocking seller and his father a netmaker (Ashraf 1983:11). Spence then grew up in Newcastle bearing witness to the passage of the events

studied in chapters three, four and five. Indeed Spence specifically cited the influence that the Town Moor affair (chapter four) had on the formation of his ideas during his trial for treason in 1803 (Spence 1803), and he also made specific reference to a visit he made to Marsden Grotto in 1782 (chapter five) (Spence 1795:250). Having lived through and experienced these political tumults of later-eighteenth-century North-East England, Spence offers an excellent unifying case study to draw together the preceding case study discussions, exploring whether and how he engaged with objects and spaces in ways which can be paralleled in his past experiences.

1.3 Definition of Terms

1.3.1 Subaltern

The word subaltern is used repeatedly throughout this study in reference to people who are and were subjects of domination. I have chosen to employ the definition offered by Ram Das (1989:324) who argues that: ‘Subalterns are not in my opinion morphological categories, but represent a perspective’. Das’ definition is thus aimed towards offering a flexible definition; defining ‘Subaltern’ not as a fixed identity but as a changeable state of being dependent on context.

In Das’ definition, the concept of a subaltern is only possible in a discursive relationship with an elite. A person or group may not necessarily be subaltern in all situations, and may only be subaltern in relation to another group. This definition is particularly useful for the present thesis as it complements the heterogeneous nature of eighteenth-century popular protest movements in which persons may have been both subaltern to dominant others and simultaneously dominant to a subaltern other. This is particularly apparent in chapter three concerning the Wilkes and Liberty movement in which individual activists were often simultaneously both subaltern and dominant depending on the perspective of their situation. (A further examination of the field of ‘subaltern studies’ and its relevance to this thesis is made below in section 1.8.2.)

1.3.2 Hidden and Public Transcripts

The terms Hidden and Public Transcripts, as used throughout this thesis are drawn in their definitions directly from the work of James C. Scott (1985; 1989; 1990) particularly via Martin Hall (2000).

Scott’s idea of the transcript is rooted in Foucault’s concept of the ‘statement’ (Foucault 1972). For Foucault, statements are constituted by speech, actions and materialisations which gain meaning according to their context of use and deployment (see section 2.2.1 for similar post-structuralist approaches to archaeological interpretation.). These statements further exist in discourses, through which regularity is given to social practice and which govern how the

meanings of statements develop. Foucault's definition of statements is inherently focused on public statements, made to exist in discourse with other public statements, and his interest is in how this discourse references, reinforces and modifies power relations and normative social behaviour.

Scott however developed Foucault's insights to explore how the public statement or 'transcript' exists in relation to a hidden counterpart transcript and how systems of power and domination are mediated and negotiated between powerholders and subalterns. Scott thus identified two divergent types of transcript; **public transcripts** and **hidden transcripts** which exist in opposition to each other (Scott 1985; 1989; 1990).

> Public here refers to action that is openly avowed to the other party in the power relationship, and transcript is used almost in its juridical sense (Procés Verbal) of a complete record of what was said. This complete record, however, would also include non-speech acts such as gestures and expressions. (Scott 1990:2)

The hidden transcript conversely is the 'discourse that takes place "offstage", beyond direct observation of powerholders' (ibid.4); the diametric opposite of the public transcript. It is a repertoire of gestures, words, and expressions that are/were deployed in contexts considered beyond the direct observation or comprehension of power holders. The present thesis is thus particularly concerned with exploring ***hidden transcripts*** as the avenues by which subaltern communities could give voice to protests.

For Scott, public and hidden transcripts exist in a discourse where the hidden transcript can confirm, contradict or inflect what appears in the public transcript and can transform and alter the meanings of the suite of acts employed in public transcripts (1990:2). For Scott, the relationship between the public and hidden transcript is predicated on the concept of dominant and subaltern power relations; where subalterns were restricted in their expressions by dominant power holders. (See section 2.2.4 for further exploration of how I engage with the concept of transcripts in this thesis' methodology).

1.3.3 Space and Place

The concepts of space and place are essential components of this thesis' approach and as such require definition here.

As historical geographer Charles Wither's argues 'If space has recently been this dominant epistemological metaphor, place has not been far behind. Of course, it may be that the two terms have been used interchangeably for… neither term, nor the relationship between them enjoys a

precise definition' (Withers 2009:657). To provide definitions of space and place, this thesis turns to historian Katrina Navickas who draws on the work of cultural geographers, anthropologists and archaeologists such as Tim Ingold (2000) to argue that **space** shapes the character of engagement through its materiality whilst **place** is invested with meaning, associations, performances and codes (Navickas 2015:16). This way of thinking about the relationship between space and place is valuable to this thesis as it provides a framework through which to approach my case studies. (See section 2.3 for further discussion on how I approach the concepts of space and place in this thesis.)

1.3.4 Resistance and protest

The concepts of resistance and protest are central themes in this thesis and an understanding of what is meant by these two words is therefore essential.

The archaeology of resistance is a well-established sub-field of historical archaeology. An edition of the International Journal of Historical Archaeology was dedicated to the topic in 1999 and therein, Matthew Johnson (1999a:124) usefully discusses the notion of 'archaeologies of resistance' arguing that:

> resisting communities so often appear conservative and passive. The new powers of colonial and class domination of the modern world had a wide disciplinary armory, a quite massive selection of weapons of domination to choose from... Openly or covertly resisting communities, on the other hand, had few weapons at their disposal. One of them was established tradition or customary practice, and it was a weapon that often served them well in the law courts and in mobilizing popular feeling (Johnson 1999a:124–5)

Johnson's definition provides a clear impression of what resistance is in archaeological terms and the various ways in which it can be manifested. Johnson (*ibid.*) also explores different definitions of resistance, from dichotomies between domination and resistance employed in Marxist archaeologies (e.g. Leone & Potter 1999; Leone 1995; McGuire & Paynter 1991) to more complex, web-like relationships as employed by Charles Orser and Mary Beaudry (e.g. Orser 1992; Orser & Funari 2001; Beaudry 1989; Beaudry et al. 1991).

Following Johnson, I have chosen to use the words protest and resistance interchangeably, encompassing actions both active and passive, ambitious and conservative. Eighteenth-century protest cannot simply be reduced to a study of inertia-driven resistance oversimplifying the complex and diverse factors at play. The present thesis therefore takes a much broader-brush approach to understanding subaltern dissenting activism in the later eighteenth century;

incorporating facets of proactive and ambitious action alongside conservative and reactive elements.

The term protest is commonly employed by historians (though less so by archaeologists) in describing later eighteenth and early nineteenth-century contexts. In an article exploring the terminology and parameters of 'protest history' Navickas (2012:306) concludes that there is no such thing as a 'protest historian' and that instead they are historians of protest **and** resistance lending further support to my interchangeable approach to the words. Further to this, Navickas (2012:305) explores whether protest is always reactive, arguably making it synonymous with resistance due to an implied association with reaction as being resistant and contrary to a precursory dominating influence. In this exploration, Navickas (*ibid.*) argues that many later-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century movements harked back to golden ages of equality which never really existed or cited historical precedents for justification of progressive action (*ibid.*). Navickas thus concludes that many protest movements consisted of a complex blend of reactive and retrospective elements, and prospective and proactive characteristics. This thesis has followed Navickas' lead and does not attach arbitrary labels to the activism which it studies; preferring terminology which is flexible and interchangeable, and which can encompass all acts of dissent and defiance.

1.4 Locational Focus

This study focuses on popular protest in England in the later eighteenth century. This is a conscious decision reflecting the complex nature of eighteenth-century British politics. The scope of a pan-British or indeed pan-English study would also necessarily include sections on Jacobitism, opposition to English rule in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, clearances and a multitude of other protest and resistance movements. The scope of this thesis has therefore been focused on England allowing a more thorough and detailed exploration of the materiality and spatiality of protest movements in the later eighteenth century to be achieved.

Despite the specific focus of several of this thesis' case studies on North-Eastern popular protest, reference is made throughout to protest and resistance in other national and global contexts. This contextualization is essential both to avoid charges of parochialism and to allow the present study to be situated within its historical context. Indeed Charles Orser argues that 'At this point in the history of historical archaeology, it is no longer a case of whether its practitioners should think in multiscalar terms (i.e. global and local), but rather how they might seek to accomplish this difficult task.' (2009:9). This study thus situates a series of local case

studies within a global context of protest and resistance in the eighteenth century, exploring the socio-cultural constructs which caused protest to be articulated materially and spatially.

1.5 Temporal Focus

The temporal extent of this thesis extends from 1762, the year of the release of the first issue of John Wilkes' *North Briton* to 1814 when the Radical activist Thomas Spence died. These two key events are arguably the book ends for English radicalism in the later eighteenth century before it evolved into its early nineteenth-century successor.

The emergence of the Wilkes and Liberty Movement in the 1760s has been chosen as the starting point for this study, as it marked an important shift in the way that popular political protest was expressed and engaged with. This shift was something new and unprecedented as George Rudé argues:

> 'Wilkes and Liberty' was a political slogan that stirred the political passions not only of freeholders and Freemen but of the unenfranchised craftsmen and journeymen, who were its most vocal and enthusiastic promoters. This was something new in the nation's political life and raises the popular movement associated with Wilkes above the level of the mere food-riot or such blind outbursts. (Rudé 1962:197)

Rudé's quote provides a clear context for my choice to begin this study in the 1760s as this was a period when political protest was moving from spontaneous food riots and other mob demonstrations towards more unified movements with agreed objectives. As this thesis argues, the 1760s thus herald the emergence of a distinctively later eighteenth-century form of protest, manifested both actually and materially.

Spence's funeral in 1814 marked the end of a close link between the North-East of England and the politics of protest which had spanned continuously from local North-East engagement with the Wilkes and Liberty movement, through the Town Moor affair and its international resonances, through Marsden Grotto to Thomas Spence himself. The latter lived through and experienced each of these case study moments of protest and resistance.

The second decade of the nineteenth century saw a resurgence in the mass demonstrations and meetings that had been dormant since the Gordon Riots of 1780, changing the dynamics and character of subaltern protest and resistance. These mass meetings, epitomised by Peterloo in 1819, and the Kennington Common meeting in 1848, characterise popular protest movements of the nineteenth century, particularly Chartism and Trade Unionism. The Peterloo affair of

1819 is traditionally taken by researchers as marking a key watershed moment in the history of protest (Navickas 2016:6) and this thesis therefore situates its cut-off before Peterloo and the subsequent Six-Acts, clamping down on seditious meetings, which defined the beginning of a new period of protest in Britain.

1.6 Material Culture in Protest

For the purpose of this study, the term 'material culture' is employed to refer to objects associated with popular protest during the second half of the eighteenth century, including ceramics, metalwork, glassware, fabrics and furniture. This study's broad definition of material culture also includes printed documentary material such as pamphlets and hand-bills which are considered as artefacts alongside their textual meanings.

Pamphlets and handbills constituted an important part of the material culture of eighteenth-century political and popular protest movements, being distributed widely amongst the populace at diverse levels of society. A key example is Thomas Spence's *Pig's Meat,* which circulated very widely and offered a tangible and tactile way of engaging with Spence's Plan. In this way, whilst the textual content of a piece of print culture constitutes an important part of its biography, other elements of its materiality are also at work in shaping and mediating its meanings.

The polyvalency and ambiguity of objects (see section 2.2.1) makes any definite attribution of intentionality in the use or meaning of an object or place difficult. This thesis has therefore for the sake of clarity in its argument drawn upon some of the less ambiguous and more identifiably dissenting objects and spaces to illustrate how things and places were engaged and mobilised in expressions of protest and resistance. Alexandra Hartnett's study of clay pipes in Galway for instance has demonstrated how the most modest of pipes could be enmeshed in a web of relations to articulate a hidden transcript of protest and resistance (Hartnett 2004). This thesis therefore focuses on artefacts which bear protest movement motifs and/or symbols or have biographical associations to known protestors. The artefacts considered commonly commemorate or represent key events in a protest movement's history such as the release of John Wilkes from King's Bench Gaol or the Town Moor Act of 1774 or, as in the Case of Thomas Spence, were significant emblems of a movement.

Most of the artefacts discussed in this thesis are today curated by museums or belong to private collectors. Very few derive from excavated contexts; and the majority of those are metal detecting finds catalogued on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. Within the United Kingdom, archaeological investigations are commonly undertaken as part of developer funded

investigations and artefact collection strategies can mean that only a small sample of material is retained, particularly on eighteenth-century and post-medieval sites where large quantities of artefacts are excavated. Protest related objects (and ceramic sherds especially) may often have been overlooked and not recognised for what they are. A prime example of this is a study by the author (forthcoming) of a ceramic punchbowl sherd, excavated from Colonial Williamsburg in the 1930s, which had previously gone unrecognised as a fragment of the material culture of a protesting community which had existed in mid-1760s Williamsburg.

One way or another, much will have been lost or destroyed over time. These missing artefacts are sometimes accessible through textual sources and their 'recovery' this way is a strong testament to the value of an interdisciplinary, historical archaeological approach in investigating the materiality of later eighteenth-century popular protest. A specific example here, written about but no longer surviving, is a forty-five armed candle commissioned by a Newcastle publican in 1770 to celebrate John Wilkes and the Wilkes and Liberty movement (Brewer 1983:352). This thesis has been able to recover this and other artefacts through drawing on textual accounts recording the existence of and uses of objects.

1.7 Space and Place in Protest

The sites considered in this all have a direct association with protest movements. These associations with protest may be manifested in the role a space took during an act of protest (such as the role of the Town Moor in 1770s Newcastle-upon-Tyne, chapter five), as a space facilitating or encouraging protest through seclusion from surveillance, or by an encoded association with protest (as is the case certain taverns and ale-houses. e.g. the Crown and Anchor Tavern (Parolin 2010:14)).

Exploring the meanings, significance and roles of my case study sites necessitates interrogating a variety of sources including historic mapping, textual sources and contemporary images accessible in historic archives (see 2.3). The changing nature of landscapes over time however means that often little is left of the eighteenth-century landscape itself. The use of historic maps and pictorial sources is therefore essential in recovering a site's eighteenth-century appearance and enabling it to be contextualised and understood as a venue facilitating and/or embodying protest.

1.8 Research Context

The study of the history and heritage of protest and resistance is a well-established field of historical enquiry. In contrast, archaeological studies of protest and resistance in the early modern and modern periods are significantly fewer in number. Yet as explored below (1.8.3),

an ‘archaeology of resistance’ has gradually emerged over the last thirty years and is now a well-represented sub-discipline of historical archaeology.

1.8.1 Protest and Social History

Contemporary historical scholarship on protest and resistance in Britain is built upon a strong tradition of social historical research. Social historians such as James Epstein (1989; 1994; 2003), Andrew Charlesworth (Charlesworth 1994; Charlesworth & Randall 1996b; Charlesworth & Randall 1996a), Adrian Randall (Randall 2006) and Katrina Navickas (2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016) continue to contribute to this strong tradition through pioneering and increasingly interdisciplinary methodologies (see chapter two for more detail on interdisciplinarity in studies of protest and resistance.).

Marxist, labour historians such as Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm & Rudé 1969), George Rudé (1962) and, most notably, E.P.Thompson in his seminal works *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) and *The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century* (1971) were amongst the first historians to undertake dedicated and theoretically informed studies of resistance and popular protest in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England. The culmination of this body of scholarship is arguably the joint publication *Albion’s Fatal Tree* (Hay et al. 2011 (1st ed.1975)) which drew together the leading exponents of history from below to publish a range of articles examining eighteenth-century crime and society, in which protest and dissent played a central role.

These labour histories, built on Marxist frameworks, are predicated on the study of class consciousness, struggle and formation according to the tenets of Marxist theory. It is however crucial to recognise that the history from below approach, as pioneered by Hobsbawm, Rudé and Thompson, forms the basis for much contemporary social history research and indeed Poole (2010:10) argues that this methodology was critical in the development of current research patterns and methods.

Navickas (2012) further explores the legacy and development of the history from below approach, arguing that modern developments in the field are increasingly focused on everyday experience of life in the past at the expense of studies into class and political consciousness. This development is seen by Navickas (*ibid.*) as a result of the decline in popularity of Marxist and labour history frameworks amongst contemporary historians, who prefer to sidestep the issues of class and collective action.

Since the 1960s, historical theory has evolved considerably. A key figure in this context has been Jürgen Habermas (1992) whose work on 'the public-sphere' challenged the labour history dominance of the subject. Habermas sought to explain the emergence of political activism amongst the 'bourgeois' middle classes in the eighteenth century contending that the middle classes carved themselves an arena for political activism in coffeehouse politics, pamphleteering and newspaper articles. This model of social activism has been developed by historians such as James Epstein (2003:13) and Christina Parolin (2010:10) to include work on 'plebeian public-spheres', exploring how the poor challenged bourgeois domination through the establishment of their own public-spheres.

Contemporary social historians of protest are increasingly moving towards interdisciplinary methodologies in their research (see section 2.5). This trend is noted by Navickas (2015:12) who observes that several historians of eighteenth and nineteenth-century protest have adapted the methodologies of Thompson, Hobsbawm and Rudé to incorporate work by anthropologist James C. Scott (1985, 1990) on hidden transcripts and subaltern voices (see section 2.3 for further discussion). The incorporation of Scott's work provided researchers with extra scope to look beyond what was reported in elite produced texts, newspapers or official minutes and to explore the hidden transcripts of protest found in every-day life. Reading these hidden transcripts as part of a wider narrative of popular protest is best achieved through the adoption of an holistic and interdisciplinary approach to the source material considering the full scope of ways in which protest was manifested (*ibid.*). This theme in contemporary historical research fits neatly with the methodology of this thesis (see chapter two) which is also inspired by Scott via Martin Hall's work researching the materialisation of eighteenth-century popular protest.

1.8.2 Subaltern Studies

The term 'subaltern studies' is predominantly used in anthropology and cultural theory to describe the study of and research into subaltern protest and elite-subaltern relations. Scott (1985, 1990), as an anthropologist, has been particularly influential in this context with his work focusing on the concept of resistance and hidden transcripts in South East Asian 'peasant communities'. Scott's seminal work however is his pioneering methodology for examining resistance and protest amongst subaltern communities through reading what he terms as 'hidden transcripts', tenets of protest and resistance invisible to hegemonic authorities (Scott 1990:17). This methodology is further explored in chapter two (2.2).

Scott however is not alone in his interest in protest and resistance in subaltern studies and many post-colonial scholars have taken a strong interest in, and indeed strongly contributed to the

field. This close relationship between subaltern studies and post-colonial theory is exemplified in the work of post-colonial scholars such as Homi Bhabha (1994) and Gayatri Spivak (1988) both of whom study elite and subaltern relations in colonial contexts, fruitfully employing the concept of the subaltern as an analytical perspective.

Scott's work on 'hidden transcripts', and Bhabha's work on 'subaltern voices' is widely applicable in history and archaeology as demonstrated by archaeologist Martin Hall (1999:193). Hall explores the existence of subaltern voices and hidden transcripts in the context of Slavery in South Africa and the Chesapeake (USA) drawing heavily on the work of Scott and Bhabha.

Subaltern studies thus offers an excellent corpus of theoretically informed research into social and power relations which this thesis draws upon regularly, not least in the terminology employed in discussing elite and subaltern interactions and in the analytical framework of Homi Bhabha's third-space as explored further in chapter two (section 2.2) and as implemented in Chapters three, four, five and six.

It is important here to emphasise that the distinction between subaltern and elite in eighteenth-century popular protest movements was not dichotomous (as noted above with Das' definition of subaltern in section 1.3.1) with many movements drawing membership and subscription from diverse levels of society such as the Wilkes and Liberty movement which enjoyed elements of support by various people both elite and subaltern (Rudé 1962:197). The dialogic relationship between subaltern and elite groups and figures *within* popular protest movements is therefore of particular concern to this thesis.

1.8.3 Historical Archaeology of Resistance and Protest

Archaeologists only began examining the theme of protest and resistance within the last 30 years and this approach has been pioneered in work by Matthew Johnson (1996; 1999a), Martin Hall (1999; 2000; 2008; also; Funari et al. 1999b; Hall & Silliman 2006) and John Schofield (2003; 2010; Schofield & Anderton 2000; Crea et al. 2014; Oliver et al. 2016), amongst many others. As a discipline, archaeology is perhaps amongst the most mercenary of academic subjects, drawing influence and borrowing methodologies from a plethora of other subject areas, thus making historical archaeology intrinsically interdisciplinary as further explored in chapter two (2.2).

In the United States, the archaeology of protest and resistance is a well-developed sub-field of historical archaeology. Some examples here include work on Lowell Boott Mills (Beaudry 1989; Beaudry et al. 1991; Loren & Beaudry 2006), the Colorado Coalfields Miners' Strike

(McGuire & Paynter 1991; McGuire & Walker 1999; Larkin & McGuire 2009) and the social landscapes of eighteenth-century Annapolis (Leone 1984; Leone 1995; Leone & Potter 1999; Leone & Fry 1999; Leone et al. 2005; Leone 2010).

Archaeological work on protest and resistance notably focuses on subaltern communities in colonial contexts, enslaved, Maroon and indigenous communities and the means by which they expressed resistance against and negotiated their identities. Key examples include the work of Charles Orser (1992; Orser & Funari 2001), Martin Hall (2000; 2008; 2009) and Pedro Funari (Funari et al. 1999a; Funari et al. 1999b; Orser & Funari 2001) each of whose work is inspired by a post-colonial approach, exploring and understanding social and power relations in colonial contexts. Adapting the methodologies employed in understanding social relations, resistance and protest from American and Colonial contexts to an English context present methodological challenges which are considered in chapter two (2.2).

Within the British context of studying protest and resistance in historical archaeology, the predominant focus and emphasis has traditionally been on researching the archaeology of nineteenth-century clearances in Scotland and Ireland (Atkinson 1996; Atkinson 2010; Dalglish 2003; Jones 2012; Symonds 1999). A 1999 edition of the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* however, explored the scope for the study of resistance in British historical archaeology and demonstrated the importance of theorising the field (Johnson 1999a; Frazer 1999). Although this edition of the journal was dedicated to exploring resistance in British historical archaeology, only one article considered resistance in an eighteenth-century context and in this, Williamson (1999) suggested that evidence for resistance and protest of subaltern actors was invisible in the archaeological record of eighteenth-century landscape gardens.

By examining eighteenth-century material culture and landscapes, the present study aims to apply a historical archaeological approach to the later eighteenth century demonstrating how subaltern actors, who are often glossed over in period texts, engaged in popular protest, particularly radical and revolutionary political protest movements. chapter two sets out in greater detail the methodology informing that endeavour.

Chapter 2 Methodological Considerations

As set out in chapter one, this thesis is built around a series of case studies, each presenting different and progressively more complex methodological challenges. The aim of the present chapter is to identify those challenges and to set out the methodology employed in resolving them. The four key challenges can be summarised as follows:

To Marry Words and Things

The nature of this thesis - situated between history and archaeology - presents the first challenge; how to navigate the methodological differences between these sibling disciplines? Traditionally the two have each been tightly circumscribed as to their source materials; history being text-led and archaeology object-led. In more recent years however, the emergence and strengthening of historical archaeology and the material and spatial turns in history have blurred these conceptual fiefdoms. Both historical archaeologists and material/spatial historians require methodologies by which, to quote Hall, ‘to marry words and things’ (2000:16). A framework of methods, theories and techniques that enable the integration of source materials, material, textual and spatial, to achieve more detailed and nuanced understandings and interpretations of the past.

Accessing Subaltern communities

How is it possible to access the communities and individuals who were at the core of eighteenth-century protest? Subalterns rarely left their own textual record and their material record is often scant (see section 1.6 for a deeper discussion of this thesis’ source materials).

This thesis endeavours to access, the ‘hidden transcripts’ of subaltern protest and resistance; ‘the discourse that takes place “offstage”, beyond direct observation of powerholders’ (Scott 1990). It therefore requires a methodology whereby necessarily discrete, ambiguous, and coded voices of dissent and protest can be rendered visible as hints, whispers and ghostly impressions haunting their counterpart public transcript.

Integrating a Third Dimension – Space and Place

Whilst archaeology has a long tradition of interrogating space both as an evidentiary source and as an independent subject of investigation, this tradition is less well established in history. The challenge here, therefore, is to define what this thesis means by ‘space’ and ‘place’ and then to establish these themes in relation to the other source materials (texts and objects) established in section 2.1.

Working with Multi-scalar Case Studies

'How does a historical archaeology of the modern world maintain in the same frame of reference the "small things forgotten" of everyday life and particular individuals, and the global system of distribution characteristic of modernity?' (Hall & Silliman 2006:8). This thesis thus demands a methodology allowing it to move fluidly between different scales, relating the particular to the general, to understand the micro-scale in terms of the macro, and simultaneously the macro in terms of its micro expressions.

2.1 To Marry Words and Things

2.1.1 Changing Understandings of the Relationship Between Words and Things in Material Culture History and Historical Archaeology

In order to develop an appropriate methodology achieving all of the above it is necessary to briefly explore the disciplinary evolution of both historical archaeology and material culture history. The origins and developments of these similar yet distinct fields deeply influence how they approach their sources, affecting the value and weighting they give to material and textual sources and the roles each evidentiary strand is understood to occupy in the wider research framework.

Origins and Genesis of Historical Archaeology

At first glance **post-medieval archaeology** and **historical archaeology** seem little more than different names for the same subject; both originated in the mid-1960s, both take for their source materials objects, spaces and texts, and both focus on the archaeology of the modern world (historical archaeology starts c.1492, post-medieval archaeology c.1536). These shared attributes however belie a fundamental conceptual difference. As Charles Orser argues, definitions of historical archaeology generally rest around three key themes – 'historical archaeology as the study of a period', 'historical archaeology as a method', and 'historical archaeology as thematic' (Orser 2004:6–25). This section touches on all three of these defining characteristics, particularly focusing on exploring historical archaeology as a method.

As a self-identifying discipline historical archaeology first emerged in the United States of America as the binary opposite of 'prehistoric' archaeology, dealing with a period with an accompanying European textual record (that is the period after 1492). For Ivor Noël Hume, one of the founding fathers of historical archaeology, and for his contemporaries, such a distinction was central to outlining the parameters of what historical archaeology was and was not (Hume 1964). This understanding is best articulated by James Deetz who describes historical archaeology as 'the archaeology of the spread of European cultures throughout the world since

the fifteenth century, and their impact on and interaction with the cultures of indigenous peoples.' (1996:5).

This historic and prehistoric dualism was not nearly so strongly envisaged in European post-medieval archaeology. As Pedro Funari and Martin Hall argue 'in Europe…there has been little inclination to separate history from prehistory in any strict sense as for instance in North America, Australia and South Africa' (Funari & Hall 1999:2). It is interesting therefore that Hume was himself British and cut his teeth in the 1950s developing the field of post-medieval archaeology before taking his expertise to America as chief archaeologist at Colonial Williamsburg (Miller & Hume 2013).

Hume (1964) was clearly aware that America presented a different context from Britain, with different challenges. There was not the same *long durée* gradation or evolution in textual source availability as there was in Europe, nor the same tradition of the archaeology of 'historic' periods (Roman, Medieval and so on). Rather, archaeology in America could be more easily defined as prehistoric or historical depending on the availability or absence of contiguous textual sources. In European archaeology the *long durée* of documentary sources and the established schools of classical and medieval archaeology meant that the relationship between texts and things was already deeply entrenched (Funari & Hall 2013). Post-medieval archaeology did not need to justify itself in the face of prehistoric archaeology; rather it existed as an extension of a well-established tradition of archaeology drawing on both texts and objects as appropriate.

Hume in 1964 furthermore defined historical archaeology in relation to **history,** stating that archaeology (of historic periods) was the 'handmaiden to history' (1964:214). Hume's 'handmaiden to history' comment has since become infamous amongst archaeologists – a touchstone for the problematic relationship between history and archaeology, wherein archaeology is reduced to providing illustrative matter for text-led research. In contrast, post-medieval archaeology did not seek to define itself disciplinarily in relation to history, but rather defined itself temporally (Gaimster 2009; Egan 2009; Wilkie 2009), and today is generally agreed to encompass almost any date after the dissolution of the monasteries in Britain, post-c.1536 (see for example: Crea et al. 2014; Hall 2000 for their archaeologies of the present day).

During the latter years of the twentieth century, post-medieval archaeology focused its attention on reporting fieldwork on post-medieval sites and empirically cataloguing, constructing typologies of, and dating the wealth of material remains which fell within its period remit (Egan 2009:557). This empirical close-study of material culture resulted in British post medieval

archaeologists being viewed by their American counterparts as ‘arch empiricists content to describe evidence that is thought to offer its own explanation if one is required.’(Shott 2005:5).

By contrast, historical archaeology took quite a different trajectory, dedicating itself to devising grand structuring narratives within stringent theoretical frameworks. As Shott argues, ‘Americans have a reputation as preoccupied with theory, British archaeologists may regard the American predilection for ‘big theory’… as vulgar neurosis.’ (2005:5).

Origins and Genesis of Material Culture History

Material culture history, the second core strand which closely informs the methodology of this thesis, had equally complex origins which have influenced its research foci and attendant methodologies. The now widely acknowledged ‘material turn’ in history developed largely as an extension of the ‘cultural turn’ of the 1980s and 1990s and *Cultural History*, (Grassby 2005; Green 2012; Schouwenburg 2015) itself a push back from the ‘linguistic turn’ of the mid-late twentieth century.

The central tenet of the cultural turn was that meaning is not **only** linguistically constructed (as was argued in the linguistic turn) but is culturally constructed and experienced. Cultural history thus problematised linguistic analytical models as Roger Chartier argues; ‘the biggest contribution of cultural history was forcing historians to question their seemingly strongest convictions… that ideas, doctrines, texts and images have intrinsic meaning, it affirmed the historicity of those meanings, wholly dependent on their materiality and their appropriations’ (Chartier 2009:16).

By destabilising the pre-eminence of linguistics in the production of meaning and culture, cultural historians cleared the way for the material turn. Shifting focus towards understanding how sources were culturally inscribed, constructed, and received enabled scholars to consider new types of sources, particularly visual sources as it was realised that these too were culturally inscribed, just as texts were. From images it was then only a small step further to realise that material sources were likewise constructed and received according to their cultural contexts and that they too might contribute to answering questions about the cultural past (Grassby 2005:591).

The material turn in history seeks to re-materialise the past and to re-establish material culture as being constitutive of culture and society rather than simply reflective of it. As Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson argue; ‘Knowing about people’s possessions is crucial to understanding their experience of daily life, the way they saw themselves in relation to their

peers and their responses to, and interactions with, the social, cultural and economic processes which made up the societies in which they lived' (Hamling & Richardson 2016:1). By focusing on material culture, historians have sought to rebalance historical narratives which had become increasingly detached from the material world. The material turn can therefore be broadly characterised as a rejection of the abstract in favour of the tangible; using tangible material remains to both ground historical narratives in lived experience and to explore how experience of the material world conditioned and influenced past peoples and societies.

Much of the earliest research in material culture history nevertheless regarded objects as illustrative and supportive of text-led historical meta-narratives, particularly concerning early modern consumerism (e.g. Brewer & Porter 1993; Belk 1995; Breen 2004; Glennie 1995). In her 1988 book *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* for instance Lorna Weatherill drew extensively on inventory data, using the objects mentioned within the inventories to illustrate a change in consumer behaviour, situating the object as illustrative of an overarching narrative (Weatherill 1988).

Following on from this pioneering work, historians such as Maxine Berg, Amanda Vickery, John Styles and Lisa Jardine produced innovative works incorporating material sources in historical studies (Berg 1991; 1993; 2005; Vickery 1993; Styles & Vickery 2006; Styles 2007; Jardine 1998). These studies mostly focused on elite contexts, privileging large and valuable objects. Amanda Vickery for instance used objects to materialise concepts of gender and power in elite anglophone and European contexts (Vickery 1993; 2006; Styles & Vickery 2006), whilst Maxine Berg explored how the evolution of the concept of 'luxury' was reflected in contemporary artefacts (Berg 1991; Berg 1993; Berg 2005).

The twenty-five chapters within John Brewer and Roy Porter's (1993) edited compilation *Consumption and the World of Goods* offer a good illustration of both the elite focus of early material culture histories and their tendency to subordinate material culture to text-led narratives. Only five chapters focus specifically on objects themselves, and all are elite goods (paintings, formal gardens, electrical showcases, elite book illustrations). The other twenty chapters explore the concept of consumerism using material culture (often elite), not as the focus of their research, but to illustrate the material consequences of narratives of consumption and commerce developed from text-led research strategies.

The elite focus of these early works is perhaps understandable, given the wealth of source materials available to researchers. It is no coincidence, in this context, that the overwhelming majority of these early material histories focused on the late-seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries; a direct reflection of the proliferation of elite material culture and consumerism during that period (Trentmann 2009:284). Fewer lower and middle class artefacts survive, but this should not be considered as prohibitive to research, rather, as this thesis demonstrates, the material worlds of the lower and middle classes can be reconstructed through the combined analysis of textual and material sources (see in section 2.4).

The potential for material culture to provide new insights into past societies has thus proven seductive to many historians (Berry 2009; Epstein 1989; 1994; Glennie 1995; Hannan & Longair 2017; Herman 2006; Lubar & Kingery 1993; Pennell 2009; 2013; Wilson 2008) however this potential is accompanied by a plethora of theoretical and methodological challenges, as the present chapter itself exemplifies.

It seems apparent then that both early historical archaeologies and early material culture histories suffered from a hierarchical approach to integrating material and textual sources. Both regarded texts as being the principal source for generating and answering questions, with material sources relegated to a supporting role, useful to illustrate text-led historical narratives as materialised in the 'real world'. The idea of such a hierarchical relationship between source materials is however an increasingly antiquated perspective as interdisciplinary methodologies increasingly exemplify the profitability of analysing material culture and texts in combination.

2.1.2 Towards a Better Combination of Source Materials

Combining Source Materials in Historical Archaeology (c.1960-c.2000)

The 'handmaiden to history' approach in historical archaeology did not hold sway for long as archaeologists began to explore what material sources could reveal that textual sources alone could not. As James Deetz argued in his seminal work *In Small Things Forgotten;* 'in spite of the richness and diversity of the historical record, there are things we want to know that are not discovered from it… The documentary record and the archaeological record complement each other.' (1996:11). Deetz viewed material culture as capable of answering questions independently of textual sources and providing access to the everyday 'simple details of past existence, which escape historical mention.' (1996:37). Deetz's approach thus demonstrated the capacity for historical archaeology to access subaltern communities which did not leave their own textual record (a core theme of this thesis and one explored in greater detail in section 2.2) situating archaeological data as being most useful where textual sources are deficient (1996:37).

Deetz however regarded material culture as passively reflective of society, not actively constitutive of it. In Deetz's own words 'Material culture, it is often correctly said, is not culture

but its product. Culture is socially transmitted rules for behaviour, ways of thinking about and doing things.' (1996:35). Mark Leone however, regarded Deetz's structuralist approach as deeply problematic, and demanded an approach which better accounted for the active roles of objects in the mediation of 'culture', and for the concept of class (a somewhat glaring omission from Deetz's work) was developed by in the form of critical materialism. Leone's 'critical materialism' (Leone 1984; 1995; 2010) methodology thus synthesised structuralist approaches to theorizing trends in material culture with Marxist models of historical change (Hall 2000:76). The strength of critical materialism in regard to the present thesis is in its theorization of the roles of objects in mediating authority and power relations. Leone theorized that material culture operated not as inanimate reflections of dominant ideology (culture), but as materialisations actively mediating the character of a totalising capitalist system (Leone 1984; 1995; Leone & Potter 1999; Palus et al. 2006)

The recognition of material culture as both active and affective in its relationship with culture was a major advance in equalizing the relationship between words and things, as both could now be understood as being recursively engaged in the construction of culture. Leone's approach is particularly well exemplified in his paper 'Conjuring in the Big House Kitchen' which combined the archaeological evidence of *minkisi* (caches of objects believed to hold magical power) with 'slave narratives' (accounts of enslaved experience as written by, or transcribed from testimony by individuals who were slaves in North America) to explore how widespread this practice was and where its origins lay (Leone & Fry 1999).

Whilst Leone thus made further steps towards integrating material and textual sources, the persistent tension between the utility of textual and material sources remained. This tension is palpable in Deetz's infamous quip 'historical archaeology can be seen as an expensive way of finding out what we already know' (Deetz 1995:159). Deetz's comment highlighted persisting concerns that the relationship between history and archaeology continued to be unidirectional, with the material record used simply to illustrate and confirm textual evidence, or (in some instances) using the textual sources to corroborate and elaborate on material evidence (*ibid.* 158). Deetz instead suggested that the true relationship should be, 'working back and forth between the documents and what the site has produced, constantly refining and reformulating questions raised by one set of data by looking at it against the background of the other.' (*ibid.*159.).

Whilst Deetz continued to regard material culture as reflective of culture, he here advanced an analytical approach which proposed a dialectic and reflexive relationship between source

materials. He thus argued that the best research uses its evidentiary strands in combination to generate new and innovative research questions beyond the scope of questions generated from consulting one source on its own (Deetz 1995:159). This discursive approach is strongly advocated in this thesis and is particularly exemplified in chapter four, which combines maps, texts and images to develop both questions and insights into the meanings and significances of Newcastle-upon-Tyne's eighteenth-century urban streetscape.

Similar dialogic relationships between source materials have also been suggested by historical archaeologists including Beaudry (1989; Beaudry et al. 1991), Orser (1992; 2004; 2009), and Hall (2000). Beaudry, for instance, situates the textual sources for Boott Mills (Lowell, Massachusetts) in dialogue with the material evidence revealing that what is articulated through textual sources is not always represented in reality (Beaudry et al. 1991). In particular Beaudry reveals how proscriptive rules against mill workers' alcohol consumption were resisted by workers who continued to consume alcohol and then dispose of the bottles discretely in privies (*ibid.*). Such contradictions between sources is equally as productive as if the sources had complemented each other and corresponded. By revealing dissonances between sources, further questions are generated as to why such dissonances exist, and what they can tell us about the social and cultural structures and contexts in which the sources were formed.

In 2000 Martin Hall pioneered one of the first methodologies employing the critical study of texts, and the critical study of things, on equal terms (2000:17). Drawing on James C. Scott's concept of the transcripts (see below 3.3), Hall conceptualises words and things as enmeshed in a web of relations (2000:17). In Hall's own words:

> I see transcripts as a web of relations that entwine both objects and words. Transcripts are the basic building blocks of my historical archaeology, because they are the means of connecting material assemblages (the key subject matter of archaeology) with texts (the key sources with which historians work). (2000:16).

Through this approach, Hall dissolves disciplinary boundaries and demonstrates how the various evidentiary strands available to historical archaeologists can be understood as together comprising 'transcripts'. (2000:16). It is this conceptualization of the relationship between words and things as enmeshed together in transcripts, which is the foundation of this thesis' approach to integrating its diverse source materials. The utility of this approach is further explored below in 2.2.3 and 2.4.2 which demonstrate its value in enabling this thesis to access subaltern communities and to undertake multi-scalar analyses.

One particular example of the implementation of Hall's integrative approach to source materials is in chapter six with regard to Thomas Spence's propaganda outputs. By considering Spence's outputs not, as texts, objects, or spaces but as nodes in the web of relations that are **transcripts** these various data categories can be integrated more fully. For instance, as textual sources Spence's pamphlets are traditionally the exclusive domain of historians and literary scholars whilst his token coinage is traditionally the domain of numismatists. As a result, it becomes difficult to reference them against each other or contextualise them. By dissolving these disciplinary boundaries and considering the tokens and pamphlets enmeshed as transcripts it is possible to explore connections between them.

Hall further problematises the disciplinary boundaries between history and archaeology in arguing that 'most contemporary academic disciplines are inventions of the nineteenth century – somewhat arbitrary divisions of a broad intellectual field. **Archaeology is history and history is archaeology**.' (2000:16 emphasis my own). This conceptualisation of the relationship between history and archaeology is a far cry from the early days of the 'handmaiden to history' and reflects the trend in historical archaeology to close the gap between the twin disciplines.

Theoretically Conscious Post-Medieval Archaeology

From the mid-1990s, British post-medieval archaeology has become increasingly theoretically aware, synthesizing its accumulated wealth of site reports and typological data into new, theoretically informed narratives (Egan 2009). This is particularly apparent in the work of archaeologists such as Matthew Johnson (e.g. 1993; 1996; 1999a; 1999b; 2009) and Sarah Tarlow (2007). Sarah Tarlow and Susie West's seminal edited compilation *Familiar Past?: Archaeologies of Later Historical Britain* marks a particularly important milestone in the reconnection of post-medieval and historical archaeology (Tarlow & West 1998). This collection brought together some of the leading post-medieval archaeologists in Britain who were adopting increasingly theoretically conscious approaches to their research. As West argues in her introduction to the book; 'This volume is the result of the editors' interest in taking up the challenge that American historical archaeology offers to British post-medieval archaeology… British practice can draw on the innovations and successes of American historical archaeology in producing theoretically informed and inclusive accounts of the recent past' (West 1998:2).

British 'post-medieval archaeology' and American 'historical archaeology' are increasingly alike in theoretical and methodological consciousness and for the purpose of this thesis they are

considered as twin strands of the same discipline – one with its roots in Britain and Europe and the other with roots in America. Where David Gaimster once argued that 'the term "historical archaeology," … in northern Europe has developed as a convenient shorthand for a methodological approach,' (Gaimster 2009:526) this thesis argues instead that the terms post-medieval archaeology and historical archaeology are increasingly synonymous in meaning. Both draw on shared methodologies and both are increasingly theoretically informed, today the two are only differentiated by reference to the traditions out of which they emerged and the geographic regions on which they focus.

Moving Beyond Illustrative uses of Material Culture in History

The successes which attended upon the inclusion of material sources in historical studies in the 1980s resulted in material culture history taking on a somewhat self-perpetuating character in terms of its outward looking and magpie-ish methodologies. The characteristic interdisciplinarity of the material turn was initially the product of necessity as historians, who were not so well acquainted with using or interrogating material sources, drew on methodologies developed in adjacent humanities; particularly anthropology, literary studies and sociology with archaeology remaining, as yet, largely unexplored. (Trentmann 2009:284).

One particular methodological and theoretical concern which has affected the material turn is the ontological status of texts and things and the question of how historians should approach such seemingly distinct and dissimilar evidentiary strands. Recent work in this field (e.g. Salzberg 2014; Silver 2018; Zuroski & Yonan 2018) is of particular significance to the present thesis, and particularly chapter six and its concerns with the materiality of print culture. Salzberg, for example, explores the materiality of early-modern Venetian print culture alongside its textual contents and its geographical spread throughout Venice, revealing hidden networks and communities mediated and cemented by the printed word (2014). Salzberg's search for the hidden transcripts of Venetian politics and sociability within print culture has thus inspired this thesis in many ways to look beyond the textual component of print culture and consider its material and spatial context. Salzberg's focus solely on 'ephemera' however, circumscribes print culture as distinct from other material sources and thus constrains it from being easily connected or combined with other 'classes' of material culture in a multi-source approach, a problem which this thesis seeks to avoid by eschewing such rigid classifications.

	RIELLO **Things, Methodologies and Narratives**			**WHITFIELD** **Things, Methodologies and Narratives**		
History *from* things	THING A ‘concealed’ stomacher	METHODOLOGY Integration of sources	NARRATIVE Choice of a narrative	THING(s) Spence’s ‘Propaganda’	METHODOLOGY Integration of sources	NARRATIVE Multivocality and polysemy of things
History *of* things	METHODOLOGY Interdisciplinary research	NARRATIVE The Consumer Revolution	THING Pottery excavated in Jamestown			
History *and* things	NARRATIVE The Industrial Revolution	THING A cut image of a flying machine	METHODOLOGY Revising positivism	NARRATIVE The Wilkes and Liberty movement	THING(s) Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls	METHODOLOGY Transcripts and Thirdspace

Fig. 1 *Where and how this thesis draws on Riello's approaches to material culture history.*

As material culture history has evolved, historians have reappraised how they approach objects in their research. Giorgio Riello has helpfully identified three broad methodological categories in this context: History FROM Things, History OF Things, and History AND Things (Riello 2009). This triumvirate of approaches, and the thought processes informing them (Riello 2009:26), are summarised in Fig 2.

Of particular relevance to this thesis are the History FROM and History AND Things approaches. History FROM things is an approach which situates objects as raw evidence, using them as primary source material in the same way as historians would normally rely on textual sources; studying the source without a prior historical narrative into which it is assumed to fit. One of the key strengths of a 'history from things' approach is that it liberates source material from doggedly supporting a pre-determined historical narrative. History AND things alternatively recognizes how text-led history can be challenged, reappraised and/or affirmed through research conducted in a dialogic relationship with objects. As Riello argues, 'artefacts are multifarious entities whose nature and heuristic value is often determined by the diverse range of narratives that historians bring with them' (2009:30).

A further development in material culture history is the shift in focus away from elite objects and contexts towards poorer and particularly 'middle class' stuff. A quick comparison of Harvey's (2009) and Riello's (Gerritsen & Riello 2015) handbooks on material culture history reveals this growing interest in lower and middle class material culture. John Styles' study of foundling hospital tokens (Styles 2015), and Sara Pennell's essay on 'Mundane materiality' along with her own book on cook-books (Pennell 2009; Pennell 2013) well attest this growing interest in understanding non-elite material culture in the past. That focus is particularly valuable in the context of this thesis, which explores subaltern engagement with protest and resistance through deployments of material culture and place.

Histories of protest and resistance have also increasingly embraced the material turn; a development of great value to the present thesis and best exemplified in the work of James Epstein, Ruth Mather, Timothy Breen and Katrina Navickas (Breen 2004; Epstein 1989; 1994; 2003; Mather 2016; Navickas 2010; 2014). Navickas' research on political sashes in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century protest and resistance argues that 'by examining the potent and often critical role of clothing and adornment in popular politics, both textile and political historians can rediscover the materiality of the sign.' (2010:543). Similarly, Epstein argues with regard to political banners and the cap of liberty that: 'These were not merely the trimmings of political culture, but often went to the heart of what was ultimately at issue: how

power at all levels of the state and civil society was to be defined and exercised.'(1989:77). Such materially focused histories of protest and resistance provide an excellent link between the material turn in history and the present thesis as an historical archaeology of protest and resistance.

Nevertheless, the methodologies by which these scholars approach material culture differ from that employed in this thesis, particularly in regard to perceiving objects as symbolic rather than active. Navickas' approach to sashes is perhaps the most closely akin to my own concerns, employing a technique similar to Riello's history AND things methodology, examining the material record in parallel with the textual, and challenging the text-led narrative to explore the symbolism of objects (2010:564). Likewise, Epstein's work on the cap of liberty emphasises its role as a symbol in later-eighteenth-century politics (1989:87-88) establishing the material object as emblematic of an existing radical presence as opposed to being constitutive of and contributory to that radicalism. Mather's approach is also closely related to the present thesis in its focus on mundane objects which were neither the 'paraphernalia of public protest' nor elite objects; (2016:153) and which were found in subaltern domestic contexts. Mather's emphasis however is on reading objects which have explicit radical symbolism and limited consideration is given to less explicitly articulatory objects.

It is important to note that Epstein, Navickas, and Mather each employed multi-source approaches in their research incorporating and interweaving material, textual, and more recently spatial sources to access hidden pasts of protest and resistance. Epstein considered the sites at which the cap of liberty was displayed, through consulting textual accounts reporting its appearance (Epstein 1989); and likewise, Navickas explored the symbolism of political sashes through reading accounts of their use and display (Navickas 2010). As Mather succinctly argues 'objects were given meaning by the context of their creation, acquisition, or use, so that by being attentive to the material culture of working-class homes, we can further probe the emotional elements of class and gender politics, and the potential of the home to foster and express those elements.'(2015:147).

2.1.3 How I Marry Words and Things

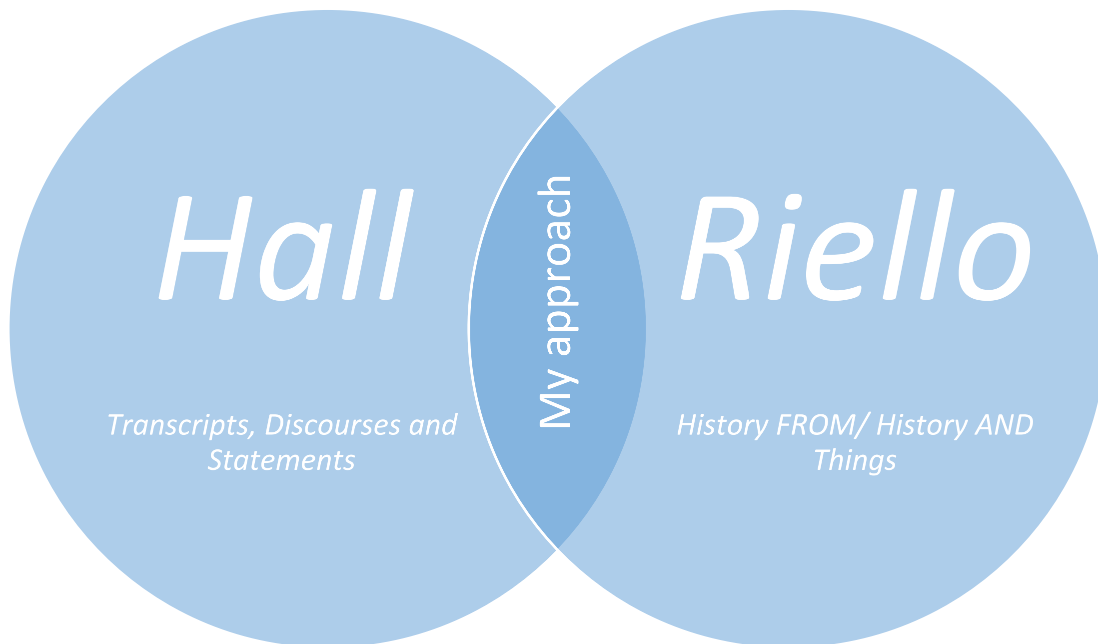

Fig. 2 *Venn diagram showing the key influences on my approach to 'Marrying words and Things'*

The Venn diagram above demonstrates the two key methodological strands on which this thesis had drawn in developing a methodology to integrate textual and material sources. Drawing on Riello's history **and/from** things approaches (2009) only goes so far as to reveal dissonances between how the past can be understood from various sources. To explore the significance of these dissonances, and to examine how and why they existed this thesis turns to Hall's methodology (2000), situating both the material sources and the textual sources as entangled constituents of transcripts. Thus, neither source is privileged above the other and both can be interrogated in conjunction, exploring how they relate to discourses in society.

2.2 Accessing Subaltern Communities

As discussed in chapter one, the term 'subaltern communities' has been strategically chosen in this thesis to refer not specifically to class groupings such as lower or middle class but rather to any group which endures domination by another. This is because in all contexts of domination, regardless of class, subaltern communities deployed multi-media strategies to articulate protest and/or resistance.

For example, in chapter three, which explores Wilkes and Liberty themed punch bowls , the subaltern community employing them to protest elite domination was of middling status, with the dominant community being the political elite. Conversely in chapter five, which focuses on

Marsden Grotto, Jack the Blaster articulates the grievances of a working (or lower) class subaltern community resisting domination by a land-owning middle and upper class.

2.2.1 Intentionality and Reception

An important aspect of defining acts of protest and/or resistance is to identity intentionality (Vinthagen & Johansson 2013:10). Without understanding the intentionality of protest acts, everyday resistance often becomes 'difficult to distinguish from coping, survival techniques and compliance.' (*ibid.*). In addressing this difficulty, this thesis employs a post-structuralist approach building on a foundation of contextual-archaeology and the Cambridge School of intellectual history both of which provide valuable frameworks for accessing the reception, authorial intentionality and intended meanings of actions, objects, texts and places.

Contextual-archaeologists (e.g. Hodder 1987; 1989; 1991; Tilley 1989) argue that it is only through a deeply contextual understanding of objects and places that meanings can be recovered; proposing that if the belief systems and socio-cultural structures in which an object or space was 'originally' contextualised were known then the meanings can be retrieved. Likewise Quentin Skinner, a leading figure in the Cambridge School of intellectual history, argued that in order to understand the meaning and intentionality of past texts, it is essential to contextualise them according to the political and intellectual circumstances of their production (Whatmore 2016; Skinner 1969). Skinner therefore proposed a methodology of returning 'the specific texts which we study to the precise cultural contexts in which they were originally formed' (Skinner 2002:125).

Significantly, Skinner also argued that texts (on which his research focusses) should be contextualised 'as contributions to particular discourses, thereby to recognise the ways in which they followed, challenged or subverted the conventional terms of those discourses' (2002:125). Skinner's approach chimes well with my own approach, contextualising not only texts, but also objects and things within the discourses in which they were engaged.

Neither contextual archaeology or the Cambridge School, however, adequately account for the difference between authorial intentionality and audience reception, a crucial theme in this thesis. This thesis therefore draws on post-structural archaeology to explore how objects held and acquired meaning not just as a result of authorial composition, but as a result of how they were experienced and used in a cultural context (e.g. Hodder 1989; Hodder & Hutson 2009). Thus, although an object or place may be created by an author to articulate a specific message or transcript (particularly public transcript), Hodder argues;

> The material object soon becomes divorced from its context of production and it can be taken into new contexts of use. The meanings of objects may change as they move into new contexts. The ambiguity has a greater potential for increase… (1989:73)

Likewise the post-structuralist literary theorist Roland Barthes argues that scholars 'try to establish what the author meant and not at all what the reader understands.' (Barthes 1986:30). Barthes instead argued that meaning was not the product of authorial intention but was the result of the interaction between the **audience** and the text. By exploring dissonances in how a text was differently received and understood by different audiences, Barthes sought to illuminate the cultural constructs which affected how meaning was produced. A similar combination of approaches to intentionality and reception is most fruitfully employed in chapter six of this thesis exploring how Thomas Spence's political propaganda, particularly his tokens, held meaning differently according to the different contexts in which they circulated.

2.2.2 History from Below

As discussed above in section 1.8.1, some of the earliest contributions to studying and accessing past subaltern communities were made by Marxist labour historians pioneering 'history from below' (See for example: Thompson 1963; Thompson 1971; Rudé 1962; Hobsbawm & Rudé 1969). These scholars argued that historians should tell the stories and understand the experiences of the working classes.

The labour histories of the 1960s and 1970s drew principally on textual sources, and largely failed to engage with material culture although space and place were recognised as important themes in working class protest and resistance (e.g. Thompson 1963; 1971; 1974; 1990; 1993). History from below's focus on exploring the experience of the working classes means that the middling sort are often obscured or rigidly and dualistically divided as either dominant or subaltern (as for example Thompson 1974 discussing the differences between patrician and plebeian culture and identity). Conversely this thesis finds that the rigid classificatory systems of Marxist theory are inappropriate and that it was not only the working classes, but also the middle classes and in some circumstances even the upper classes who found themselves in asymmetrical power relationships with a dominant other which those in subaltern positions were apt to resist.

2.2.3 Jacobite Studies and Accessing Politically Dissenting Communities

As a field researching the history of a dissenting and repressed political movement in eighteenth-century Britain, Jacobite Studies immediately suggests itself as a field of research

which may be expected to offer fertile ground for developing methodologies for understanding dissenting and political objects and/or places. Indeed scholars such as Jen Novotny (2013), Murray Pittock (2011), Neil Guthrie (2013) and Georgia Vullinghs (Forthcoming) have produced innovative research exploring how Jacobite material culture was understood, used, and valued in eighteenth-century British society; nobly advancing the study of Jacobite objects away from descriptive connoisseurship. Pittock, for example, argues that 'the Jacobite *thing* is not a passive object lorded over by a splendid subject… but rather an 'inhabited' or 'animated' thing.' (2011:47). He emphasises that the aim of those who designed and disseminated Jacobite artefacts was to communicate politically whilst avoiding charges of treason and/or sedition (*ibid.*). Novotny likewise argues that:

> "Material culture offered a range of forms of resistance, from seemingly innocuous items not perceived to be dangerous to the established government, to outright tools of war… they facilitated use, transforming rebellious or subversive thought into action… As propaganda tools, they were physical reminders of a cause and offer a way to actively oppose authority. To the government they were physical manifestations of rebellion, while to the owners they were damning pieces of evidence of their dangerous political allegiances."
>
> (Novotny 2013:66-7)

In common with other artefacts of political dissent, Jacobite material culture safely materialised a political sentiment. The strategies for achieving this objective were, however, deeply contingent and contextual. As Pittock as shown in the Jacobite case, the objects employed were not just private but counter-public: opaque to some but entirely open to others, and a product of masking political symbolism within the public-sphere. (Pittock 2011:45). Guthrie further argues that 'In light of the risks that attended the handling of Jacobite material, its production and dissemination were often secret. This involved underground presses and workshops for material produced in England' (2013:33).

The Jacobite necessity for secrecy and opacity means that this cause stands apart from the dissenting political movements explored within the present thesis. Jacobitism was particularly heavily repressed throughout the eighteenth-century, and subject to hefty charges of sedition, seditious libel and High Treason. As Pittock argues 'the greatest xenophobia of the eighteenth-century British state was aimed at its own subjects, not against the French.' (2011:60). Jacobite sympathisers responded to this ever present danger by going underground in their quest for an avenue by which to securely express their identities and politics.

In contrast, the political dissent considered in this thesis often took place within full view of the dominant other against which it was protesting. The Wilkes and Liberty movement (chapter three), for example, was, if anything, often loud and brash in its expression. Likewise, Thomas Spence (chapter six) often broadcast his protest very publicly in such prominent places as Parliament Street in London. The acts of protest against land ownership as in the Town Moor Affair (chapter four) and at Marsden Grotto were likewise publicly expressed to draw attention to themselves, using ambiguities in legal frameworks and commonly understood power relations as their safety against prosecution or reprisal.

The crux of the difference between Jacobite modes of securing and safeguarding their dissenting politics, and the methods engaged by the dissenting and protesting persons considered within this thesis, is in the use of secrecy. As shown by Guthrie (2013), Novotny (2013) and Pittock (2011), Jacobite sympathisers often went to great lengths to conceal their identities, using complex hidden codes and rituals which remained opaque to others. The protestors considered within this thesis, in contrast, commonly gained security through the solidarity of infrapolitics and the nuanced and deliberate exploitation of ambiguities and loopholes in the laws and customs of the land. Through these means, protest did not need to be secret, only cautious.

Whilst Jacobite Studies offers some excellent and valuable modes of thinking about the animism and activism of objects in dissenting contexts, its accompanying focus on opaque secrecy and privacy is not appropriate in the context of this thesis. This thesis therefore develops a new theoretical approach aimed at exploring acts of protest and resistance which, although visible to a dominant other, were veiled in ambiguity so as to make them secure.

2.2.4 Through Transcripts, Discourse and Thirdspace

Accessing Subaltern Hidden Transcripts

The approach taken herein to subaltern communities and their transcripts owes a great debt to Martin Hall (2000) who in turn, owes a debt to the work of James C. Scott (Scott 1985; 1989; 1990). The concept of transcripts, and particularly hidden transcripts has been explored and defined above in section 1.3.2.

With particular regard to the study of protest and dissent in later-eighteenth-century England, the concept of the hidden transcript enables this thesis to explore the power dynamics between elites and subalterns and to examine how they were materially and spatially negotiated and articulated. Scott developed his transcripts methodology for anthropological research on living communities in which speech acts, gestures and actions can be observed in ‘real-time’, and thus it requires modification to be applicable to historic contexts. Hall, in his research on colonialism

in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dutch South Africa and Chesapeake America, has developed precisely the methodology to achieve this (Hall 1999; 2000; 2008; 2011).

Hall's methodology draws initially on the tradition of critical materialism in historical archaeology (see for example: Leone 2010; Palus et al. 2006) developing it further to include the search for hidden transcripts in the historical archaeological record. In archaeological terms, what constitutes a hidden transcript is hard to define or isolate and indeed Hall acknowledges that 'what seems at first sight to be the material trace of the ordinary person all too often turns out to be the debris of those with power and influence' (Hall 2000:19). In eighteenth-century England, certainly, the hidden transcript is often ephemeral and hard to define. If, however one agrees with Scott's assertion that an individual or group put in a position of inferiority will inevitably answer back, then the increasingly socially stratified nature of eighteenth-century English society should offer a fertile plain for the development of hidden transcripts of protest. It is this answering back, and the perceived threat thereof, which generates traces of the hidden transcript within the historical and archaeological record of the elite public transcript.

Hall employs a critical analysis of public transcripts to reveal inconsistencies and structured repetitions which can be interpreted as evidence of a discourse between the power holders and an invisible, subaltern, other.

> In the face of everyday acts of opposition or, in anticipation of resistance, the behaviour of those in positions of power is affected. As a consequence, the impression that the 'hidden transcript' makes on the public manifestations of power can be read as an indication of the form of these hidden voices of the past.
>
> (Hall 2000:97)

The search for hidden transcripts of protest and dissent must therefore consider the methods by which the elite sought to reinforce its social position and to subjugate a 'low-other'. As Peter Stallybrass and Allison White argue:

> A recurrent pattern emerges: the 'top' attempts to reject and eliminate the 'bottom' for reasons of prestige and status, only to discover… that it is in some way frequently dependent upon that low-other. (Stallybrass & White 1986:5)

In material terms Stallybrass and White's argument can be seen in the consumption practices of a social elite, particularly in their determination to articulate social differentiation from their subalterns through the consumption of finer materials in socially discrete contexts. A prime example of this is in an account of a gathering in celebration of Wilkes and Liberty held in

Ongar in Essex where at the end of the structured celebrations, the gentlemen and social elite of the town retired from the crowd to private, socially discrete dinners thus enforcing a differentiation (*Middlesex Journal,* 8th May, 1770 p.3).

A search for hidden transcripts of protest and dissent in eighteenth-century England would however be missing important evidence if it did not consider the nature of the sites which gave context to the transcripts. This much is apparent in Hall's research, where he discusses the ways in which indigenous South African Khoikhoi and Dutch settlers engaged in conflicting discourses over the mapping and understanding of the landscape (Hall 2000:116). In this way it can be considered that there existed different geographies of space and place within later-eighteenth-century England overlapping and existing in a single discourse. This thesis therefore considers places where protest was articulated within the same framework as objects, to explore the tensions of discourse which went into their construction as codified places.

Chapters three and five for example investigate how specific taverns both gave essential context to gatherings within their walls and how subaltern parties also imbued taverns with meaning as havens from domination where the hidden transcript could be expressed openly (Scott 1990:121). Resistance was however always intolerable to elites and taverns were thus subject to policing through networks of elite sponsored spies and informers. It is therefore in the zone of ambiguity between legal and illegal, between acceptable and unacceptable forms where the true depth of the hidden transcript is hinted at; the situations where the hidden transcript transgresses into the public.

The contestations of power, and the public, punitive measures by which the elite suppressed dissent, suggest the existence of hidden transcripts of protest which the elite needed to silence. Material culture in particular has an important role in these contestations as Dick Hebdige argues:

> The tensions between dominant and subordinate groups can be found reflected in the surfaces of subculture – in the styles of mundane objects which have a double meaning. On the one hand, they warn the 'Straight' world in advance of a sinister presence – the presence of difference – and draw down upon themselves vague suspicions, uneasy laughter, 'white and dumb rages.' On the other hand, for those who erect them into icons, who use them as words or curses, these objects become signs of forbidden identity, sources of value. (Hebdige 1988:2–3)

This polysemy is a crucial consideration in the search for the hidden transcript, how does a seemingly mundane object with a known social function also serve as an articulation of protest and dissent? An example of such polysemy is in Alexandra Hartnett's study of clay pipes and tobacco consumption in Galway, Ireland in which the clay pipe was simultaneously both a mundane, functional object and also an expression of protest against British rule (Hartnett 2004).

The use of objects in non-normative ways or contexts is further explored by Mary Beaudry (Beaudry 1989; Beaudry et al. 1991) examining how corporate identity and power was challenged by workers through consumption of illicit objects and substances at Boott Mills in Lowell (Massachusetts). This may be interpreted as being indicative of how subaltern actors in society were making use of the material culture of those who held power over them and thereby making objects ambiguous in their meaning and no longer symbolic of subjugation; instead mobilizing material culture to re-negotiate social position in society (Webster 1999:54; Hall 2000:21).

It is therefore apparent that, when considered in combination, objects, spaces and textual sources provide fertile ground for the search for the hidden transcripts of later-eighteenth-century popular protest and dissent in. As Hall succinctly argues 'Just as textual sources reveal, in themselves, ambiguities, contradictions and absences, so the ways in which the networks of social relations across the grids of race, gender and class were objectified reveal the active agency of hidden transcripts.' (Hall 2000:127).

There is a further value in Scott's approach to facilitating multi-scalar analysis, as within Scott's framework, transcripts and discourse exist in a recursive relationship with local transcripts relating to broader discourse. This is explored later in this chapter (see 2.5.1).

Ultimately, this thesis searches for the hidden transcripts of later-eighteenth-century popular protest and the strategies through which subaltern communities, were able to make their mark upon the discourses which characterized the shape and form of society.

Accessing Subaltern Protest through Third-space

As necessarily elusive and guarded, hidden transcripts are not always legible through conventionally interpreting an artefact, text, or place according to form, function etc. Instead the method of accessing hidden transcripts, as developed by Hall (1992, 2000), explores the interstices between sources, highlighting discordance through the critical study of sources as enmeshed in a web of transcripts.

To illuminate inconsistences and breaches in a dominant narrative, Hall draws on Homi Bhabha's concept of thirdspace, which proposes that between a dominant public transcript and an audience's agency of interpretation and understanding there exists a creative gap, a liminal space where the meaning of a statement is not yet fixed allowing the audience to contest and re-fashion its meaning. (Bhabha 1994). As Hall argues: 'I see inconsistencies and ambiguities as the key to interpreting the colonial order. In societies dominated by anxieties about control and forced into the nervous repetitions of Homi Bhabha's "Thirdspace", the transcripts of colonialism can be expected to be very noisy indeed. These discords are a key to interpretation in historical archaeology and demonstrate eloquently, the imperative of taking into account both written and material sources' (2000:150).

Navickas has likewise deployed the notion of thirdspace in her research on places of protest (2015, 2016), drawing on Edward Soja's concern to problematise fixity in the meanings of space and place (see section 2.3 for a deeper discussion of space and place), and instead constructs them as venues of ambiguity in which meaning is constantly open for contestation between interested parties (Soja 1996). For Navickas therefore, the meanings of space and place are constantly evolving in a process of varied human engagement. Navickas' deployment of Soja's work (Navickas 2016) thus resonates with Hall's deployment of Bhabha's (1994) thirdspace theory as an arena of ambiguity and uncertainty ripe for exploitation by subalterns (Hall 2000).

As a concept, thirdspace is used in chapter four to interrogate the streetscapes of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This chapter examines how there existed a thirdspace of ambiguity and uncertainty between the message which the elite corporation intended to articulate; one of power and authority, and the message which was understood by a subaltern audience; who increasingly understood the streetscape as an open stage in which they had equal stake .

2.2.5 Accessing Non-Colonial Subalterns

It is important to recognise here that Hall's approach to accessing subaltern communities is particularly constructed to work in colonial contexts (the eighteenth-century Chesapeake and seventeenth and eighteenth-century South Africa) in which subaltern communities are often more rigidly defined than they were in eighteenth-century England. This difference in context has been a core strand in much of the criticism levelled at the applicability of Scott's methodology to European contexts. Historian Keith Thomas for example argues that 'the situation of the peasants he [Scott] studied differed considerably from that of English copyholders and clothworkers, and his simple bipolar model of a dominant group confronted

by a subordinate one is ill-adapted to fit the social complexities of the English village [in the sixteenth-century].' (Thomas 2017:21). This difference in context however does not make Hall's and Scott's methodologies untenable and indeed their methodologies have been deployed by scholars to explore such diverse contexts as the Highland Clearances (Symonds 1999), sixteenth-century enclosure protests (McDonagh 2019), nineteenth-century incarceration in Tasmania (Casella 2007) and Roman slavery (e.g. Webster 2005).

This thesis therefore, as this section demonstrates, argues that Scott's methodology as developed by Hall is immensely applicable in a range of contexts not least in later eighteenth-century England. Although the discourse of power in eighteenth-century England was manifested and experienced in radically different ways from South-East Asia and the colonial Chesapeake and Dutch South Africa, each of these contexts share a common ground of asymmetrical power dynamics which were constantly enforced, resisted and negotiated.

James Symonds' study of resistance against clearances in South Uist (1999) offers an excellent example of the applicability of Scott's methodology beyond its immediate context of South-East Asia. Symonds draws particularly on Scott's definitions of 'everyday resistance' as 'the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them… the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and so forth' (Scott 1985). Symonds then argues that although there is limited direct or obvious evidence;

> [Everyday] forms of covert resistance are likely to have operated in South Uist, where the period of 1760 to 1880 has few recorded incidents of open defiance. In this scenario individual action is mediated by an 'unverbalised set of mutual understandings… what takes place is a continual probing on the part of rulers and subjects to find out what they can get away with, to test and discover the limits of obedience and disobedience' (*cit.*Thompson 1993:343). Discourse is shaped by the localized articulation of individuals within social networks.
>
> (Symonds 1999:112)

What Symonds' research makes apparent is that Scott's approach can be applied, beyond its origins in Malaysian peasant societies, to British contexts of subaltern, dominant relations.

Iain Robertson deploys a similar approach, though not directly referencing Scott, to accessing the subaltern communities of the Highland Clearances arguing:

> By using the routine practices of the sporting estate, crofters and cottars were able to open up holes and tears in these spatial monoliths, largely in the form of the invading non-human but also in their own bodily practices through which they were able to make their own spaces of assertion.
>
> (Robertson 2016:52)

This approach both develops Symonds' methodology exploring how space and place were deployed in 'everyday resistance' and also deploys a concept remarkably similar to thirdspace, with subaltern communities exploiting routine as a portal for articulating resistance to domination. Thus, between Symonds and Robertson's studies, the central tenets of Hall's methodology can be demonstrated to be applicable in exploring non-colonial contexts.

2.2.6 How I Access Subaltern Communities

This thesis owes a great debt of gratitude to Martin Hall's work on investigating hidden transcripts of colonialism. Hall's methodology, searching for dissonances between public transcripts to reveal the presence of hidden transcripts is deployed throughout. The concept of thirdspace is also used as an important tool for thinking, demonstrating how subaltern actors mobilised ambiguities and uncertainties in the meanings of objects and places to articulate protests and mediate power relations.

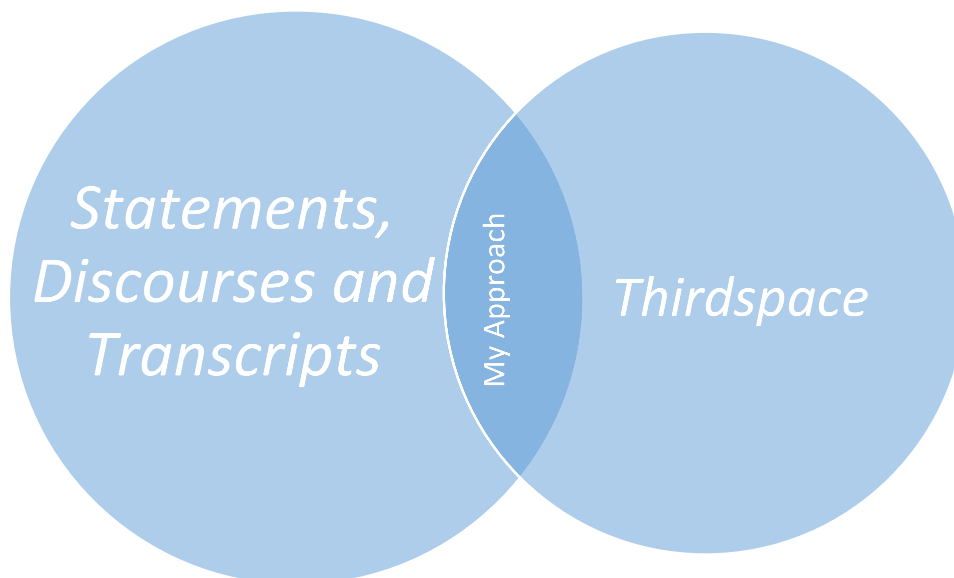

Fig. 3 *Venn Diagram showing the key influences on my approach to accessing subaltern communities*

2.3 Adding a Third Dimension – Incorporating Spatial Sources

2.3.1 Space and Place

As already noted above in Section 1.3.3, this thesis understands space and place as discussed and defined by Katrina Navickas (2015:16). Methodologically this definition is valuable as it offers an avenue for understanding how places gain, develop and hold meanings not as dumb locales of human activities but as participants; recursively shaping and mediating the ways in which humans engage with the world and simultaneously being reshaped as a result of their acquired meanings.

As a space, for example, the streetscape of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (see chapter four) ordered and structured movement by its materiality; the walls, surfaces, buildings, and topography. As a place it was invested with meaning; associated with civic processions, performances of the power of the city corporation and with the laws which governed appropriate uses of the streetscape. In this way then Navickas' approach to space and place provides a methodology for thinking about how the character of protest events and acts was constructed through polyvalent interactions between humans and their surroundings.

Thus where chapter five discusses Marsden Grotto as a place, it is referring not only to the material form of the cave dwelling but to the immanent and multiple meanings of the site both as a venue of protest through its associations and performances and simultaneously as a sublime destination for elite day-trippers.

2.3.2 Landscape Archaeology

It is important here also to recognise the contributions of the field of landscape archaeology to the study of space and place and this thesis draws on several of the analytical methods developed within this field. In particular chapters four, five and six each use map regression analysis (Rippon 2012) which works by considering the modern landscape as a palimpsest created through the continuous superimposition of new features onto the existing landscape. The superimposed layers can be peeled away gradually through consulting historic mapping, archaeological reports, documentary sources and through the intuitive removal of walls, hedgerows, roads etc which do not correspond to the underlying historic landscape. Fortunately for the time period on which this study focuses, there is a healthy corpus of source material surviving which facilitates the process.

Methodologically however, there are two key and prevalent strands in landscape archaeology; evolutionary approaches and experiential approaches (Dalglish 2009). Evolutionary approaches are those which seek to offer a 'history of things which have been done to the land' by way of

exploring how the landscape has evolved into its modern format (*ibid.*237). Experiential approaches conversely seek to understand space and place not as 'passive stages for action but the material conditions of and resources for action with an active role – people do not simply exploit the landscape or reshape it; they too are shaped by it.' (*ibid.*238). This thesis draws on both strands to develop and answer its research questions. An evolutionary approach (charting the development of space and generating questions as to why it developed in such a way) is employed in analysing Newcastle Town Moor, yet it is also accompanied by an experiential approach which foregrounds the active role of the Town Moor as a place offering the necessary material conditions and resources for action by the City Freemen against the oligarchy of the City Corporation. Many landscape archaeologies however fail to fully reconcile the relationships between experiential and evolutionary approaches and this thesis therefore turns towards the Spatial Turn in history to offer a methodology for incorporating the themes of space and place into historical research.

2.3.3 The Spatial Turn in History

The recent 'spatial turn' in historical protest studies is of particular value to the present thesis, which draws methodological inspiration from spatial historians and historical geographers including Katrina Navickas, Christina Parolin, Briony McDonagh, Nicola Whyte, and James Epstein (Navickas 2009; 2011; 2014; 2015; 2016; Parolin 2010; McDonagh 2013; Griffin & McDonagh 2018; Whyte 2009; Epstein 2002; 2003). As Parolin argues, however, an appreciation of the role of space and place in eighteenth and nineteenth-century protest and resistance is not an entirely new development as historians of this period 'have long sensed, at least implicitly, that space mattered to radical culture.' (2010:7). Eminent scholars such as E.P.Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, George Rudé and Jurgen Habermas (though not writing with specific reference to radicalism, resistance or protest) recognised long ago that the sites in which protest acts occurred had to be acknowledged if the nature of the protest was to be understood (Habermas 1992; Hobsbawm & Rudé 1969; Rudé 1962; Thompson 1963; 1971; 1974; 1990)

A dedicated spatial turn in historical protest studies is a more recent development, arguably originating with James Epstein's 2003 study of eighteenth and nineteenth-century popular politics which included a chapter on 'Spatial Practices/ Democratic Vistas'. Epstein pioneered a deeply interdisciplinary pursuit which recognized the importance of material culture and the physicality of space as contributing both to the construction of physical space and meaningful place. Significantly, Epstein and Navickas have also published materially focused histories and Epstein, Navickas and Parolin each interweave material, spatial and textual evidentiary strands

in their histories of English radicalism. (Epstein 1989; 1994; 2003; Navickas 2010; 2014; Parolin 2010).

In her seminal work on *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place* (2015), Navickas details the various methodological and theoretical influences which have impacted on the character of the spatial turn in historical studies. In so doing, Navickas draws up an innovative methodology for thinking about the roles of space and place in history particularly arguing the importance of thinking about space as material and experienced as opposed to symbolic and representative (2015:15). This is particularly achieved through Navickas' deployment of Soja's concept of thirdspace (Navickas 2016; Soja 1996) (see above 3.3) to destabilise fixity of meaning in place and reveal ambiguities which were mobilized in articulating subaltern protests.

Navickas' genius thus lies in her methodology to reconstruct the ways in which space and place operated as participants in protest discourses. By referencing textual sources detailing protest events against the spaces in which the events occurred, Navickas reveals dissonances and inconsistencies in dominant sources. Navickas then excavates these dissonances to reconstruct dominant and subaltern understandings of space and place, resituating them at the heart of protest acts. As Navickas argues, with reference to political engagement in England's northern industrial towns and cities, she 'seeks to uncover some voices of the excluded…' (2015:13).

2.3.4 How I Integrate Spatial Sources

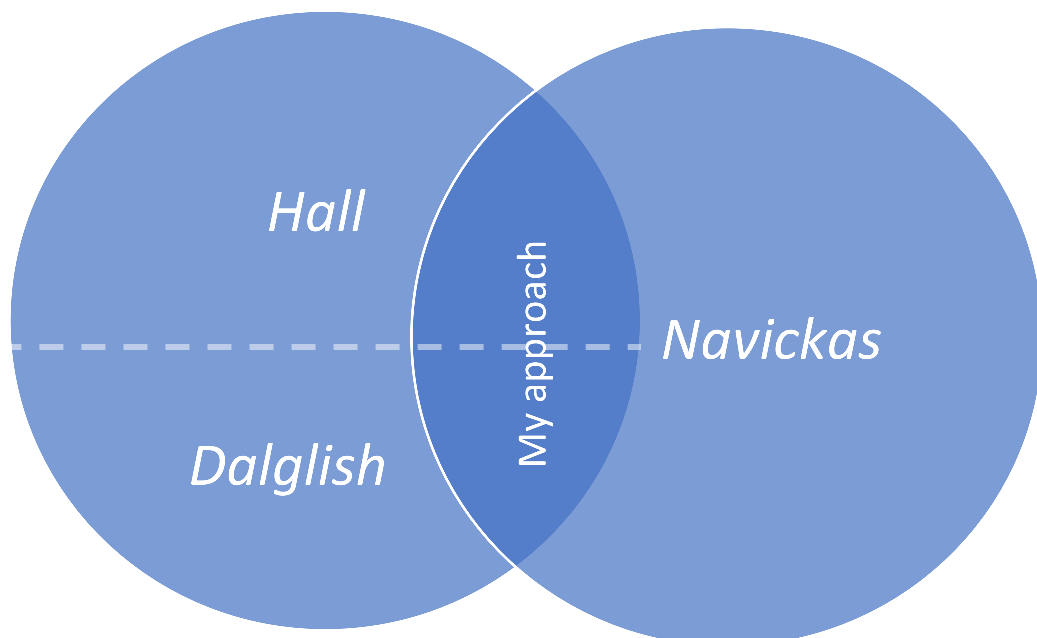

Fig. 4 *Venn diagram showing the key influences on my approach to integrating spatial sources.*

This thesis particularly draws on Navickas' methodology for considering how spaces were mobilized in acts of protest as places which articulated a specific message, or which were codified in a certain way to hold a particular significance. Chris Dalglish likewise explores how domination and resistance was embodied in the Scottish Highlands through deliberate mobilisations and codifications of significant **places.**

This thesis refocuses Dalglish's approach through Hall's discourses methodology, considering landscape not as the object of study but as one of many sources for the study of larger discourses, specifically discourses of land ownership and power-relations in eighteenth-century England. Between this modified 'Landscape Archaeology' approach and Navickas' methodology there is a common strand of thirdspace which, as a tool for thinking, enables this thesis to access the dissenting hidden transcripts of subaltern communities.

2.4 Working Between Multi-Scalar Case Studies

The challenge of working between multi-scalar case studies applies predominantly to the archaeological context of this thesis. Historians quite commonly conduct their research across a range of scales, referencing particular instances to broader trends, themes, and narratives. Material-culture histories often position objects as constituent materialisations of a broader narrative. Riello's examination of a printed image in the context of the narrative of the industrial revolution (Riello 2009) is a case in point (see fig 3). Likewise, Navickas' research on the uses of space and place in later-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century protest movements consistently references micro-scale, site specific protests to wider dialogues surrounding access to and definition of public place (Navickas 2015). As Hall and Silliman however argue, 'It is clear that there has yet to be a full appreciation of the inherent possibilities of scale in historical archaeology… rich possibilities rest in as yet unrealized connections across scales.' (Hall & Silliman 2006:8–9). As this thesis may be itself considered to be a collection of microhistories; each chapter offering a nuanced and narrow piece of research, understanding how these can be related to wider discourses is essential.

Issues of scope and scale in microhistory are closely linked; how can research so narrow in its scope relate to research of a global/national/regional scale? Carlos Ginzburg argues that rather than considering microhistories in isolation, it is through a comparative and correlatory approach that the utility and value of microhistory in relation with macro-scale narratives of historical processes and themes can be understood (Ginzburg 1993:32). In particular Ginzburg argues that 'Italian microhistory has confronted the question of comparison… through the anomalous, not the analogous… it demonstrates that any social structure is the result of

interaction of numerous individual strategies, a fabric that can only be reconstituted from close observation.' (*ibid*.33) As Lauri Putnam further argues; 'to understand the causes and assess the consequences of change observed at one locale, we must consider events and patterns at the places most closely linked to it, as well as trends affecting the system as a whole.' (Putnam 2006:615)

Reconciling histories at macro and micro-scales is thus best achieved through understanding micro-scale case studies as simultaneously constituting and being recursively constituted by macro-scale narratives, historical processes and/or social structures. As István Szijártó succinctly summarises:

> I believe that the advantage of a microhistorical approach is that it can present this diversity of contexts within the frame of a relatively limited investigation. It is in this way that the level of the individual case and the level of the general will be linked: while these contexts are present the fabric of society may also be constructed.
>
> (Szijártó 2002:210)

This approach, has particularly informed my analysis in chapter five, offering a microhistory of Marsden Grotto. In this chapter, the peculiar circumstances of Marsden Grotto are constantly considered in reference to other micro-scale case studies, revealing linkages and correlations which enable a larger scale analysis to be enacted, bringing to light contested spaces within which the overarching social structures of landownership were mediated and negotiated through micro-scale personal and communal acts of protest and resistance.

2.4.1 Multiscalar analysis in Archaeology

Historical Archaeological Approaches

Multiscalar analysis has recently received significant attention in American historical archaeology, due in part the American predilection for 'big theory' necessitating the constant relation of the particular to the general in order to construct, prove and disprove grand narratives. James Deetz's macro-scale Georgian World View thesis, for example, was posited most forcefully in his book *In Small Things Forgotten*, a work concerned, at least in part, with demonstrating how his macro-scale thesis was reflected in the smallest of objects and at the smallest scale site (Deetz 1996). Mark Leone likewise synthesised site specific archaeological studies in Annapolis into macro Marxian narratives of power, class struggle and capitalism (Leone 1984).

British post-medieval archaeology, conversely, declined for many years to synthesise its wealth of micro-scale research into broader structuring narratives. This began to change in the early-1990s particularly with the work of Matthew Johnson, who related his microscopic research into fifteenth and sixteenth-century house structures with a larger narrative of the emergence of capitalism (Johnson 1993; 1996). Whilst the acceptance of more theoretically informed 'historical archaeology' (Gaimster 2009) in Europe ushered in an interest in grand-narratives, Matthew Johnson offered a cautionary note:

> The major task facing European historical archaeology, and indeed historical archaeology in general, is not to shift focus to an exclusively larger scale, but to grasp the relationship between the small-scale and local, wider processes of transformation, and the colonial experience.
>
> (Johnson 2006:318)

Although Johnson is referring specifically to 'the colonial experience' this thesis faces a similar challenge; to grasp the relationship between small-scale instances of protest; wider processes of power and domination; and subaltern experience.

Charles Orser has been one of the chief proponents of multi-scalar analysis in historical archaeology, arguing that historical archaeologists should be working towards producing 'global archaeologies', which 'think globally, dig locally'; always synthesising site specific data into broader narratives of globalism (e.g. Orser 1992; 1996; 2004; 2014; Orser & Funari 2001; see also Orser's editorship of the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*).

Orser proposed a multi-scalar approach combining Henri Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis with David Harvey's 'Time-Space compression', to explore 'processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of times and space that we are forced to alter… how we represent the world to ourselves.'(Orser 2009:12; drawing on Lefebvre 2004; and Harvey 1990) Orser argues that 'every human being is engaged in a series of simultaneously acting intertwined rhythms that extend from the intensely personal – the beating of one's heart- to the broadly natural – the changing of the seasons.' (2009:12). These rhythms become visible in moments when they become irregular, interrupted or 'arrhythmic' due to the influence of time-space compressions, at which points humans are forced to renegotiate how they represent the world to themselves in ways which leave material markers readable by historical archaeologists. Thus, a change in material form may indicate a moment where normative rhythms changed and became arrhythmic due to a macro-scale 'time-space compression' (Orser 2009:13).

Orser, Johnson, Deetz and Leone all share a focus on how the macro-scale structure, be it a rhythm, capitalism, or 'world view', is experienced at a local level: they are less concerned with how local factors influenced the construction of the global. This thesis, in contrast, also explores how acts of protest recursively mediated macro-scale discourses of power and domination.

Discourse, Transcripts and Statements as a Multi-Scalar Approach

Although already discussed in detail above, it is worth returning here to Hall's methodology of considering the past as composed of a network of discourse, transcripts and statements as an approach which facilitates multi-scalar analysis. Relating the macro and micro-scale is at the heart of Hall's methodology as he makes clear in arguing 'By focusing both on local transcripts and global discourses, an archaeology of the modern world can do justice to a variety of scales.' (Hall 2000:17) Hall's approach regards the scalar relationship between discourse, transcript and statement as recursive and dialectic, with statements and transcripts locally mediating the character, direction and expression of grand, global discourses. Hall's conception of the scalar arrangement between transcripts, statements and discourse is best related through his own words

> Discourse is evident in patterns and trends at a larger scale than individual actions… [the] play between public transcripts and hidden transcripts constitutes the discourse of history as it unfolds.
>
> (Hall 2000:17).

'Workers experience the factory, the speeding rhythm of the assembly line, the foremen, the spies, the guards, the owner and the pay check. **They do not experience monopoly capitalism.**' (Scott 1985:43 – emphasis my own). Thus, macro-scale historical processes and social structures such as capitalism, aristocracy and land-ownership should be considered as discourses, recursively constituted by and producing transcripts (both public and hidden) which interact with each other to mediate the character of that discourse.

Whilst it is consistently applied throughout this thesis, Hall's multi-scalar approach is perhaps best exemplified in chapter five which explores how Marsden Grotto was constructed as a statement critiquing the discourses of land ownership and tenancy. It will be argued that Marsden Grotto was a material articulation of an individual's protest against exploitative tenancy by local elites, mediating both a public transcript of acquiescence to elite norms, and simultaneously a hidden transcript of protest. Between the public and hidden transcripts, there

existed a larger scale discourse of power relating to land ownership and tenancy, in turn relating to discourses of capitalism and globalism.

Hall's methodology is thus well suited to the needs of the present thesis as it takes into direct account the dialogic nature of the multiscalar power relations which characterized everyday life in the eighteenth century. Macro-scale historical processes were not simply imposed by elites on passive subalterns but were asymmetrically negotiated through hidden and public transcripts at a range of scales. Hall's model also accounts for the intentionality of human actors in their choices to voice dissenting opinions through a range of media, even when a person is in the most subaltern of positions. It is therefore this approach that this thesis uses to demonstrate how its case studies, regardless of how small-scale and isolated they may seem, are constantly engaged in a recursive relationship with wider discourses which operated at increasingly large scales.

2.4.2 How I Operate Multiscalar Analysis

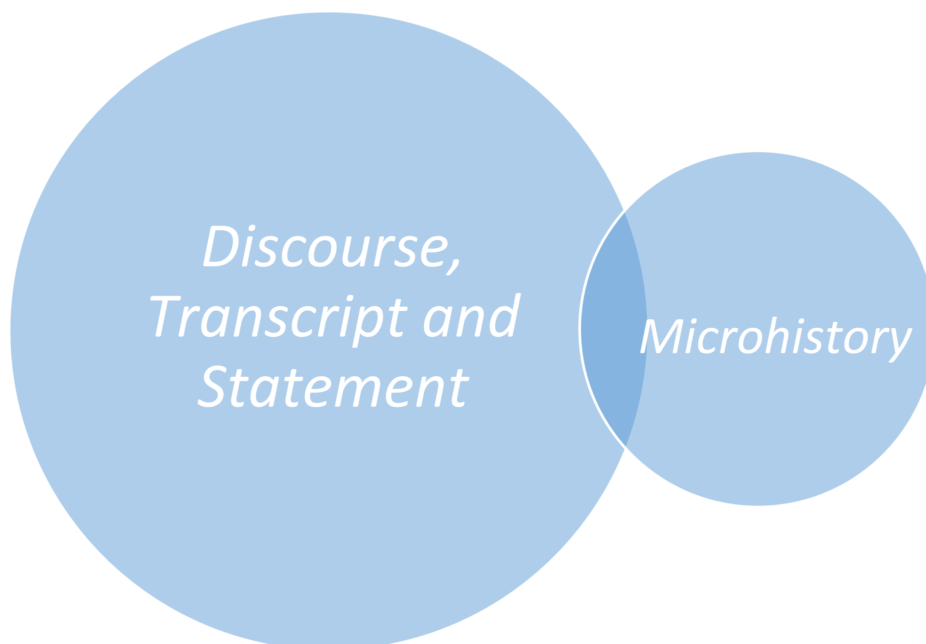

Fig. 5 *Venn diagram showing the key influences on my approach to operating multi-scalar analysis.*

In order to always hold in hand multiple scales of reference, this thesis draws on Hall's methodology, situating the subject matter of each case study as transcripts in dialogue both with each other and with broader discourses. Discourses are thus considered as large, macro-scale entities which are embodied and experienced at smaller scales through statements and transcripts. My methodology (see Fig.5) is thus, to a small extent, also inspired by the Italian

Table 2. *The core methodological challenges posed by each case-study chapter of this thesis, and the strategies used to resolve them.*

Ch.	Title	Core Methodological Challenges	Bricolage Solution
3	Material Culture of the Wilkes and Liberty movement	Integrating textual and material sources in an analytical framework.	Integrating the approaches of Hall (2000) and Riello (2009) (See 2.1)
		Accessing the intentions of the subaltern communities who engaged in the movement	Fusing post-structuralist approaches of archaeology and literary criticism (See 2.2)
4	Contesting Newcastle-upon-Tyne Town Moor	Building an analytical framework integrating textual, material and Spatial sources.	Integrating the approaches of Navickas, Dalglish and Hall. (See 2.3)
		Integrating concepts of space and place into the analysis of the political contestations in Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Using Thirdspace as an analytical approach (See 2.2)
5	Underground Resistance at Marsden Grotto	Contextualising the case study of Marsden Grotto within multiple analytical scales.	Integrating Hall's transcripts and discourses approach with elements of the Italian school of Microhistory. (See 2.4)
		Interrogating a case study through spatial, material and textual sources and interpreting the relationship between these sources.	Integrating the approaches of Hall, Riello, Dalglish, Navickas (See 2.1, 2.3)
		Accessing the intentionality of Marsden Grotto as an articulation of protest/resistance	Taking a post structuralist approach drawing from archaeology and literary criticism. (See 2.2)
6	Articulating Spence's Plan	Integrating the textual, material and spatial aspects of Thomas Spence's propaganda oeuvre, and analysing them in combination.	Integrating the approaches of Hall, Riello, Dalglish, Navickas (See 2.1, 2.3)
		To situate Spence's propaganda within multiple scales of reference.	By considering the local in terms of the general and vice-versa. Fusing Hall and Italian School of Microhistory. (See 2.4)
		To access the subaltern communities who engaged with Spence's plan.	Using the concept of Thirdspace as an analytical approach, integrated with James C. Scott's transcripts and discourses methodology. (See 2.4)
		Interpreting the intentionality of Spence's integration of these media.	Fusing post-structuralist approaches of archaeology and literary criticism (See 2.2)

school of microhistory which situates Micro-scale studies in conversation with macro-historical processes and themes.

2.5 An Interdisciplinary Bricolage

In summary, it will be clear by now that this thesis draws on diverse methods and source materials and it makes no apologies for its bricoleur activities in borrowing extensively from various disciplines including: history, archaeology, art history, anthropology and literary studies (see Table.2). The bricolage methodology of this thesis thus speaks fluently to both history and archaeology as their own established disciplines and yet can also be commensurately understood in its own terms as situated *between* history and archaeology. To repeat a citation from Hall 'Archaeology is history and history is archaeology.' (2000:16). Ultimately, material culture history, spatial history and historical archaeology are each working towards a common goal; the better incorporation of source materials in researching the past. The same can be said of the present thesis. As Lynette Russell argues, to create a 'capital 'H' History' free from disciplinary fiefdoms of source materials, 'there is a need for site-specific, highly technical studies to be integrated with historiographical approaches.' (Russell 2016:58). This is precisely what this thesis aims to do. Russell then further argues that 'If the study of the past might be created in the intersection between words and things, where the tangible meets the intangible, where images, artefacts and ephemera all provide evidence of the past, then rather than a handmaiden to history, historical archaeology might just be "**H**istory"' (Russell 2016:59). I would add to this that the greater intersections are between words **and** things **and** spaces **and** scale.

Chapter 3 The Stuff of Politics -
Material Culture, Space and the Wilkes and Liberty Movement

This chapter explores the materiality and spatiality of the Wilkes and Liberty movement; examining how objects and places were engaged in transcripts of diverse personal and communal anxieties, and therein transcripts of protest and dissent. Since the scope of this chapter is large, the focus, where possible, will be on examples from North-East England. That said, it has not been possible to identify any extant Wilkes and Liberty objects with tight attribution to a North-East context and so these are studied more generally as materialising the tensions and anxieties of the collective Wilkes and Liberty movement. These tensions and anxieties are contextualised in the North-East through contrasting two different, yet related, Wilkes and Liberty events. It is essential to recall, as mentioned in chapter two, that this thesis aims to explore the general as expressed in the particular, and the particular as manifested in the general (Hall 2000:17). The present chapter thus explores how the international Wilkes and Liberty movement was embodied at a range of scales; from micro-scale punch bowls to larger communal celebrations and agitations. It also considers how local and individual (micro-scale) concerns, anxieties and circumstances influenced the character of the Wilkes and Liberty movement at the macro-scale as manifested in objects and places.

3.1 Wilkes and Liberty

As a somewhat outrageous, roguish and libertine character, John Wilkes has attracted a great deal of interest from historians who have written detailed examinations of his life (see for example Christie 1962; Rudé 1962; Garner 1996; Cash 2006; Sainsbury 2006). A brief overview exploring the key points of the Wilkes and Liberty movement is offered here to preface and inform the subsequent discussion.

Wilkes came to the fore in the early 1760s, in the wake of the Seven Years War (ending 1763). As MP for Aylesbury he was a vociferous critic and opponent of the Government, publishing a regular scathing pamphlet titled the *North Briton*[1] in which he frequently reviled the Scottish Prime Minister, the Earl of Bute and his policies. Wilkes' early journalism in the *North Briton* earned him some notoriety in Parliament as the Government sought unsuccessfully to silence his criticisms, however it was following issue 45[2] published in 1763 that Wilkes' fame

[1] *North Briton* being an eighteenth-century name for Scotland.

[2] A reference to the 1745 Jacobite rising in which a predominantly Scottish army unsuccessfully invaded England with aim of restoring the Stuart Monarchy. The '45 rising caused great distrust between England and Scotland and Wilkes drew on this distrust to blackguard the Earl of Bute though never directly accusing Bute of Jacobitism (a treasonous crime). Following Wilkes' publication of Issue 45 the number became an important symbol for the Wilkes and Liberty movement (See Brewer 1983 for a deeper exploration of the number's Wilkite significance.)

exploded. Herein, Wilkes directly attacked both the Government and the King, landing him a charge of seditious libel for which he was duly arrested and expelled from Parliament. His arrest and expulsion propelled Wilkes into the limelight as the champion and voice of the unenfranchised, protesting an unpopular Government. As John Brewer argues, the Government's decision to prosecute Wilkes' paper and its publishers 'triggered a series of events, too well known to bear reiteration here, but which made Wilkes a popular hero and martyr, and the eponymous leader of a somewhat inchoate movement seeking parliamentary reform, accountable government, and the security of a free press.' (Brewer 1983:551).

Following his expulsion from Parliament, Wilkes fled to France returning (still an outlaw) in 1768 to reclaim a Parliamentary seat in the general elections of that year. Although Wilkes first attempt to win a seat for the City of London failed, he restood and successfully contested a by-election for Brentford, only to have his seat denied him by the Government on the grounds that he was still an outlaw. Following this denial, Wilkes was imprisoned in the King's Bench on the 14th June 1768 to serve a two-year sentence for Seditious Libel (for which he had been convicted in 1764). Whilst in gaol, Wilkes again restood for and won his seat in Brentford but was again expelled, undeterred Wilkes restood and won a third election at Brentford however this time the seat was scandalously awarded to Colonel Henry Luttrell, who had stood against Wilkes on the Government interest and had **lost** by 847 votes (Wilkes 1143/ Luttrell 296). This final scandal ended Wilkes' hopes of sitting in the 1768-1774 Parliament but helped contribute to the fall of the then Prime Minister Lord Grenville. The affair thus spawned calls for Parliamentary reform and became a rallying point for Wilkites who regarded the event as epitomising a Government ignorant of subaltern interests and wishes; a view which Wilkes was only too happy to promote.

The third pillar of Wilkes' fame and popularity came from his demands for the public reporting of Parliamentary proceedings by a free press. As Peter Thomas argues 'hitherto parliamentary reporting had been supressed by direct action by both houses against newspapers and magazines. The successful challenge to this censorship in 1771 followed a tactical coup masterminded by Wilkes.' (Thomas 2004a:Online). Wilkes' promotion of the freedom of the press drew wide support as it was closely linked with improving the accountability of elected politicians to their electorate a cause which Wilkes had championed from his original campaigns against Earl Bute in 1762.

The movement which sprung up in support of Wilkes was diversely manifested including; agitations akin to rioting, citywide illuminations, toasts, songs, elite dinner clubs, tavern names,

petitions and, most significantly in the context of this thesis, in a wealth of material culture. The object categories articulating support for the Wilkes and Liberty movement in the 1760s include statuettes, sleeve buttons, teapots, shirt buckles, buttons, medals, prints, sword pommels, pipes, pipe tampers, mugs, glasses, clothing and rings and punch bowls.

3.2 Wilkes and Liberty in North-East England

The Wilkes and Liberty movement in North-East England took a similar form to elsewhere in the country, with examples of street-agitations such as one in which an effigy of John Horne Tooke, formerly an ally of Wilkes but latterly a critic, was ritually executed:

> Betwixt eight and nine o'clock the effigy of the Brentford Priest [Horne Tooke] (in clerical habit) seated upon an ass, was carried through the streets into the Fleshmarket, and there directly under the sign of Mr. Wilkes's Head, committed to the flames. On the breast was affixed a label with these words *The pious Minister of New Brentford*; on the back another label, with, *This is the reward of my lying, slandering, and treachery* and on his right sleeve a Middlesex Journal, the vehicle of the Parson's malicious invectives against the Supporters of the Bill of Rights.
>
> (*Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal*, 17th June, 1771 p.1)

Similarly theatrical, and in some instances violent, demonstrations occurred throughout the North-East, particularly focused in the larger conurbations of the region (Newcastle, Sunderland, Alnwick, South Shields, Darlington, Durham, Morpeth Hexham etc (Brewer 1976:178–9; Bradley 1990:259).

Less theatrically, Newcastle-upon-Tyne's Freemen signed and lodged a strong petition in 1769, imploring the King to intercede and reinstate Wilkes in his Parliamentary seat for Brentford (Brewer 1976:150; Sykes 1833:103).

Although few examples survive, North-East textual sources offer rich accounts of Wilkite material culture. For example, a candle of 45 branches (a reference to issue 45 of the *North Briton*) which was commissioned and produced for the 'Cappadocian Club' in Newcastle in April 1770:

> A curious candle was made in Newcastle. It consisted of 44 branches issuing in four circular divisions from the main stem, and forming four circles at the top, where they all terminated horizontally with each other, and would cast 45 lights. It weighed $22^{1/2}$ lbs. From the bottom to the top of the main stem it was about three feet. It was intended to be lighted up at the Cappadocian entertainment in

Newcastle, on the Wednesday in Easter week, being the day of Mr. Wilkes' enlargement. It was invented and executed by Mr. Kelly, of the Quay Side, at whose house the curious were allowed to see it until the above day.

(Sykes 1833:271)

For the same occasion, Taylor Ansell, a pipe-maker in Gateshead produced a run of '45 pipes, each 45-inches long, tipped and glazed, and marked on the shank "J.W. 45."' These, he distributed to the four Wilkite clubs in the City at 'The King's Head, Cappadocian, Mr. Cowling's and Mr. Byerley's' (Sykes 1833:272). Unfortunately none of these pipes have survived though a fragment of pipe from c.1770 recovered from an excavation in Gateshead and marked 'TA' (likely for Taylor Ansell), suggests that Ansell's pipes were fairly typical for the period and that his Wilkite examples would have been distinctive by their mottoes and extreme length (Nolan & Vaughan 2006:211) (see. Fig.6). It is important here to note that these particular objects were intended to be displayed and used to bring people together communally in the spirit of Wilkes and Liberty.

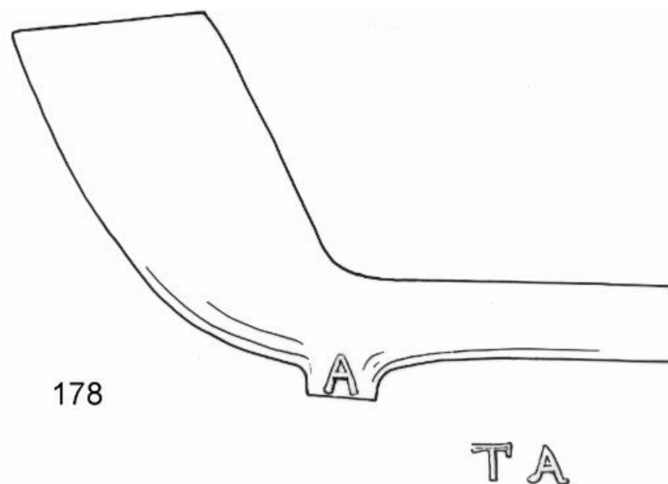

Fig. 6 *Clay Pipe from Oakwellgate, Gateshead. Marked TA for Taylor Ansell (Nolan and Vaughan 2006:211) [1.984mm stem bore]*

Although punch bowls are not specifically mentioned in sources relating to Newcastle's Wilkes and Liberty celebrations, the consumption of alcohol is certainly frequently alluded to and indeed the venues where the pro-Wilkes petition was signed by the Freemen of Newcastle in 1769 were interchangeably referred to as 'coffee and punch-houses' (Whitehead 1778). Likewise the four Wilkite clubs in Newcastle met in coffee/ punch-houses and taverns where the consumption of alcohol would have been a normal part of the meeting; as North-East native Thomas Bewick recounted of a similar political debating club in 1790s Newcastle 'About the

year 1790, I became a member of 'Swarley's Club', held in the evenings at the Black Boy Inn…on entering the room, **every member paid fourpence, which was to be spent in refreshment**.' (Bewick 1862:141 emphasis my own).

3.3 Punch bowls

The punch bowls of the Wilkes and Liberty movement can be divided into two broad types based on their fabric: tin-glazed earthenware (delftware) and porcelain (see appendix A. for gazetteer of known bowls). This chapter will first consider these categories of punch bowl, contrasting differences and similarities in their form, function and contexts of use. It will illuminate how the delft and porcelain bowls operated as materialisations of both the wider Wilkes and Liberty movement and of personal anxieties and tensions. It will be argued that punch bowls both brought people together articulating shared sentiments of support for Wilkes and protest against diverse grievances yet also were used to distinguish between social status and groupings within the Wilkes and Liberty movement itself.

3.3.1 Tin-Glazed Earthenware Bowls

The tin-glazed earthenware (or delftware) bowls celebrating the Wilkes and Liberty movement (Fig.7 for example) are heterogeneous in form and design, being wheel-thrown, glazed in a white tin-glaze and decorated with diverse blue motifs, slogans and effigies (Dawson 2010:9).

Fig. 7 *Two Delftware Wilkes and Liberty Punch bowls. L- (BM: 1910,1122.1; Bowl 1- Appendix A [173mm rim Ø]) R- (VAM:c.49-1939; Bowl 2 – Appendix A [225mm rim Ø])*

Delftware was a major industry in eighteenth-century Britain; based mainly in London, Bristol, Liverpool and Glasgow (though with smaller manufactories known as pot-houses in other regional cities), the industry grew throughout the century to feed an increasingly demanding

market. By the mid-eighteenth century, British pot houses were able to offer diverse goods to people from a range of backgrounds: punch bowls , jugs, plates, mugs, chamber-pots, posset-pots, tiles and candlesticks (see for example Garner 1947; Austin 1994; Archer 1997; Dawson 2010). In form, decoration and style, tin-glazed earthenware commonly emulated prevalent tastes amongst the social elite, providing a significantly cheaper and (in terms of design, and production time scale) more flexible alternative to porcelain (Dawson 2010:15). Delftware was thus readily accessible to individuals from all social strata, though particularly those with disposable income and excavated evidence suggests that by the mid-eighteenth century most punch bowls were made of delft (Harvey 2012:174).

Delftware punch bowls depicting John Wilkes are however unusual within the broader corpus of designs and motifs. Where individuals are depicted on delftware, they are most commonly either royalty or military/naval heroes (Garner 1947:23) and only very few pieces bear political sentiments similar to the Wilkes and Liberty bowls (*ibid.*). Comparable examples of politically inscribed delftware include a plate produced in support of Thomas Coster, MP for Bristol in 1734 (Dawson 2010:66), Punch bowls made in support of Blackett and Fenwick as MPs for Newcastle in 1741 (TWM- TWCMS: C10789), a plate produced for the election of Nicholas Calvert and John Martin as MPs for Tewkesbury in 1754 (*ibid.*76), and a punch bowl produced to celebrate the release of Brass Crosby (Lord Mayor London) and Alderman Oliver (Magistrate) from the Tower of London where the two had been incarcerated in 1771 for supporting the open publication of Parliamentary debates (*ibid.*88) and therein supporting Wilkes[3]. The delftware ceramics of the Wilkes and Liberty movement therefore fit into a somewhat patchy tradition of using tin-glazed earthenware to promote political themes.

The blue and white colouration of the tin-glazed bowls is particularly interesting in the context of the Wilkes and Liberty movement as blue was an important colour for Wilkites with blue flags, cockades and ribbons being common features at Wilkite events (Rogers 2001:235). Whether or not this association between blue delft and Wilkes was actively pursued by either the potters and painters or the consumers, the colourway will certainly have added to the codified meanings and associations of the bowls as being pro-Wilkes.

Surprisingly despite the greater commonalty of delftware in the eighteenth century, delftware bowls are today the least commonly surviving type of Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls with only 9 known in museum and private collections. This is peculiar if one considers that the

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[3] The Crosby and Oliver bowl, although being a closely associated Wilkite bowl, has not been included in the database of this thesis which instead focuses only on those which specifically proclaim support for Wilkes directly.

Wilkes and Liberty movement was largely London-centric in its focus (Rudé 1962) and that at the time Lambeth was one of the major producers of delftware in Britain (Tyler et al. 2008). Given the proximity of the centre of the movement to the centre of English delft production it is a fair assertion that similar bowls would have been quickly available on the market. Indeed as Tyler *et al.* (2008:112) argue, flexibility was essential in the delftware industry which demanded rapid returns on investments suggesting that the delftware industries, of London in particular, were well-disposed to capitalise on emergent trends. Furthermore, the pot-houses of Lambeth and Southwark were also known to actively unite to influence the directions of the market in ceramics (*ibid.*). Support for the Wilkes and Liberty movement among the potters could thus influence both the market and politics in favour of the movement. It is furthermore significant that Wilkes was incarcerated in the King's Bench Prison in Southwark in 1768 and that the infamous St. George's Fields Massacre, in which Wilkite demonstrators were fired on by armed forces, took place between Southwark and Lambeth involving a great many of the inhabitants of those places (Rudé 1962). The London delft producers were therefore in a fine location to capitalise on the popularity of Wilkes and the fact that 78% of the known surviving corpus of earthenware punch bowls are attributed to London makers, suggests that the London pot-houses did not miss their opportunity (see Appendix A.).

The logistical advantages of the London pot-houses therefore suggests that delftware bowls would have been reasonably common during the 1760s and 1770s and certainly more common than their porcelain counterparts (Harvey 2012:174). The reasons for their poorer survival therefore must be sought elsewhere and the most likely explanation is differences in the curation of the bowls; both historical and contemporary. Due to its greater commonality, cheaper price, and easy availability, delft was likely less carefully maintained and curated resulting in fewer survivals (Mather 2016:148-9). Similarly, it is likely that as cheaply available items, Wilkite delftwares were discarded when Wilkes and the movement fell out of vogue in the later century. Indeed excavated eighteenth-century inn clearance assemblages support this inasmuch as taverns and inns were commonly subjected to clearances whereby dated and unfashionable objects were discarded en-masse to be replaced with newer, fashionable materials (see for example Pearce 2000; Boothroyd & Higgins 2005; Watson et al. 2010). Matthew Johnson (1996:182) adds further credence to this theory in exploring the domestic Evett household in Warwickshire which underwent a clearance, in the 1730s, of any 'pre-polite' material culture, replacing it with more fashionable items. Likewise, in modern collecting practices, valuable fine wares are often more appealing to collectors (depending on collections) causing a potential bias in survival (Harvey 2012:174; Mather 2016:148-9).

3.3.2 Porcelain Bowls

The majority of surviving Wilkes and Liberty bowls are made of Chinese porcelain with a total of 21 known to be in existence (16 enamel, 5 *grisaille*, see Appendix A). These porcelain bowls comprise two main types; bowls with enamel depictions of 'The Arms of Liberty and Slavery' (Fig.10 and Fig.11), a Wilkite motif taken from a pamphlet published in support of Wilkes whilst in gaol in 1768, and bowls with *en grisaille* (fine hand decoration in grey composed of delicate brushwork) depictions of Wilkes after a Hogarth engraving[4] (Fig.8 and Fig.9). Chinese porcelain export bowls were inherently high status and expensive items, made in Jingdezhen (China), the principle manufactory of Chinese export porcelain, and then taken to Canton (Guangzhou, China) for trade with the East India trading companies of various European nations. It was in Canton that various hand painted decorative motifs were applied to the blank ceramics. These motifs can be grouped into two broad categories; standard mass produced blue and white chinoiserie designs popular in Europe in the eighteenth century and bespoke, private orders (Godden 1998:50).

The relative homogeneity of design on the Chinese porcelain Wilkes and Liberty bowls is suggestive that these bowls were specifically ordered according to set patterns given to Cantonese decorators. The number of bowls surviving indicates that this may have been undertaken by enterprising porcelain merchants, supra-cargos (the trading company representatives responsible for trading in China), or trading ships' captains who recognised a lucrative market in the Wilkes and Liberty movement (Godden 1998:60).

The designs on the bowls, taken directly from popular pamphlets and prints, offered a template for the Chinese artists to work from. These preferred European designs will necessarily have been transported to China by merchants, suggesting that, given the time lag in the porcelain trade, the *en grisaille* bowls could not have been available in England before 1764, and the enamel bowls before 1769. The yearlong waiting times for delivery suggest a strong level of support for Wilkes amongst those who ordered porcelain bowls. The confidence of both patrons and merchants that there would still be a market for Wilkes and Liberty on the receipt of their goods clearly indicates a faith in the strength and popularity of Wilkes and Liberty and a trust that it was not a passing fad.

The financial investment by patrons and/or speculators in the porcelain punch bowls is also an excellent testament to the lucrative potential of materialising the Wilkes and Liberty movement.

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[4] The significance of Hogarth's caricature lampooning Wilkes and its subsequent appropriation by Wilkites as a symbol of the movement is well explored by Amelia Rauser (2001).

Fig. 8 *Grisaille Chinese Porcelain Punch Bowl showing image of Wilkes after Hogarth (BM 1988,042.1; Bowl 30, Appendix A) [412mm rim Ø]*

Fig. 9 *Satirical portrait of John Wilkes by William Hogarth 1763 (NPG D1362)*

Fig. 10 *Enamelled Chinese Porcelain Export Punch bowl depicting the "Arms of Liberty and Slavery" motif (VAM c.20-1951; Bowl 10 – Appendix A [262mm rim Ø])*

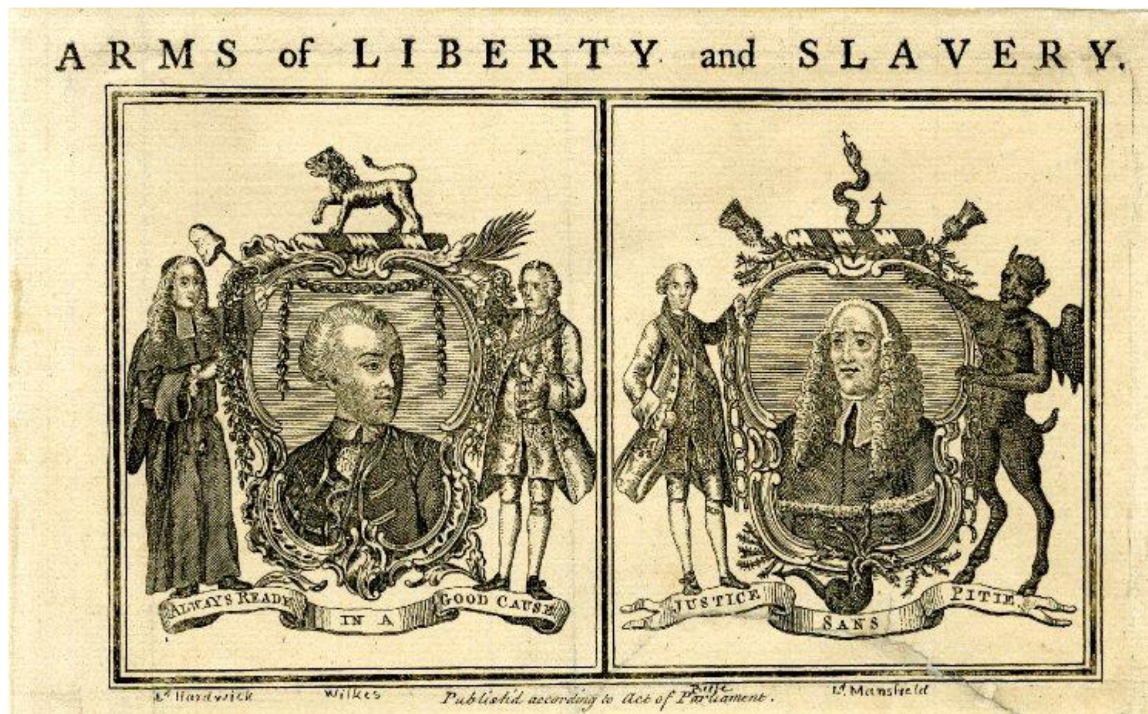


Fig. 11 *Cropped header of a 1768 handbill depicting 'Arms of Liberty and Slavery'. BM 1868,0808.4414*

Although it is hard to gauge the monetary value of the bespoke Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls, Harvey (2012:173) suggests that, based on Old Bailey Proceedings, a Chinese porcelain bowl could range in price from between 6d and 20s with the average value around 5s. Based on Harvey's estimations it is apparent that porcelain bowls were roughly five times as valuable as delft bowls, which were valued closer to the 1s mark (*ibid.*). Furthermore the average porcelain bowl was decorated with a basic blue and white chinoiserie design and enamelled porcelain wares were approximately 50% more expensive situating them at around 7s.6d in value (Godden 1998:54 citing cups as examples). It is therefore evident that the enamelled and *grisaille* punch bowls were highly valuable goods and would only have been available to the wealthiest members of society.

3.4 Punch Bowl Politics

3.4.1 Using the Bowls

It might seem an obvious question, but *how* were these punch bowls used? The capacity of the bowls is important here, as a factor governing the size of a group of drinkers. Although the capacities of punch bowls are rarely listed in museum catalogues, and experimentally determining it would be in many cases against museum collection protocols, reasonably accurate approximations of bowl capacity can be achieved using Wendy Miervaldis' formula to calculate punch bowl volume. Miervaldis' formula uses a series of ratios between height, diameter, and foot ring and rim circumference in its calculations, measurements which are commonly supplied in museum catalogues (Miervaldis 2012; Breen 2012). Fig.12 displays the calculated capacities of Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls for which dimensions have been made available in museum catalogues (demonstrated in gallons, as being the contemporary common unit of volume).

As Fig.12 demonstrates, delftware bowls are generally of smaller volumes: on average only half a gallon (4 pints, 2.27 litres). Based on work by Karen Harvey (2008:207) it is apparent that these smaller volumes represent bowls for individuals or smaller gatherings. Several contemporary accounts of punch consumption, particularly in Old Bailey Proceedings, record punch being drunk from small, individually sized bowls indicating that such a manner of consumption was a normal practice (OBP 1771; OBP 1778). One particular account records two men entering a pub and ordering two small bowls, one of gin and water and one of rum and water, which they drank individually, and which sufficed them for the evening (OBP 1778).

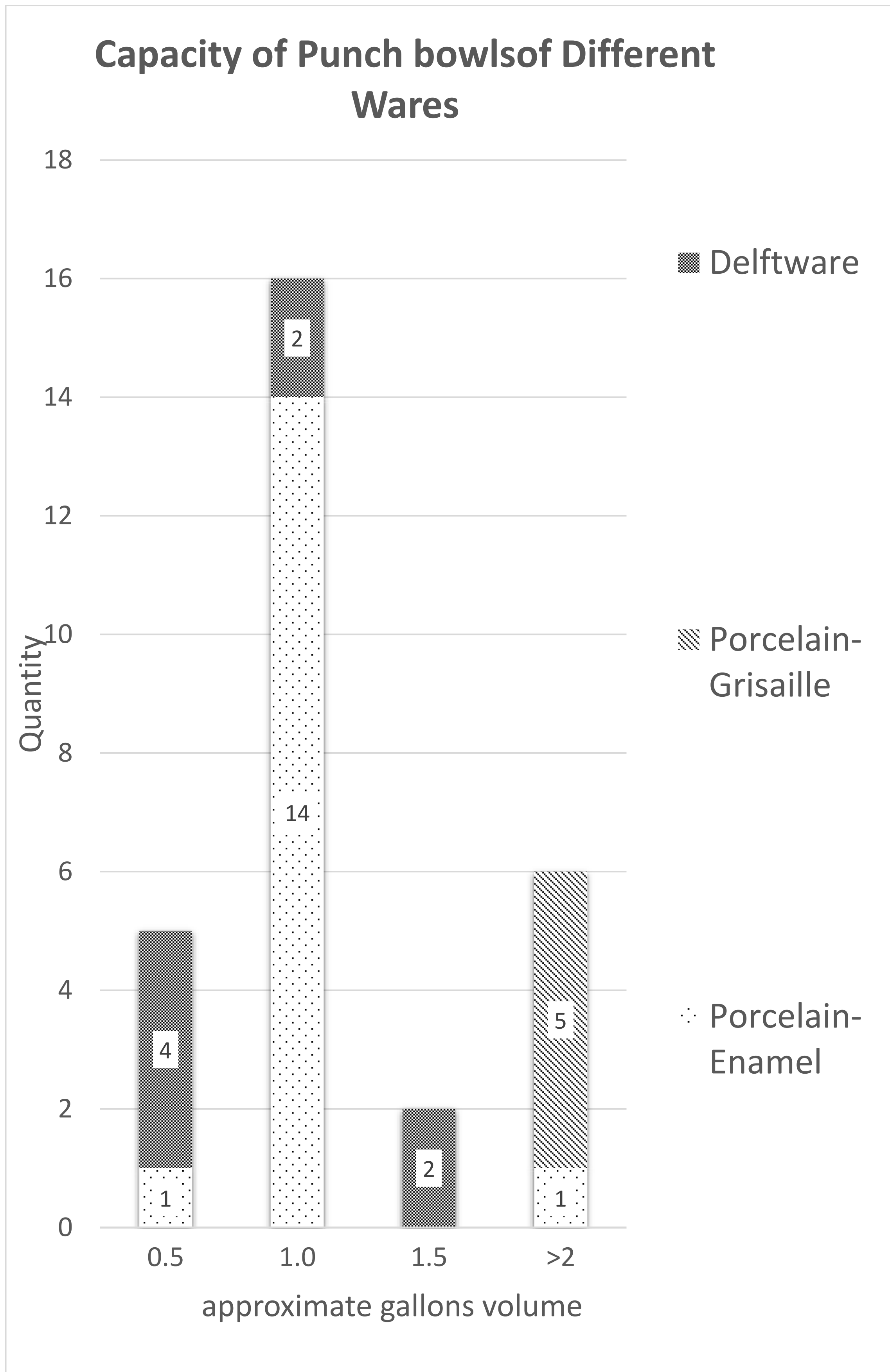


Fig. 12 *Volumes of Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls by type (numbers within the bar refer to actual numbers of bowls)- Data drawn from Appendix A.*

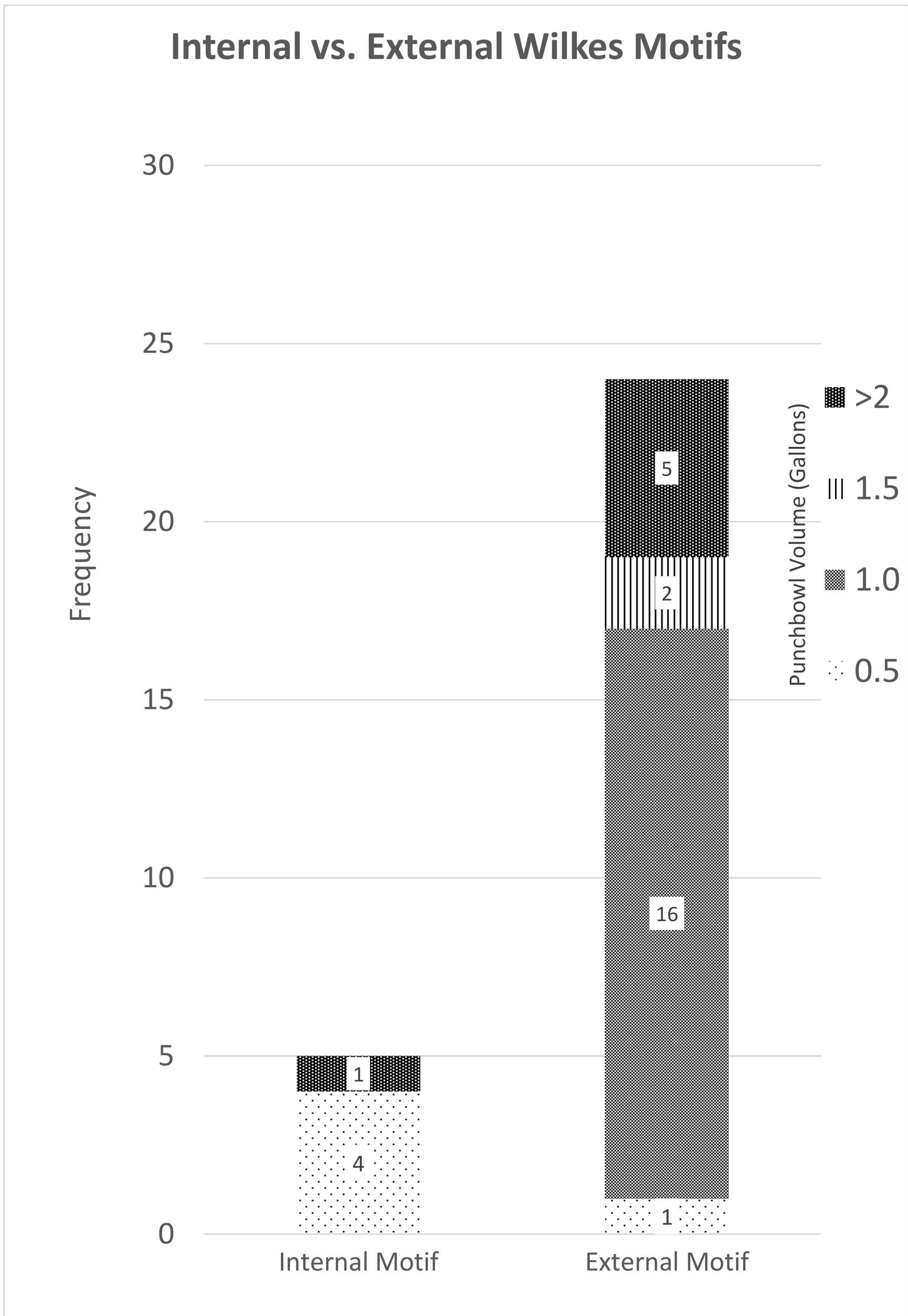


Fig. 13 *Chart showing internal vs. external decorative motifs against volume of punch bowls . – Data drawn from Appendix A.*

The enamel porcelain bowls however, tend towards a larger average capacity of one gallon (8 pints, 4.5 litres) which is around double the size of their delft counterparts. A one-gallon bowl would be of sufficient capacity to provide plenty of liquor for sharing in groups such as at dinner parties and the *grisaille* bowls are even larger than their enamel counterparts averaging 4 gallons (32 pints, 18.2 litres) suggesting that they were intended for use with large groups. The larger capacity of the porcelain bowls also positions them as prestige items intended to articulate an individual's social status and identity to other revellers, not just as Wilkites but also as members of the affluent middling sort, able to afford fine porcelain and to entertain guests in a socially polite manner.

The lack of any group or club insignia on the large porcelain Wilkes and Liberty bowls, suggests that they were not intended to affirm membership to any specific club and were intended instead to only demonstrate association with the Wilkes and Liberty movement.

Individual and group ownership and usage is interesting when considered in the context of Wilkite dinners, which Nicholas Rogers described as usually being:

> socially discrete events involving men of the same class or standing. Thus while merchants, tradesmen, shopkeepers and even lesser folks participated in Wilkite dinners, they did so within their own social sphere, not as part of a heterogeneous radical assembly.
>
> (Rogers 2001:248)

Larger bowls were thus articulations of their owner's social status and political affiliations whether as a group or individually and were intended for use in socially discrete contexts to cement and express the identity of the owner and users as a collective with shared ideals. Porcelain and large delft Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls should therefore be understood as objects mediating support for Wilkes through gatherings of politically aspirant individuals. The punch bowls thus helped to cement partakers as being of shared social standing and of shared political alignment; defining their social and political identities in opposition to both dominant and subaltern others within and without the Wilkes and Liberty movement.

A further feature noticeable in Fig.13 is a correlation between the size of bowls and the presence of internal and external motifs in the decoration. This correlation suggests a clearly structured differentiation; with smaller bowls of around half a gallon having predominantly **internal** Wilkite motifs while larger punch bowls, greater than 1 gallon, have predominantly **external** motifs. This correlation may further suggest how they were intended to be used either in groups

or individually (Fig.13); whether they were intended for display to articulate a statement to an audience or for personal interest.

Internal motifs, painted inside a punch bowl, are inherently private and are visible only to a close drinker. Internal decoration does not display the bowl's Wilkite association openly to others, and rather it internalises and focuses the meaning of the bowl onto an intimate user or users. In this way the smaller bowls, were arguably intended to be used as personal, and private affirmations of membership of the larger Wilkite community and of support for the Wilkes and Liberty movement. These bowls, small, inwardly focused, earthenware and locally produced, would have been available for use and ownership to a wide audience, both poor and wealthy. It has already been demonstrated above that small bowls of punch were often consumed as personal drinks in taverns and inns (OBP 1778; OBP 1771) and it therefore seems likely that small Wilkes and Liberty bowls internally decorated were intended for use in intimate gatherings. In such small private contexts, the desired effect was not to impress others through display or to affirm social status but rather to celebrate the Wilkes and Liberty movement privately.

The larger and predominantly porcelain bowls, however, tend to carry their motifs externally (Fig.13), an indication of their intended use as part of a communal display. These bowls appear to articulate both individual and communal support for Wilkes and Liberty as well as operating as statements of elite taste and social status. They were intended for use by a group of drinkers, either as guests of an individual or as members of a club with Wilkite leanings. In these interactions, the bowls served to mediate and shape the nature of the occasions as both Wilkite and middle class. The motifs were made visible so that all revellers in a group could see them and understand the meaning of the bowl. As Karen Harvey argues, punch bowls played a crucial role in forming communities, with the open-central bowl facilitating easy sharing and with each man serving himself from a central point, engaging with a central theme or statement through which fraternal ties were established (Harvey 2012:197). The large and communal Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls thus cemented a shared social status and a shared support for Wilkes and Liberty.

3.4.2 *Tensions in Decoration*

Of equal importance to the location of decoration on the bowls, is the choice of motifs used. Commonly the motifs consist of a blend of obviously Wilkite imagery such as busts, coats of arms, Wilkite slogans and the number 45 in combination with other typical motifs, often

chinoiserie and floral. The combination of motifs in some instances offers valuable insights into the intended meanings of the bowls and the tensions and anxieties which they materialise.

Much of the material culture produced to support Wilkes was emblazoned with Wilkite symbolism including the number '45', prints of Wilkes, and a host of other symbolism. This use of symbolism may be broadly paralleled with Jacobite uses of codes and symbols however as noted above in section 2.2.3 there is an essential difference in the legal statuses of Jacobitism and Wilkism. Where Jacobitism was illegal and therefore necessarily relied on hidden codes and symbols, Wilkism was always legal and indeed support for Wilkes was commonly openly, loudly, and publicly proclaimed with easily legible and understandable symbolism. As argued in section 2.2.3 the methodologies developed to consider the symbolism and codes embedded within Jacobite material culture are of limited immediate applicability to the Wilkes and Liberty movement.

The most commonly occurring, not Wilkite, motifs on Wilkite punch bowls were floral and chinoiserie landscapes, widely reproduced on later eighteenth-century ceramics, and particularly on porcelains and prestige goods. Bowls bearing these motifs therefore demonstrated that their owners and users had 'arrived' in Georgian polite society and were conversant with its governing principles and discourse. Indeed, the bowls themselves can be understood as statements governed in their form and use by discourses of consumption, political engagement, and decorative taste.

The floral and chinoiserie motifs, statements of an elite discourse of taste and style, are however then juxtaposed with the Wilkite motifs which challenged the discourses of power in Georgian society. This juxtaposition is noticeably present on both cheaper delftware and lavish porcelain bowls, though it is far more pronounced on the porcelain examples. The bowls may therefore be understood as materialising hidden dissenting transcripts by individuals from across a spectrum of social backgrounds.

It is worth restating here that it is unusual to see politicians on punch bowls, more usually they are decorated with military heroes and royalty (Webster 2015:72; Mather 2016:166). The insertion of Wilkes into this pantheon of heroes is a clear counterstatement to discourses on national identity, political representation and power. By subtly modifying the material statements of elite discourse, replacing traditional public heroes with Wilkes, the artisans of the British delftware industry were able to materialise their own dissent and disaffection in the public-sphere. Likewise, those who used a punch bowl which bore Wilkes instead of a more typical heroic figure of the day were also engaged in subverting elite statements of power and

were complicitly undermining the elite discourse of power, reworking the statements which gave it regularity.

Through their carefully crafted decoration and juxtapositions of motifs the Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls should also be understood to mimic elite forms bearing traditional heroes and design motifs. As Scott argues 'The powerful…have a vital interest in keeping up the appearances appropriate to their form of domination. Subordinates, for their part ordinarily have good reasons to help sustain those appearances or at least, not openly to contradict them.'(Scott 1990:70). Scott's argument here is that it is far more dangerous for a subaltern to openly and directly contest elite forms than it is to appropriate, modify and mimic them in parody. Such mimicry is a well-recognised form of resistance to domination; adopting and modifying the forms of the dominant party and in so doing carving out a secure avenue for the expression of a dissenting transcript as Bhabha argues:

> Mimicry is always produced at the site of interdiction, it is a form of discourse that is uttered inter-dicta: a discourse at the crossroads of what is known and permissible, and what that which though known must be kept concealed; a discourse uttered between the lines and as such both against the rules and within them.
>
> (Bhabha 1984:130)

Although Bhabha is concerned with colonial contexts, the concept of mimesis is deeply applicable in the Wilkes and Liberty movement where the tensions over power-relations constitute 'that which though known must be kept concealed'. The punch bowls thus materialise the discourse of power uttered between the lines, and should it be considered as actively mediating the character of the discourse of power through pushing the boundaries of appropriate decoration. The importance of such open yet deniable statements is perhaps best argued by Hall in regard to Colonial Virginia;

> Aspirations for greater power could be dangerous if expressed merely in words… members of the Burgess who openly defied the King's representative would be sailing close to the perils of treason. But houses and gardens [or in this instance, punch bowls] provided material metaphors, rendered powerful because their meanings were clear, but deniable and were substantial in their transforming the visual landscape.
>
> (Hall 2000:85).

The idea of Wilkes and Liberty symbols as openly yet deniably subversive of elite discourses of power can be exemplified in the motif on the *grisaille* bowl in Fig.14. This bowl reproduces a popular print engraving of the eighteenth century entitled ‘The Queen's Arms, a Night's Amusement’, depicting four men around a punch bowl with one man being coerced into drinking by the other three. This image has been argued as being metaphorical of an oppressive Government regime forcing legislation on the weak and helpless, particularly in American and colonial contexts (Colonial Williamsburg 2016).

An alternative reading of the Queen’s Arms motif however may be related to the fact that drinking directly from the punch bowl was a faux pas within polite Georgian society (Harvey 2008:208). The replication of an image of a social faux pas on a bowl decorated in what is otherwise a style concordant with elite forms should be understood as subverting those elite forms. That the bowl in the motif is being drunk from under duress may further indicate that the individuals gathered around these *grisaille* Wilkes and Liberty bowls feel that that they have been forced into the position of supporting Wilkes by an overbearing Government infringing on their liberties. Both interpretations, of course, ultimately situate the motif as articulatory of subversive sentiments on the part of the bowl’s commissioners and users.

***Fig. 14** Chinese Porcelain Grisaille Punch bowl depicting "The Queens Arms, a Night's Amusement" – On the other side is the portrait of Wilkes after Hogarth (BM:1988,042.1.1) (Bowl 30 Appendix A) [412mm rim Ø]*

The juxtaposition of Wilkes and Liberty with Governmental oppression was one of the greatest appeals of the Wilkes and Liberty movement to the ‘middling sort’ and Wilkes’ position on leading electoral reform in the interest of fairer franchise amongst the electorate is a prime example of this appeal. Wilkes’ position on electoral reform is well exemplified in his

introduction of a bill for such to the House of Commons on the 21st March 1776 arguing that 'We ought always to remember this important truth, acknowledged by every free state, that all government is instituted for the food of the mass of people to be governed; that they are the original fountain of power.' (Cash 2006:349).

3.4.3 Subaltern Punch Consumption

The discussion of punch bowls thus far has mostly pertained to their open uses how they materialised their makers, owner's and users' identities. As most of the surviving bowls were most likely owned and used by an affluent middling sort, they should be considered as articulating the identities of this class. With regards to the traditionally un-enfranchised members of society, the potential meanings of bowls are more ambiguous.

An account from Ongar in Essex is one of only a handful of accounts of a Wilkite demonstration which mentions punch consumption and is reproduced in full as follows:

> At the release of Mr. Wilkes from his confinement. In the morning guns were fired off and the bells set a-ringing; about noon an effigy of the noble patriot was carried through the town in a triumphal car, drawn by six bay horses, ornamented with blue ribbons, and attended by many hundreds of people. In the car, by his side, was seated Britannia, holding in her hand a large blue flag with the following words in letters of gold. JOHN WILKES, Esq, No 45, DEFENDER OF OUR RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES, and FOE to TYRANNY and OPPRESSION. The procession was closed with a band of music, provided by the gentlemen of the town. In the afternoon an effigy of Lord Bute was stuck up on a high pole in the middle of the town. Under him was placed 45 faggots, and at night he was burnt to ashes, amidst the acclamations of the populace. There were but two houses in the town that were not illuminated; **45 bowls of punch were given to the populace; the gentlemen met at each other's houses** : fire-works were played off, and the evening concluded with the greatest demonstrations of joy – So sensible are they of the obligations they are under to the Preserver of their Freedom and Liberty.
>
> (*Middlesex Journal*, 8th May, 1770 p.1 emphasis my own)

The 45 bowls mentioned in this account were unlikely to have been made of porcelain, or to have been richly decorated with Wilkite imagery, but they were still considered as materialisations of the Wilkes and Liberty movement. Their purpose was to enable 'the populace' to materially participate in an act of support for the movement, drinking from a bowl

dedicated to celebrating the cause. As Bourque argues, Wilkite material culture had a strong participatory aspect, actively enabling individuals from a variety of social strata to engage with the movement through consumption (Bourque 2013).

In this Ongar example, the context in which an object was employed helped to create a meaning for that object, intelligible only to those familiar with the nature of the context. Thus, a punch bowl, even if undecorated, may take on a role as an articulation of Wilkite sentiment if it is used in a context which encodes that meaning. At the same time however, objects can be used to help codify the meanings of a context or interaction (See for example Mather 2016:148–9) and it is in this function that the **overtly** decorated punch bowls of the Wilkes and Liberty movement were most likely employed; codifying engagements and events as being in some way celebratory of the politics of John Wilkes. The smaller, internally decorated punch bowls , were unlikely to have codified social interactions in the same way as their larger counterparts since their discrete, internal focus kept their meanings intimate to an immediate user (see above 3.3.1). It is therefore arguably the smaller, internally decorated bowls that might most convincingly be considered as materialising a public statement drawn from a hidden transcript of protest against domination. Where textual sources reveal that the populace was engaging in the Wilkes and Liberty movement in large numbers (such as in the Ongar account above, or indeed in the various agitations which took place in Newcastle-upon-Tyne), these small individual bowls remind us that the movement was not just about crowd dynamics and popular fervour.

The specific messages articulated through the designs and motifs on the small, internally decorated punch bowls may therefore reveal private and personal hidden transcripts articulating dissent and protest against a specific discourse. For example; a particular delftware punch bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A c.49/1939 – Fig.7) bears the internal decoration of a bust of Wilkes with the slogan ‘Honest Britons Demand Wilkes’ Seate [sic.]’ – this message is a guarded attack on the character of Parliament as being dishonest for denying Wilkes his legitimately won seat. The double-edge of the slogan is that the person drinking from the bowl is intimated to be more honest than Parliament and feels that ‘Honest Britons’’ demands were not being heard by their elected representatives. As this message is focused internally and privately it was unlikely to have been intended as an overt articulation of grievance and rather as a materialisation of individual dissent. The slogan however is carefully crafted to be ambiguous and deniable in its meaning, avoiding any explicitly libellous, seditious or treasonous words which might be used as legal evidence; an important consideration for subalterns wishing to articulate dissent (Scott 1990:152).

The cautious ambiguity of the messages adorning the delft bowls is further apparent in a bowl which reads 'Wilkes and Liberty, No Bu**' in a scroll surrounding a bust of Wilkes. Although the last word is clearly intended to be read 'Bute', alluding to the much maligned Prime Minister 'the Earl of Bute', the choice of the decorator to asterisk the last two letters of the name show their awareness of avoiding being caught on a charge of libel. The asterisks further allow the reader of the bowl to fill in the blanks with whichever appropriate letters they see fit[5]. There thus again existed an essential deniability as to the meanings of the slogans and the intentions of the drinker, owner and maker.

Whilst the 'Honest Britons' and 'No Bu**' bowls are particularly forthright examples of dissenting statements, other decorative motifs and slogans written inside the delft bowls are significantly more ambiguous. By far the most common slogan is simply 'Wilkes and Liberty', the ambiguity of which allows a great range of interpretations as to what it was intended to mean. This may therefore represent a 'weapon of the weak' concealing a particular meaning behind a general ambiguous slogan with the intended meaning of the bowl only being apparent in the context of its use thus protecting the subaltern user from repercussions. Without being able to resituate the bowls in their contexts of use the specific meanings of many of the smaller, internally decorated Wilkes and Liberty bowls will remain impenetrable though as this section has demonstrated they must always be considered as articulating a specific message.

3.5 Between Delft and Porcelain - The Jennings Bowl

The themes explored above can be well exemplified in one particular punch bowl– the Jennings bowl.

The Jennings bowl (Fig.15 HD 57.109) is a delftware punchbowl made and dated in 1770 to celebrate the wedding of George Jennings[6] and Sarah Wilcock[7] of Newsells Park in Hertfordshire. The bowl was made in Bristol and is attributed to John Bowen, a highly regarded delft painter of that city (HD 57.109 – Collections Catalogue Entry). Such a tightly attributable provenance to delft is extremely rare and is a testament to the quality and recognizability of Bowen's work. The bowl holds approximately 1.1 gallons (4.97 litres) and is decorated with

[5] Some possible alternatives to 'Bute' taken from Francis Grose's 1785 'Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue' include: Butt, a dependent or poor relation; Burr, an unwanted hanger on; Bull, a blunder; Bube, a venereal disease. (Grose 1785)

[6]George Jennings (b.1721-d.1790) was an ambitious politician and eldest son of Admiral Sir John Jennings. By the time of his marriage to Sarah Wilcock he was MP for St. Germans in Cornwall and Comptroller General of the Army. Jennings' marriage to Sarah Wilcock was his second marriage, his first wife having died in 1760. Jennings was a vocal political ally of Wilkes in 1764 and was included in a list of Gentlemen whose healths were drunk as 'Friends to Liberty' (*Public Advertiser* March 6th 1764 p.4).

[7] Almost nothing is known about Sarah Wilcock and only this punch bowlattests her marriage to George Jennings.

familial arms of the Jennings and Wilcock families, twin busts of Wilkes and an assortment of typical floral and chinoiserie motifs. This bowl thus combined the bespoke familial arms of the Wilcocks family and twin busts of Wilkes with very typical floral decoration.

***Fig. 15** Delftware Punch bowl relating to George and Sarah Jennings (HD:57.109)(Bowl 6 Appendix A) [266.7mm rim Ø]*

The Jennings bowl may therefore be considered as both materialising the sympathies of those who commissioned it for the Wilkes and Liberty movement whilst simultaneously articulating their social standing as consumers of fashionable contemporary design. The juxtaposition between the bust of Wilkes as a notorious rogue and libertine and the floral decoration on the bowl is striking here and is explored in detail earlier in this chapter (3.4.2).

As a bowl commissioned from one of Bristol's most renowned delft painters, even though Jennings lived in Hertfordshire, this bowl must be considered as a prestigious and elite item. The choice of delft for the Jennings bowl was however most likely due to the flexibility in its production and the closer control that could be exercised over the design. The time gap between engagement and marriage in the eighteenth century rarely lasted over a year and therefore would not have allowed sufficient time for a customised Chinese porcelain bowl to be ordered, made and delivered (Maurer 1997; Godden 1998:60). In this instance then, delft provided an adequate material form for a high status, prestigious occasion.

That this is an elite object puts it at odds with other delft Wilkes and Liberty bowls which were significantly rougher and coarser in manufacture and decoration . The Jennings bowl must thus be considered as a hybrid form. blending the decorative styles of prestigious porcelain bowls with the use of cheaper delft.

It is essential here to explore the tensions which existed between delft and porcelain bowls, both of which were ultimately intended to do the same basic job of holding liquor to facilitate and articulate support for Wilkes and Liberty. This tension is most palpable in the very materiality of the bowls and the choices of elite consumers to purchase expensive porcelain bowls despite earthenware delft being able to do an equally good job. It is important to acknowledge the importance of economic factors on influencing consumer choice; that is to say that the rich could afford to buy porcelain whilst the poor could not and therefore the wealthy owned nicer wares. Such an economic explanation however flattens out the social complexities of the Wilkes and Liberty movement and obscures tensions around social status and power between more dominant and affluent activists and their poorer subaltern counterparts.

If it is understood here that porcelain bowls were more prestigious and elite items than delft bowls then the difference between delft and porcelain bowls can be understood as a statement asserting difference in status between dominant and subaltern through material culture (Hall 2000:19). As Hall argues (albeit with regards to house facades) 'The substantial investment of effort and money that went into the construction of patriarchal facades… was motivated, in part by the needs of powerful men to assert, reassert, and assert again their position in society because they felt it to be threatened.' (*ibid*) The determination to assert difference in the punch bowls is thus the perfect manifestation of Homi Bhabha's argument that repetitive assertion is a marker of anxiety amongst the powerholders (Hall 2000:22). Thus as Stallybrass and White argue 'A recurrent pattern emerges: the 'top' attempts to reject and eliminate the 'bottom' for reasons of prestige and status only to discover… that it is in some way frequently dependent upon that low-other' (Stallybrass & White 1986:5). Such attempts to mask the low-other, to eliminate its presence with the aim of asserting and reinforcing social status is a consistent theme throughout this chapter and thesis.

I would argue that the same process is evident in the investment of time and money in acquiring porcelain Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls or in this instance in lavishly decorating a delftware bowl. The porcelain bowls can thus be considered as a dominant (though still likely middling sort) statement responding to subaltern encroachments on power and social status within the Wilkes and Liberty movement. As Hall argues;

> In the face of everyday acts of opposition or in anticipation of resistance, the behaviour of those in power is affected, as a consequence, the impression that the hidden transcript makes on the public manifestation of power can be read as an indication of the form of these voices in the past.
>
> (Hall 2000:97)

This same insistence on asserting difference is clear in the Jennings bowl which was decorated with particularly lavish floral designs by a highly renowned painter, differentiating it from cheaper delftware bowls such as the Lambeth examples (Fig 2.). The rich bespoke decoration of the bowl may therefore be understood as materialising Jennings' anxieties around his social status in the face of the subaltern Wilkes and Liberty movement with its ambitions to reposition the relationship of power between politicians and the 'common man' (Rudé 1967) As an object intended for display amongst a group of peers, the bowl articulates a further anxiety that the Jennings' social status was dependent on how their peers perceived their material culture; whether it was suitably concordant with the elite discourses of taste and style to warrant their holding of status.

As Ioanna Baird argues with regards to eighteenth-century consumerism, objects are all loaded with moral, political or religious meanings that underscore larger cultural changes (2013:29) and this is eminently true of the Jennings Bowl. It was an object which was meant to be read and understood by other wedding guests, not just as articulating support for Wilkes but as materialising the Jennings' social status and power.

When considered in combination with accounts of delftwares present in less prestigious contexts such as pauper inventories and Old Bailey records (see for example OBP 1774; Harvey 2012:174-175) the flexibility of delftware, becomes apparent, as a material to permeate diverse social strata. Delftware was thus a material which transcended traditional Georgian social boundaries, being available and appropriate for use in a variety of scenarios and by a range of people of different social class. Tin-glaze earthenware was ubiquitous in the eighteenth-century with many of the most elite and some of the poorest and most subaltern persons using it regularly (Tyler et al. 2008).

Although the Jennings bowl was almost certainly bespoke in its design, with its decoration and size mandated by the wedding party, it is also of course the work of the painter John Bowen and the potter who produced it. Through their wares, these artisans occupied a central position in the articulation and dissemination of social, political and cultural statements. The exact

formulation of the decoration is a product of John Bowen's personal repertoire of typical delftware patterns and designs which he replicated on a range of vessels and objects (Pountney 1920:149). The potters and painters, who themselves can be considered as subalterns to dominant consumers, were thus capable of influencing the character of elite public transcripts and thus mediating discourses of taste, power and consumption through the distribution of their wares. This power is perhaps best exemplified in the banding together of the Southwark and Lambeth pot houses to influence the delftware market (Tyler et al. 2008:112). The role of the delftware potters and painters in mediating the character of the discourses over political engagement and representation at the heart of the Wilkes and Liberty movement is further visible through the motifs which they produced on less obviously bespoke pieces, as explored above (3.3.2).

A parallel to the Jennings bowl as a bespoke delft bowl bearing both typical and a-typical decoration and painted by a specifically chosen painter can be found in Jane Webster's article on punch bowls depicting slave ships (Webster 2015). In this article Webster argues that all the bowls depicting slave ships were hand-painted and that 'moreover, the customers who commissioned them were not content to settle for stock or generic images.' (*ibid*.82). Webster furthermore argues that the bowls were intended for use in socially discrete contexts, much like the context in which the Jennings bowl would have been used. Webster argues that 'the commissioning in the 1780s of a punch bowl depicting a slave ship might be interpreted as a strategic act, one embedding a slaver in a longer, deeper visual celebration of maritime values and thereby defying the new critical environment in which the slave trade now found itself'. Something similar might be argued for the Jennings Wilkes and Liberty bowl. The commissioners of the Jennings bowl were politically active supporters of Wilkes, defying traditional politics and expressing profound support for a new and radical political system from which Jennings (as an already established politician and vocal ally of Wilkes) was hoping to benefit.

The Jennings' punchbowl may therefore be understood as metaphoric of the broader Wilkes and Liberty movement, articulating the tense relationship between the middling sorts in the movement and the subaltern 'grassroots' activists. In this metaphor the subalterns are the earthenware fabric of the bowl giving it structure and substance whilst the dominant middling sort are the glaze and decoration, trying to mask and eliminate the poorer low-other. The Jennings as leading Wilkites and as politically and socially ambitious people likely harboured these same anxieties, that they were leading figures in a reformist movement increasingly characterised by disorderly and violent subaltern agitations. The Jennings' wedding punchbowl

thus materialised the veneer of personal respectability which they (like other affluent and ambitious Wilkites) struggled to maintain by asserting a distinction between themselves and their subaltern co-Wilkites – in this instance asserting it through material culture.

3.5.1 Elite and Subaltern Gatherings – Newcastle and Gateshead 18th April, 1770

Having considered how objects, people and places all contributed to the establishment of a hidden transcript of protest, it is also important to consider additional venues. In particular it is important here to discuss the Wilkes and Liberty dinners and entertainments which were hosted throughout Britain between the mid-1760s and 1770s (Brewer 1983:353). These gatherings, dinners and entertainments were commonly held in public and were often socially circumscribed in terms of their guest lists (*ibid.*). However there existed two broad strands of these public entertainments: those which were 'elite' and attended by more powerful and affluent 'middling sort' activists and those which were more subaltern in social composition attended by the likes of chimney sweeps and journeymen. As Tim Harris argues, 'while merchants, tradesmen, shopkeepers, and even lesser folks participated in Wilkite dinners, they did so within their own social sphere' (Harris 2001:248).

This social differentiation is particularly apparent in contrasting two events which took place in North-East England on the 18th April, 1770, the day of Wilkes release from gaol:

> The friends to liberty in Newcastle, assembled at various inns and public houses to celebrate Mr. Wilkes' enlargement, where very elegant entertainments were provided and many loyal and constitutional toasts were drunk, all which were conducted with the greatest, order, decency and decorum… In the evening, the tragedy of Cato was performed by desire, when a great number of Mr. Wilkes' friends attended.
>
> (Sykes 1833:271)

> The journeymen of Mr. Taylor Ansell, tobacco-pipe maker in Gateshead… had a sheep, 45lbs. weight, roasted whole at the workshop there, which was laid down at 45 minutes past six o'clock in the morning, when two sat down and turned it 45 minutes, and then were relieved by other two, who did the same &c. till 45 minutes past eleven, when it was taken from the fire, and cut up by Mr. Ansell (who assisted all the time) and eaten on the shop bench, every man having brought his knife, fork and trencher, with 45 large potatoes, 45 biscuits, and 45 quarts of ale, with great

> mirth and decorum. Many loyal healths were drunk. **Some hundreds of people were spectators of the preparations and feasts.**
>
> (Sykes 1833:272 emphasis my own)

These two events, separated only by the river Tyne, offer a fascinating comparative pairing of Wilkes and Liberty events. Both were highly orchestrated to include complex Wilkite symbolism and both employed a wealth of objects to codify the event as Wilkite and to promote engagement with the movement. Unfortunately, neither of these events specifically record the use of punch but given that 'many loyal and constitutional toasts' were drunk as part of the Newcastle entertainments it is highly plausible that punch was consumed.

It is immediately apparent that these events share many features: toasting, dining, both taking place in public and both conducted 'in the greatest order, decency and decorum'. But the differences and dissonances reveal the underlying tensions and therein a hidden transcript. The difference in place is perhaps the most striking; one in the taverns and inns of Newcastle and the other 'eaten on the shop bench'. There is a clear dissonance here between the normal uses of these venues as whilst it may be expected for taverns and inns to be used as places of gathering for celebration and entertainment, a workshop is not normally a place associated with this usage.

The events also engaged individuals of different class; one the 'journey-men' (skilled craftsmen who had completed an apprenticeship) and the other 'Friends of Liberty', members of the four Wilkite clubs in Newcastle. Although the account of the Newcastle entertainments provides little detail concerning social composition, the fact that the 'Friends of Liberty' requested a performance of Addison's *Tragedy of Cato* suggests them to be of a middling sort (Wilson 1998:219). That the attendees were also members of clubs further suggests an affluence and connectedness as members of a middling sort (Clark 2000:470).

It is also apparent that the two events differed in their material culture, with the Newcastle gatherings likely using inn-provided ceramic dinnerware, cutlery, and glasses whilst the journeymen pipe-makers were using trenchers and their own personal cutlery. That there was '45 quarts of ale' at the Pipe-makers dinner suggest also that there would have been beer mugs to drink from.

When considered alongside other Wilkes and Liberty celebrations such as one at Ongar in Essex in which the gentlemen diners, after a lavish meal, retired to private residences to continue their revelries and one at Brentford where 45 chimney sweeps consumed a dinner upon a stage in the

centre of the town (Rogers 2001:249), dissonances and tensions begin to appear. It becomes apparent that the elite public dinners, which conformed to a long tradition of celebrating national holidays, victories and saints days (Wilson 1998; Rogers 2001), were becoming the object of subaltern mimicry and parody. The repetition and reassertions of social difference and hierarchy which elite dinners were intended to articulate through their socially circumscribed guest-lists, their use of highly specialized material culture and their occupation of public places (Rogers 2001:248) were being mimicked by subaltern actors. Through organizing their own entertainments, subalterns were exploiting ambiguities in the elite's desire for them to engage in decorous political celebration, constructing a veiled and ambiguous counter transcript of dissent behind a public transcript of meek compliance with the discourse of power.

The elite desire to control the form of the public transcript is palpable in the Newcastle celebrations where 'The magistrates, being apprehensive that some outrages would be committed in the town that night, gave strict orders to the constables to be diligent in their respective wards, in order to quash any tumults and apprehend the offenders, and by orders from the same quarter, pad-locks were placed upon the bell lofts of several churches to prevent the bells being rung.' (Sykes 1833:271). This act by the Magistracy of Newcastle articulates a clear underlying anxiety as to the riotous subaltern foundations of the Wilkes and Liberty movement; that if a public transcript of elite power was to be stated through a city-wide celebration and entertainment, the elite magistracy needed to control the typical avenues of subaltern expression, coercively if necessary, to prevent a subaltern counter-transcript being articulated. As Stallybrass and White (1986:201) argue, it is essential to control the sites of discourse in order to preserve power. Through their strict orders, the Magistracy of Newcastle were othering subalterns and, to paraphrase the terminology of Hall, were attempting to assert the dominant order through mapping the dominant transcript against the subaltern other. (2000:120). The subaltern crowd is represented by the magistracy as a low-other through the differentiation and social exclusion of which, the social elites consolidated their positions (Stallybrass & White 1986:193).

The mimicry by the pipe-makers thus offered them a secure avenue of expression on a day when the typical avenues of subaltern expression were repressed. It could therefore be argued that the subaltern pipe-makers of Gateshead were articulating a disaffection with social stratification by subverting the differentiation asserted by the traditional elite celebratory dinners and entertainments. Despite being socially circumscribed in their composition, both of the above events were held in public, with the Gateshead pipe-makers' dinner having 'hundreds

of spectators', contributing to the character of these events as demonstrations of power, maximizing their visibility and impact.

It is significant to note here that the tensions in the construction of power which emerge from contrasting the above entertainments are the same as the tensions articulated in the differences between the delft and the porcelain punch bowls (see 3.4). Tensions in the Wilkes and Liberty movement thus existed at a range of scales which can be mapped from the macro-scale to the micro.

3.6 Consumption in Context

This section more closely explores the relationship between consumption (particularly of alcohol) and the Wilkes and Liberty movement. It focuses particularly on consumption in non-domestic and public contexts, domestic contexts having already been explored above. Whilst many of the punch bowls discussed above, and particularly the porcelain bowls, were likely intended for use in domestic contexts there is a strong possibility that some of the delft punch bowls were used in tavern contexts. Unfortunately, however it is impossible based on available sources to assert definite presences of Wilkite punch bowls in either tavern or domestic contexts and it is essential to consider that, particularly delftware bowls, may have been used in both.

Taverns did however possess and display other Wilkite material culture (see for example the 45 branched candle, exhibited at the Sun Inn in Newcastle in 1770 (Sykes 1833) and it seems highly likely that some also had Wilkite themed vessels for drinking alcohol – which is, after all, one of the principle functions of tavern spaces.

3.6.1 Taverns, Inns, Ale and Coffee-houses

The meanings of punch bowls 'for the eighteenth-century individuals who commissioned and used them can only fully be understood when these ceramics are contextualized…' (Webster 2015:94). Understanding the contexts in which the Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls were likely to have been used is thus essential if this chapter is to understand their meaning. This analysis begins by considering taverns, inns and ale-houses as well recognized arenas of subversive discourse and protest in the past (Scott 1990:121). As Thompson (1963:51-52) argued, the countryside was owned by the gentry and the towns by corrupt corporations, the chapel, tavern and home became the only spaces which the 'working class' could call its own. It was therefore in these places that dissent, and subversive protest was fomented.

Stephanie Duensing's thesis further adds texture to understanding the contexts in which alcohol, and particularly punch, was consumed, examining the archaeological signatures of a selection

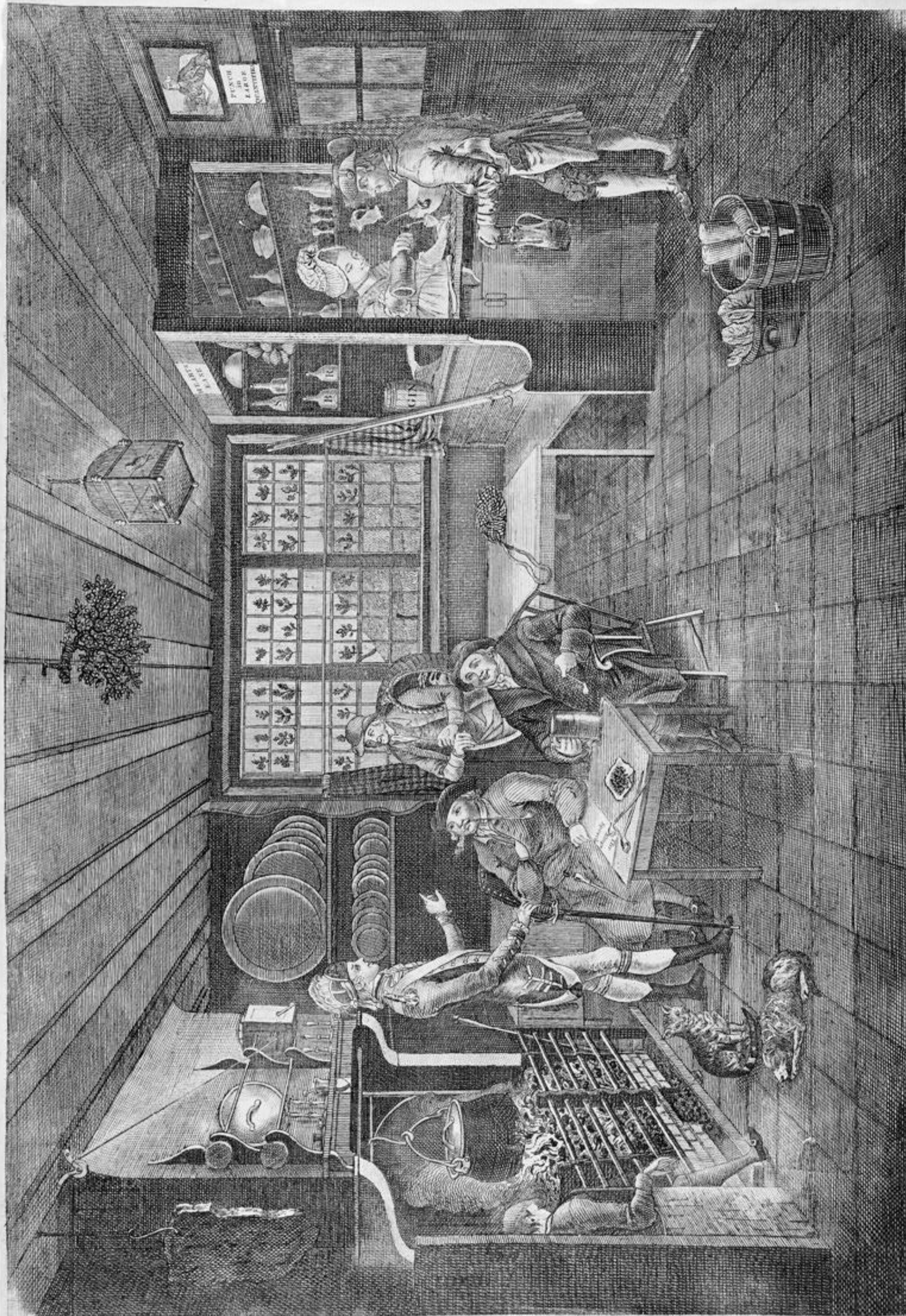


***Fig. 16** 'Settling the Affairs of the Nation', Showing the interior of a tavern or inn c.1770 Winterthur1973.0561*

of taverns, inns and alehouses in eighteenth-century London (Duensing 2014). Duensing argues that the material culture present within a tavern's archaeological record can indicate the clientele for which it catered, with different taverns catering for poorer or wealthier persons respectively (*ibid.* 229). Duensing argues that by the eighteenth century, the tavern was a communal space with a long tradition of facilitating political and social discourse, accessible to individuals and groups from all strata of society (2014:16). In this instance then, taverns, inns and alehouses provided arenas for political protest and subversive discourse where the transcripts of domination and resistance hidden in open interactions were allowed and indeed encouraged to surface and be spoken and articulated. This is further argued by Christina Parolin (2010:281) who, in exploring the relationship between the Crown and Anchor tavern in London and the Radical movement of the 1790s argues that the site was perceived by all as a site of legitimate opposition to the Government.
Eighteenth-century prints of taverns and inns are additionally helpful in facilitating understandings of how protest and subversive actions could be carried out through consumption practices in these spaces. Fig.16 is an excellent example of this, depicting the interior of a tavern/inn/ale-house c.1770. Above the door on the right is a print portrait of Wilkes after the Robert Edge Pine portrait with a sign below reading 'Punch in Large Quantities' making a clear association between punch drinking and the Wilkes and Liberty movement. Hanging from the ceiling is a caged bird, a common symbol of the Wilkes and Liberty movement, representing the denial of liberty (Belden 1967; Tague 2010:112; See also Tague 2015 for exploration of the parallels drawn in eighteenth-century Britain between captivity in animals and humans). The same bird cage motif, but with the bird taking flight (suggesting a restoration of Liberty) is well exemplified on a Wilkes and Liberty ale flute (Fig.17) further suggesting the connection between the movement, symbolism and alcohol consumption. As a print, Fig.16 was drawn to show a wealth of Wilkite symbolism so it is important not to read it at face value as representative of an average eighteenth-century English tavern or alehouse but as a stylization designed to show how such seemingly ubiquitous spaces could articulate powerful statements of radicalism.

The two men sitting at the table and the soldier are supposedly engaged 'settling the affairs of the nation' over a mug of what is probably ale and a few pipes of tobacco in front of a roaring fire; the perfect image of eighteenth-century sociability and conviviality (Brewer 1997:34). Behind the bar, the landlady is pouring a small glass of alcohol for a doctor (indicated by his carrying a bleeding bowl) as she stands beside a large bowl of punch with a ladle visible just above the rim. This print suggests that the tavern was a site where (mostly) men gathered to

settle the affairs of the nation, engaging in convivial drinking to discuss the news, weather, business, politics or any matter which may take their interest, (Brewer 1997:34; Clark 1983). As Karen Harvey argues 'In eighteenth-century Britain, excessive drinking was regarded by many as 'manly and convivial, an aid to wit, good humour and fellowship' (2012:184). Given the foregrounding of the material technologies of sociable consumption in Fig.16 it is apparent that drinking and smoking paraphernalia were integral objects in the mediation of political dialogue and engagement. The presence of at least three punch bowls in the print, furthermore, suggests that these vessels were deeply entangled in similar sociable consumption. As Hall argues, social encounters were mediated through material culture (2000:82-3), and through their wine glasses (e.g. Fig.17), beer mugs and clay pipes the men in Fig.16 were positioning themselves in the world, articulating their identities through a web of material and spatial practices. Their consumption in a tavern which has Wilkite overtones may then further insinuate into their identities a support for Wilkes and Liberty and a disaffection with the prevalent discourse of power.

Of particular note in this print are the three punch bowls stored upside down behind the bar which, although there is no way of proving them to be Wilkes and Liberty bowls, well illustrates the presence of such wares in Tavern contexts, particular in combination with the sign reading 'Punch in Large Quantities'. That punch bowls were present and accessible in public places such as taverns enabled the bowls to interact with a far broader audience than if they were owned and kept privately. As John Brewer argues; taverns catered to customers from all walks of life (1997:34) thus any individual who entered a tavern which owned a Wilkes and Liberty punch bowl could materially engage with the movement.

The concept of encoding places as Wilkite is explored by Brewer (1983:367), who argues that the marking of individuals, objects, places or structures with the symbolic number '45' brought them within the Wilkite realm, marking them out as materialisations of radical politics. If this was true for a number it was certainly also true for a reproduced image of Wilkes, a Wilkite slogan, or other Wilkite symbols such as the caged bird. Even having the print portrait above the door as is seen in Fig.16 would have contributed to encode the space as being Wilkite, transforming the doorway into a threshold to a Wilkite place.

An important aspect of the symbology of dissent and radicalism (as noted at 3.5.2) is the role of polysemy and ambiguity in creating an avenue for the public expression of a hidden transcript. In Fig.16 all of the symbolism and imagery is deniable as to its meaning and intention. It is also noticeable that the punch bowls on the shelves behind the bar are stored

inverted, partly to keep dust from settling in them, but also hiding their interior decorations, slogans and mottoes. This deniability and ambiguity of meaning is an important weapon of the weak as Scott argues; 'what permits subordinate groups to undercut the authorized cultural norms is the fact that cultural expression by virtue of its polyvalent symbolism and metaphor lends itself to disguise. By the subtle use of codes one can insinuate into a ritual, a pattern of dress, a song, a story, meanings that are accessible to one intended audience and opaque to another audience the actors wish to exclude .' (1990:158). Thus whilst there may be a collection of imagery in Fig.16 all of which *may* have radical, subversive or dangerous meaning if understood and interpreted in a certain way, none of it directly or openly articulated seditious, treasonous or libelous sentiments.

Fig. 17 *Wilkes and Liberty Engraved Ale Flute – Laurie Leigh Antiques W1382 [205mm height]*

In the instances of taverns, inns and ale-houses then, spaces for protest and subversion (in these instances Wilkite) were created through the structured use of iconography, symbology and objects which together contributed to codifying a space, shaping its meaning as an arena where individuals could congregate and engage in subversive protest and dissent. This use of ambiguous and polysemous iconography and symbology in the codification of taverns fits with Scott's argument that inns and taverns in eighteenth-century Britain represent spaces where the hidden transcript was least inhibited by control, surveillance and domination by an elite (1990:120). In these spaces, Scott argues subaltern individuals could congregate to talk freely

and to express themselves in ways which were otherwise impossible in society (*ibid.*). The material culture of the Wilkes and Liberty movement thus combined with the nature of the tavern as a site of subversive protest to mutually reinforce each other, with Wilkite objects helping to codify the tavern as a haven for subversive politics and the nature of the tavern as a traditional arena of liberty and license (Johnson 1996:186). That taverns, inns and alehouses were perceived of and used as arenas for political discourse and subversion is exemplified further in several cases for sedition made by the Treasury Solicitor's office and in Old Bailey Proceedings during the mid-late eighteenth century. Between c.1740 and c.1790 a significant number of the cases marked for sedition (particularly 'seditious words') are reported as taking place in public drinking establishments (TNA: TS 11/179/786; TS 11/424/1288; TS 11/803/2624; TS 11/506/1662; TS 11/944/3433). All relate either to acts of Jacobitism or actions directly wishing harm upon the King or Queen. This focus is to be expected given that the law was only interested in individuals who were undertaking actions directly related to the monarchy. Subversive political discourse was not, in other contexts, illegal.

All of these cases refer to seditious words uttered in tavern settings, indicating that subversive, and occasionally seditious, discourse from the lower-classes was taking place in such places. An example of such a case is that against John Nuttall of Lancaster in 1793 (TS 11/506/1662) who did, on oath of a witness, 'Fill a glass of beer and drank it off at the same time giving and expressing the following words "*Here's damnation to the King and Constitution*"'. (emphasis sic.)

The taverns, alehouses and inns of eighteenth-century England held a central role as spaces where hidden transcripts could be unveiled and made manifest. Through the carefully designed and orchestrated connections of people, objects, spaces and actions; places in which hidden transcripts of protest were created, facilitating and encouraging the assembly of individuals with shared values. As Scott argues:

> The importance of the tavern or its equivalent as a site of antihegemonic discourse lay less in the drinking it fostered or in its relative insulation from surveillance than in the fact that it was the main point of unauthorised assembly for lower-class neighbours and workers.
>
> (Scott 1990:122)

Scott's (*ibid*.) argument that the importance of the tavern was as a meeting place appears overly simplistic when applied to eighteenth-century examples. Taverns were by no means purely

subaltern or lower-class venues and drew a much broader clientele, not all of whom shared the same views (Brewer 1997:34). This is well exemplified in the above trials for sedition which reveal that not all taverns shared in an 'lower-class' fraternal identity of protest and that expressing the wrong sentiment in front of the wrong people was liable to secure their disapproval. In this way, the material culture of a site was essential in signalling to an individual whether it was a safe space for voicing dissent and protest.

Hall (Hall 2009:11) makes an interesting parallel observation in considering markets. Hall argues that 'a delimited space such as a market (allowed on specified days and in a bounded place) may in reality be within the frame of Foucault's panopticon; that the controlled opportunity for the colonial subject to let off steam and to believe that there was an opportunity for resistance was in itself part of the processes of control' (Stallybrass & White 1986). This argument is eminently applicable to taverns, inns and ale-houses which also represented free spaces for protests but were in reality delimited and controlled arenas facilitating the illusion of a free space for protest but could never be perfectly safe or sequestered from elite surveillance and were in reality increasingly saturated with Government spies and informers, as the century wore on (McCalman 1987).

It is interesting to consider that it was only when protest and dissent spilled into the streets that the Government took a stance against it and brought the force of the law and its enforcers to bear. This is apparent in the way that the material expressions of the Wilkes and Liberty movement, despite being readily present in tavern and inn settings, did not attract any legal or Governmental attention whilst street protests other than those organised by the social elites (for example the Cappadocian Entertainment in Newcastle (Sykes 1833:272) were heavily suppressed and resulted in custodial punishment (see for example the Mansion House agitation in London (OBP 1768)). The prime example of coercive Government repression is the St. George's Field 'massacre' which resulted in military intervention (Rudé 1962:51). These instances thus demonstrate that subaltern engagement was tolerated by the elite authorities provided it was within delimited circumstances and places under their control.

3.7 Public and Hidden Transcripts of Wilkes and Liberty

The Wilkes and Liberty movement was an international phenomenon embodied in myriad ways. As a macro-scale movement which brought together people from diverse social groupings under one overarching banner it was inevitably subject to internal tensions, anxieties and struggles over the discourse of power, status and hierarchy; between more dominant and powerful activists and less powerful subalterns. But *all* of the movement's supporters perceived

themselves to be subordinated, regardless to whom they were subordinated. The movement was thus engaged with two core discourses of power which this chapter has elucidated; an internal discourse within the movement, and an external discourse in a national context. This chapter has explored how both of these discourses were embodied within the Wilkes and Liberty movement, in material culture, space, place and action.

Internally, the Wilkes and Liberty movement was composed of a complex network of statements differently interwoven into antagonistic public and hidden transcripts. The public transcript was largely 'written' by a dominant middling sort and political class, although they were themselves subaltern to landed gentry and aristocracy, who controlled the typical forms and sites of discourse through carefully crafted statements of their power and position intended to be read, understood and assimilated by their subalterns. The hidden transcript of the movement was simultaneously being written by subalterns who exploited ambiguities and ill-defined statements to challenge the veracity and limits of the public transcript. Through this struggle of hidden and public transcripts the internal discourse of power in the Wilkes and Liberty movement was perpetually mediated and renegotiated, with the dominant activists fighting to both maintain their social status and power in the face of ambitious subalterns and to articulate their discontent with the discourse of power and politics at a national scale.

The competing internal hidden and public transcripts within the Wilkes and Liberty movement were materialised as tensions embodied in the various objects, places, actions and reactions which were engaged with by Wilkes and Liberty activists; tensions born out of anxieties, amongst the dominant as to their status and power. Through this chapter's examination of Wilkes and Liberty punch bowls within Hall's and Scott's analytical framework of transcripts and discourses (Hall 2000; Scott 1985; 1990), the tensions between dominant and subaltern which characterized discourse of Wilkes and Liberty have been laid bare. These bowls thus hint at the internal discourses of power and control within the Wilkes and Liberty movement – with the dominant party constantly asserting and reasserting their power over and difference from the subaltern activists in the movement.

The measures taken by the dominant parties in asserting this difference and in controlling the sites of discourse hint at their anxieties over their own positions and thus simultaneously reveal their awareness of a subaltern hidden transcript constantly subverting domination. The statements of power by dominant parties within the Wilkes and Liberty movement however are not confined to punch bowls, and as the second part of this chapter has argued were also articulated through the uses of space and place (taverns and workshops). Ambiguities within

these statements were exploited by subalterns as avenues through which they could mediate their aspirations to improve their positions through political reform. The tensions in the internal discourse of power in the Wilkes and Liberty movement were thus materialised at a range of scales from the micro examples of punch bowls and individual objects to macro city-wide celebrations and even national occasions.

Externally the Wilkes and Liberty movement was perceived as largely embodied by subaltern activism, seeking redress of the national power dynamic. The punch bowls, and particularly those of the dominant Wilkes and Liberty activists, materialise a guarded aspiration to greater power and/or social status. The fusion of Wilkes and Liberty with elite forms of material culture, and traditional forms of celebration offered the movement an avenue of expression which was both easily legible as articulating protest against traditional political power yet also deniable as to any libelous, seditious or treasonous meanings. In the face of Governmental repression, ambiguity in the meanings of a statement of protest were essential to safeguarding the messenger.

The Wilkes and Liberty movement was thus a movement deeply entangled with discourses of power at a range of scales. In all of the statements of these discourses however, and regardless of the scale of the statement, a consistent repertoire of stratagems were employed by those in dominant and subaltern positions to articulate transcripts of power and dissent. These stratagems of ambiguity, mimicry and disguise are repeatedly encountered in the following chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 4 Contesting the Town Moor

Newcastle-upon-Tyne's Town Moor has a complex history as a contested space and its present form is a palimpsest, materialising a series of struggles over power, liberty and property from the later-eighteenth century through to the modern day (See. Fig.18 for the modern boundary of the Town Moor, largely unchanged since the end of the eighteenth century).

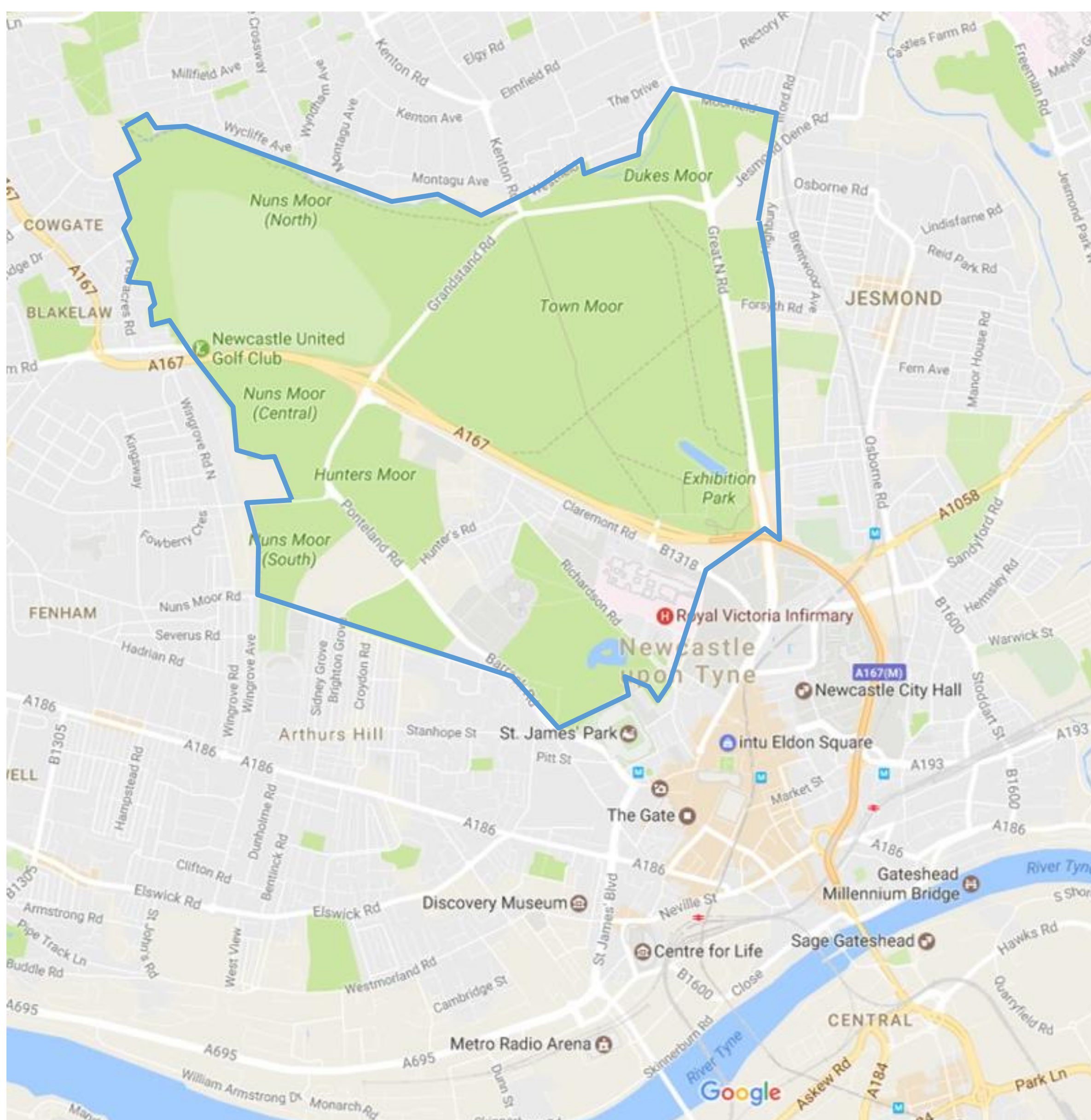


Fig. 18 Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne showing historic extent of the Town Moor outlined in blue. Green areas are still open pasture. Base map from Google (2017)

Throughout the eighteenth century, The Town Moor was characterized by its multi-faceted uses as, among other things: grazing land for the town Burgesses'[8] cattle, a race ground, a cow-fair, a military encampment and a colliery. The Town Moor was further distinguished by its complex

[8] Burgesses are interchangeably also referred to as Freemen throughout this thesis reflecting the synonymity of these terms as referenced in primary sources.

status within Newcastle's political sphere, as an appurtenance of the town, technically owned by the Burgesses but administered by the city Corporation.[9] It was within this context of multiple uses and interests that deep seated tensions between the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the city Freemen erupted during the Town Moor affair (1771-4). In this affair the Corporation leased a parcel of the Town Moor for arable farming against the wishes of the Freemen whose cattle traditionally enjoyed pasturage on the ground. Following a determined and varied campaign of resistance against the lease (see section 4.2), the lessee of the newly enclosed ground brought a lawsuit for trespass against two of the city's leading Freemen (Nathaniel Bayles and Henry Gibson). This lawsuit was settled in a landmark court case in which Serjeant John Glynn, a famed lawyer and close associate of John Wilkes (see chapter three for further discussion of Wilkes), acted as counsel for the Freemen's defence.

Focussing on the example of the Town Moor this chapter examines how the discourse of power in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was negotiated through diverse material and spatial strategies. These strategies particularly focused on mediating rights of access and ownership to/of the Town Moor which following the Corporation's autocratic enclosure presented a tangible target on which the Freemen could focus their protests. The resulting contest and political struggle within the city's body politic drew the attention of the whole anglophone world and is exemplified in a column on the Town Moor Affair and subsequent Parliamentary elections in Newcastle which was printed in the *Virginia Gazette* (September 22nd 1774, p.1). The results of this period of political turmoil in Newcastle continues to characterize the city's power structure and governance even today.

4.1 Political Place

As an example of a politically entangled place, Newcastle's Town Moor has been well drawn upon by historians; particularly by Thomas Knox (1979) who, in his study of Newcastle's eighteenth-century politics, greatly emphasised the impact of the Town Moor affair. The role of the Town Moor in the regional politics of Newcastle-upon-Tyne has further been explored by John Brewer (1976), Iain Christie (1962), Kathleen Wilson (1998) and Rachel Hammersley (2005; 2014) each placing a different emphasis on the significance of why and how the Town Moor was mobilized as a politicized space.

Brewer, Christie, Wilson and Knox each employ the Town Moor affair as a case study demonstrating the regional influence and expression of the Wilkes and Liberty movement

[9] The City Corporation was akin to the modern City Council, responsible for the day to day economic and civic administration of the city of Newcastle upon Tyne. Its roles, composition and structure is explored below in section 4.2 and section 4.3.

beyond the Metropolis although none reach any consensus on the recursive impact of this local affair on national radicalism. Knox for example argues strongly that the Town Moor only had a limited impact on voting in the 1774 elections as it was a local issue which, although linked with the wider Wilkes and Liberty Movement, constituted just one issue in an election fought on a wide frontage (Knox 1979:234). Wilson (1998) conversely and more convincingly argues that the Town Moor affair was inextricably entangled with the wider Wilkes and Liberty movement through the involvement of Wilkes' right-hand man, Serjeant John Glynn whose role in the affair will be explored in greater detail below (4.4, 4.5). What is clear from all of these studies however is that the political context of later-eighteenth-century Newcastle-upon-Tyne was heavily crosscut with themes of radicalism and traditionalism, national and local issues and furthermore existed always against the backdrop of the deeply engrained relationship between the Guilds and Corporation of the city (this relationship is explored more fully in section 4.2.1).

Importantly, Hammersley moved the debate over the Town Moor beyond a focus on regional Wilkism and instead explores its impact on other radical activists and agitators, particularly Thomas Spence and Jean-Paul Marat, both of whom were significant figures in the radical political scene of 1770s Newcastle. Hammersley's research demonstrates clearly the impact which the events surrounding the Town Moor affair had on the later political ideals and activities of Spence, and particularly his plan for the reorganisation of land-ownership according to parishes (Hammersley 2014:41). In demonstrating this influential role of the Town Moor affair, Hammersley elevates the significance of the contest itself (even without the intervention of Serjeant Glynn) beyond the small scale local significance ascribed to it by Knox, Wilson and others, into a macro-scale national and international context of radicalism and revolutionary protest over liberty, property and land-ownership.

Much of this past scholarship on the Town Moor affair has focused heavily on the extensive textual sources held within the archives of the various Guilds of Newcastle. These sources present an image of the affair as a contest fought solely through the courts and presenting a confused array of understandings of the role and meaning of the Town Moor within the political and social milieux of the City. The present study likewise relies heavily on the textual sources but uses them in a different manner, reading and comparing textual accounts and mining them for inconsistencies and disjunctions with other sources; particularly reading historic mapping as a culturally inscribed source constructed in the same ways as texts, objects and places. By considering textual, material and spatial sources as entangled in a 'web of transcripts' these

sources can be referenced both against each other as recursively forming and being formed by an over-arching discourse (Hall 2000:17).

Relying on textual sources is particularly necessary in this chapter, in part due to there being little available material culture, with the few surviving objects (such as the Town Moor rings Fig.26, and cufflinks Fig.25) being completely divorced from context and with the places of study themselves being palimpsests re-worked and heavily altered in the years since the eighteenth century. By uniting textual, material and spatial sources, this study differs from earlier scholarship on the Town Moor which solely relied on what was represented in texts to gauge popular opinions of later eighteenth-century radicalism. The material and spatial focus employed in this case study demonstrates that radical sentiment in later-eighteenth-century Newcastle was not only articulated through, acts, speech and print but was also materialised and engaged with in the quotidian places and spaces of the City itself.

This chapter further offers the first detailed study of the Town Moor affair since Reverend James Murray's 1774 account of the affair *The Contest* (Murray 1774). This chapter explores the struggles over access, ownership and rights in the Town Moor examining it as a statement of the discourses of liberty, property and improvement which was constantly being reinterpreted and renegotiated through the interplay of hidden and public transcripts. The present analysis therefore examines the Town Moor affair in comparison with other, often less high profile, protest events in which similar strategies were employed and using the material dimensions of the affair to augment our understanding of how the Town Moor functioned as a locus of protest not just for the Freemen of the Guilds but for the wider populace of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Through this approach, this study reveals a broad participation by Newcastle's population, deploying a variety of both overt and covert strategies, in the political struggles which characterised the city's political landscape of the 1770s.

4.2 The Contest – Owning and Controlling the Town Moor

In order to contextualise the 1771-1774 Town Moor affair it is essential to explore how ownership and control over the landscape was perceived by both the Freemen and Corporation of Newcastle during the later-eighteenth century.

The Town Moor affair was contested by two bodies, the plaintiff, Joshua Hopper lessee of a parcel of ground on the Town Moor, and the defendants charged with trespass, Nathaniel Bayles and Henry Gibson, who were both Burgesses and members of a committee of Freemen enquiring as to the rights by which lands of the Town Moor were leased by the Common Council. The Town Moor case was tried in front of a special jury at the Newcastle

Assizes on the 10th August, 1773 in a legal contest to decide who possessed the right to control the moor.

4.2.1 The Configuration and Hierarchy of the Corporation.

As an ancient mercantile city, Newcastle's governance was divested from the crown or lord of the manor during the middle ages and was bestowed upon the guilds of the city who were later incorporated into the City Corporation (Brand 1789). As governing bodies, the Guilds and the Corporation were thus closely interwoven (see Fig.19), with the Common Council (the Corporation's steering body) and the Aldermen (elected from the Common Council to meet twice yearly at the behest of the Mayor to regulate the by-laws of the city), both being elected from the Freemen. The elections for Common Council and Aldermen were undertaken by a body of twelve permanent Electors who had the franchise to elect their own members from Common Councilmen and also to elect the Mayor, Chamberlain, Serjeant at Mace and Sheriff. (TWA - MD.NC/D/2/5 electoral rolls for the Common Council and Aldermen demonstrate this electoral system). This entanglement of Guild and Corporation established a theoretically accountable system of governance within the City with the Corporations steering body, the Common Council, composed from the Freemen; thus, theoretically ensuring that the Freemen's wishes were at the heart of the Common Council's actions.

As the Town Moor affair underlined however, this structure of the Corporation presented an outdated system of governance vulnerable to exploitation and corruption through nepotism and patronage. For example, when the Town Moor affair first erupted in 1771, the Mayor was Sir Walter Blackett, both a Magistrate (as part of the office Mayor) and MP for Newcastle, who forcefully backed the cause of the Corporation and Magistracy in their assumed right to enclose the Town Moor without the consent of the Burgesses. The vulnerability of the Corporation to corruption and exploitation is further indicated by Mackenzie who describes the mayoral election process in 1827:

> Each of the twelve mysteries [Guilds] of the town name and present two men. These 24 delegates, called former electors, elect the old mayor and three aldermen. The four thus elected then elect and add to their own body seven aldermen, and one person, who either is or has been a sheriff of the town; or, if they cannot find seven aldermen, they have to elect eight persons who have been sheriffs; or, if they cannot find these, they have to elect eight Burgesses. The old mayor and three

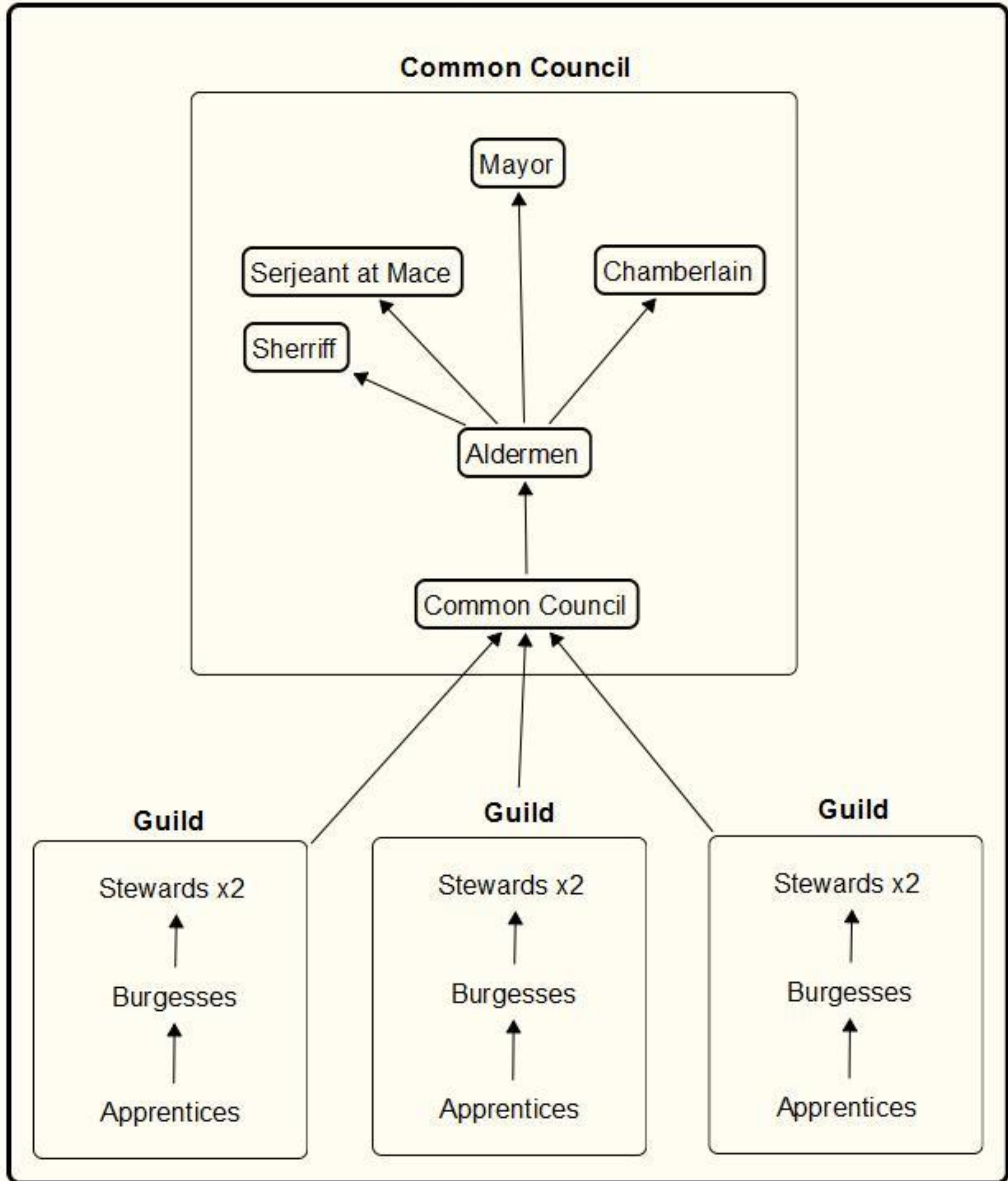


Fig. 19 *Diagram demonstrating the organisation and composition of Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Corporation. Arrows indicate progression in office. (Data from Mackenzie 1827)*

> aldermen, when joined to these eight, are called the twelve first electors. Each of the twelve mysteries next send one of their body, out of which the first electors choose six, who, joined to themselves, make eighteen electors. Each of the fifteen by-trades also choose one of their body, who again choose twelve Freemen, out of which the eighteen electors before mentioned choose six, making in all the number of twenty-four electors; which twenty-four, or the greater part of them, elect the mayor, recorder, and other officers. There are, according to this plan, seven elections before the actual election! But all the puzzling intricacy which it exhibits will be found, on examination, a despicable mockery of independence.
>
> (Mackenzie 1827:611)

This remarkably convoluted system of election meant that much of the power rested with those who already had power, excellent for the stability of the governing body but dangerous and damaging to any notion of accountability. Thus, the Freemen of Newcastle, through this electoral system were gradually alienated from the upper echelons of the Corporation.

4.2.2 Origins of the 1771-4 Affair

The origins of the contest over the Town Moor, as perceived by supporters of the Burgesses, are most clearly related by the Revd. James Murray, a Scottish Presbyterian dissenting radical whose ministry was based in High Bridge, Newcastle: (Murray 1774:24-31).

> Several years before this [the 1773 Town Moor trial] happened, a petition had been presented, when Sir Walter was mayor, from the Burgesses to the Magistrates, requesting a part of the Town moor to be inclosed [sic.], let, and cultivated; and the rent applied to the relief of the indigent Freemen, and their widows. Sir Walter, on behalf of the Magistrates, at that time, replied, that such a thing was not in their power, without an act for that purpose being first obtained.
>
> But soon after the petitioning was over, it unfortunately entered into the heads of some of the Magistrates to enclose, and let part of it, without the Burgesses consent, or entrusting them with the management, and drawing, and distributing the rent :- this made the Freemen very uneasy, and almost unanimously, began openly to oppose what, a few years before, the Magistrates themselves owned they could not legally do.
>
> (Murray 1774:24-25)

The pre-existence of tensions between the Burgesses and Corporation are further apparent in the minutes of the Common Council (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.115) in which a meeting between the Stewards of the Guilds (burgesses) and the Mayor (corporation) on the 14th May 1771 is recorded. In this meeting, the Stewards proposed 'that a committee of six of them be appointed to examine into the rights by which any roads over the Town Moor were held or enjoy'd'; a proposition to which the Mayor and Common Council gave their assent. Thus, the committee which was later to take a central role in the Town Moor affair was formed consisting of selected Guildsmen by the names of Thomas Maude, Nathaniel Bayles, Alexander Adams, William Smith, Matthew Laidler and William Addison. The formation of this committee is a clear indication of the rising tensions over the management of the Town Moor and the legitimacy of power exercised by the Corporation in managing it. It is also clear from the purpose of this committee that the concern of the Freemen was over the **leasing** of ground to individuals outside of the Corporation and Guilds.

Table 3 Brief timeline of the primary events constituting the Town Moor Case of 1771-1774

Date	**Event**
31st December, 1771	Common Council minutes its intention to lease a portion of the Town Moor for Improvement
4th January, 1772	Adverts appear in Newcastle's newspapers for the lease of ground in the Town Moor (see. Fig.22)
20th January, 1772	Joshua Hopper of Tursdale nr. Durham is leased the ground for 12 years under the agreement that he will improve it using suitable agricultural methods and means. Rented at 1s p.a. for the first two years and £10 pa for the remaining ten.
16th June, 1772	Joshua Hopper petitions the Common Council to give up his lease on the grounds of the damages and mischiefs done to his farm. Common Council reject this motion and suggest he takes legal action against the perpetrators.
10th August, 1773	Newcastle Assizes are held, and a suit of trespass is brought against Nathaniel Bayles and Henry Gibson [Burgesses]. Successfully defended by Serjeant Glynn MP for Middlesex
1774	The Town Moor Act is passed securing the rights of the Burgesses of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in managing the land of the Town Moor

This motion for the establishment of a committee and its focus on the roads over the Town Moor was likely the result of deep-seated tensions originating in 1764 when William Ord of Fenham (who just so happened to be High Sheriff of Northumberland and a close friend of Newcastle's Mayor Walter Blackett) applied successfully to build a wayleave across the Town Moor linking his Fenham Estate with the Western Turnpike (Fig.19). As Murray records (1774:22), this was the first difference between Magistrates and Burgesses and was due to a confusion over the terms of the lease between the two parties. 'The Burgesses thought he [Ord] had a right to a bridle way, but not to break the soil and cast up materials for a carriage way – the Magistrates and Common Council thought they had a right to let and lease everything which belonged to the Corporation.' (*ibid.*). The Corporation's grant to Ord for a carriageway ultimately resulted (like the later Town Moor affair) in a lawsuit brought by Ord against one 'Whitby' for the breaking up of the road from Fenham Gate over the Town Moor (NCA- NRO 324/F.2/27 (Fig.20)). In this trial, tried at the King's Bench in London (an indication of the seriousness of the case), Whitby, and therein the Freemen's cause, was defeated in circumstances brought about by 'mismanagement or chicanery' in the trial (Murray 1774:22).

Tensions between the Freemen and Common Council continued to rise throughout the later 1760s with the Wilkes and Liberty movement taking a central role in providing avenues for the articulation of the Burgesses anxieties over the increasingly autocratic Corporation. These tensions have been well exemplified in the previous chapter, particularly in the structured differentiation and mimicry which characterized the April 1770 celebrations (section 3.5.2; Sykes 1833). The centrality of the Wilkes and Liberty movement to the tensions between Guild and Corporation is further apparent in the refusal of Walter Blackett and Matthew White Ridley [MPs for Newcastle and members of the Common Council] to present a petition to the King for the release of Wilkes from the King's Bench Gaol in 1769 (Murray 1774:23). This dismissal of the Burgesses' wishes by the city Magistracy will certainly have contributed to the feeling of disenfranchisement amongst the Guilds and deepened the gulf between themselves and the Common Council. (The role of the Wilkes and Liberty Movement in radicalizing Newcastle's Guilds is explored in section 4.6.1).

The 1760s in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was thus a decade of setbacks, defeats and insults for the Burgesses, which seems only to have hardened their resolve to resist domination by the elite managerial bodies of the Corporation wherever possible. The growing discord and animosity between the Freemen and Corporation both ultimately escalated in the early 1770s into the Town Moor Affair. Whilst the rationale informing the decision of the Common Council in 1771 to enclose a parcel of the Town Moor for lease is difficult to define, they were doubtless

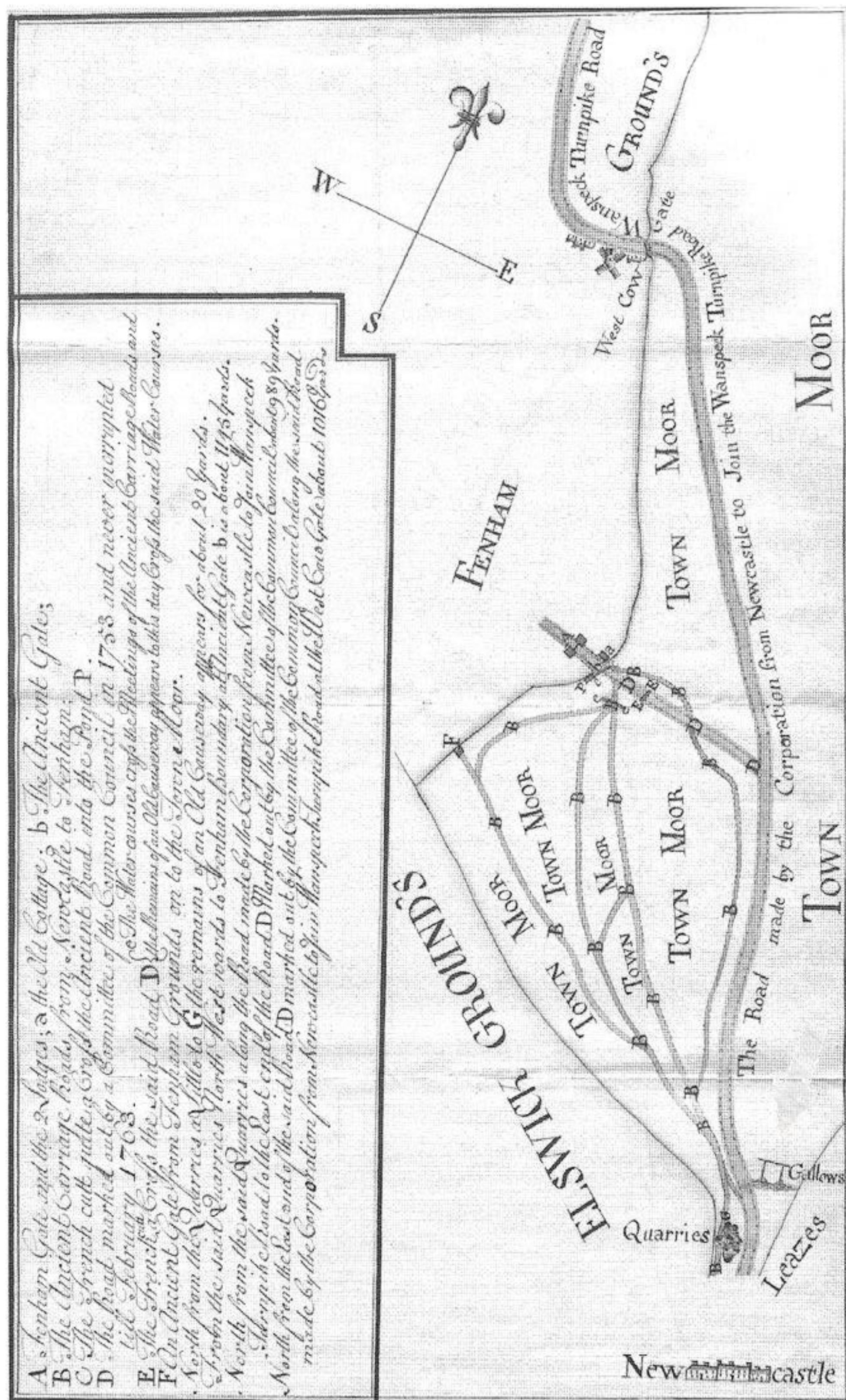


***Fig. 20** Map used in the Ord vs. Whitby court case regarding the disruption of Wm. Ord's road across the Town Moor. On the map are marked the thoroughfares across the moor, Wm. Ord's gates and the trenches dug across Ord's road. - (NCA- NRO 324/F.2/27)*

emboldened by their success in the Ord affair and their increasing strength as a legislative body. However, the Freemen's refusals to acquiesce to the Corporation and their use of the Wilkes and Liberty movement as an avenue to express grievances against the Corporation's perceived despotic autocracy must have been a source of anxiety for the Corporation. A tension is thus evident here between the Corporation and the Freemen, where the Corporation tried to maintain their power against the wishes of the Freemen whilst simultaneously being composed **of** Freemen. This anxiety may in part be the reason why the Corporation felt the need to continually assert and reassert their power and dominance over the Freemen through dictating the management and uses of the Town Moor and deciding the political inclinations of the City without reference to the grassroots Burgesses. The continual pattern of assertion and resistance between the Corporation and Freemen throughout the 1760s thus embodies what Hall terms the 'play between public transcripts [assertions of power by the Corporation] and hidden transcripts [resistance from the Freemen]' which constitutes the discourse of history as it unfolds (2000:17).

4.3 Conceptualisations of the Town Moor

4.3.1 The Town Moor as Pseudo-Common

The Town Moor itself, as a piece of land, existed ambiguously within the political landscape of Newcastle-upon-Tyne with both the Burgesses and the Corporation able to legitimately claim control of its management. The land was not technically common in the traditional sense as it was not associated with a manorial holding and nor was it private land in a true form rather it was held in a sort of 'trust' with the Freemen as trustees. I have therefore opted to coin the term 'pseudo-common' as a label to be applied to the Town Moor. This term allows a definition in which whilst the land itself was not true common, it held many of the same roles and was considered in much the same way as traditional manorial common land.

Within Newcastle's framework of governance, the Town Moor was considered as an appurtenance of the town as decreed by Edward III in 1357; 'ever since the Burgesses and their predecessors… farmed the said town with its appurtenances, [they] have held the same moor and the land… as belonging to the town' (Brand 1789:432). As an appurtenance of the town, the Town Moor must therefore be considered as similar to common land though different in that it was theoretically jointly owned amongst the Freemen of the City. The Town Moor was however communally owned and managed with communal rights of herbage, estovers and rights in the soil for digging coal, stone and other minerals (Bourne 1736:150). The Town Moor was thus used throughout the eighteenth century in much the same way as any regularly defined

common land; for grazing, coal mining, horse racing, fairs, military encampments and reviews and public executions. In this way, the Town Moor fulfilled many of the purposes of traditional common land whilst also allowing the Burgesses of the town a greater stake in its management and uses.

The role of the Town Moor as a pseudo-common is further demonstrated in the advertisements for horse races held upon the ground, such as the following from 1725 which read: 'This is to give notice, that no Foreigner [denoting someone who was not a Burgess of Newcastle] shall have Liberty to break Ground on the Town-Moor, set up a Tent or Hut, retail any Liquors, that is not a subscriber to the Inn-keepers Plate' *(Newcastle Courant,* 17th April, 1725 p.12). This advertisement provides a valuable example of the regulations placed upon the Town Moor by the Common Council in the interest of protecting the exclusivity of the Freemen's privileged right to benefit from the land.

As grassroots members of the Corporation, the individual Freemen each held a stake in the Town Moor and were individually vested with rights of access and herbage (See Birtles 1999:83 for a comparable definition of this system as 'Common in Gross'). These rights were secured and reinforced by the Burgesses through their continuous exercise since time immemorial (generally any period over 20 years of continuous usage) and were used principally for the purpose of grazing cattle to provide income and support for the widowed, poor and infirm of the various Guilds. This usage was emphasised by Serjeant Glynn in the 1773 court case, that 'the situation of the **poor Burgesses and their widows**, who received great benefits from the pasturage of the common and who were enabled by that assistance to rear up their children, and to administer comfort to age and infirmity; that many of his clients had their sole reliance on these comparatively small advantages.' (*London Evening Post,* 17th August, 1773 p.4 emphasis my own). The Town Moor therefore provided essential succour for the most disadvantaged Burgesses.

The City Corporation was also aware of the relief afforded by the Town Moor to the Burgesses as demonstrated in the terminology of their 1771 order to enclose a parcel of the Moor. In the phrasing of this order, the Common Council's minute books are keen to emphasise that the action was in the best interests of the Burgesses, particularly because 'the rent gained from the ground was to be distributed amongst the stewards of the various companies to be divided between the poor and widowed of the Guilds (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.135). By enclosing part of the moor with the intention of generating money for the relief of the poor, the Common Council was in fact following the example of numerous other parishes across England. As Sara Birtles

argues, ‘Parishes also drew set parcels of common land directly into the charity structure. This could happen in one of two ways: common land could be enclosed and used directly by the poor or it could be enclosed and let out to raise money for their benefit’ (1999:60).

A tension arises here in that both Freemen and Corporation emphasised the role of the Town Moor as a means of alleviating the hardships of the poorest members of the town, yet both advocated divergent management strategies, suggesting a disjuncture in the ideological foundations of how they conceived of the moor as a meaningful place and as a functional space.

4.3.2 The Town Moor as an Improvable Asset of the Corporation

Table 4. Outline of the major acts of improvement to take place on Newcastle Town Moor between 1700 and 1772 (Data from Brand 1789)

Date	Improving Act
1710	Haining [enclosing] of the Leazes
1739	The Town Moor Colliery advertised for lease
1747	Morpeth Turnpike construction started
1753	Ponteland Turnpike construction started
1756	75£ voted by the Common Council to pay towards improving the Race Ground
1764	Wm Ord granted a lease for a wayleave from Fenham Estate to Ponteland Turnpike
1770	A new water reservoir constructed at the Southern End of the Town Moor
1771	A parcel of the Moor west of the Ponteland Turnpike leased to Joshua Hopper to improve and farm

Whilst the Town Moor played a critical role as a pseudo-common for the benefit of the Burgesses of the city, it is also important to consider the role of the land as an asset of the Corporation to be improved and used to advantage. The Corporation’s role as the executive

body managing the Town Moor entitled it to act in the interest of the Burgesses as a whole in improving the ground for the benefit of all. This was an entitlement which the Common Council exercised throughout the duration of the eighteenth century as can be seen in Table.4 with only the 1764 Ord lease and the 1771 Hopper lease incurring resistance from the Freemen.

The drive to improve the Town Moor likely further relates to how the land was perceived. As both Nicholas Blomley (2007:10) and Sarah Tarlow (2007:42) comment; common land was considered as a relic of the old feudal landscape, the antithesis of progress and improvement. It was wild, wasteful and untamed, home to thieves and vagabonds and a space which must be either excluded or brought under control. It is certainly true that the Town Moor was a popular locale for thieves and vagabonds, as numerous newspaper accounts recount robberies perpetrated against those travelling on the turnpikes:

> Newcastle, March 10. Saturday Night, about Eleven o'Clock, as one John Atkinson, a Farmer near Ponteland, was returning home, he was attacked on the Town-moor, near the Gallows, by some Villains, who knocked him off his Horse, used him cruelly and robbed him of Half a Guinea in Gold and upwards of 40s in Silver, and left him for dead. He was that Day to have received about 40£ for Oats, which he had imprudently spoke of in a mixed Company in a Public House.
>
> (*St. James' Chronicle*, 13th March, 1764 p.3)

The earliest act of improving the moor in the context of the eighteenth century was the 'Haining of the Leazes' (haining meaning fencing/hedging) in 1710. This act, ordered by the Common Council, was 'intended for the benefit of the herbage' (Brand 1789:439). Significantly, there is no record of this enclosure incurring any resistance from the Burgesses as a whole, suggesting that they were amenable to the act as beneficial to their grazing rights.

A 1724 advertisement in the *Newcastle Courant* (1st August, 1724 p.10 emphasis my own) to lease the workings of 'the Town Moor Colliery' '**belonging to the Town of Newcastle upon Tine'**, is further indicative of the way in which the Corporation considered the Town Moor as an asset of the city which could be improved to make better use of the ground as the applications for the lease were to be reviewed by a committee in the Guildhall. The Town Moor Colliery was however finally advertised for lease in 1739 (Brand 1789:433) and seems to have ceased production by 1770, with no further references to its operation appearing thereafter in either newspapers or the Common Council's minutes. The cessation of extractive industry on the Town Moor by 1771 is further suggested in the terms of the Joshua Hopper's 1771 land lease

which includes a clause requiring the lessee to 'fill and level all pit holes' (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 P.138).

The emphasis of improvement during the mid-eighteenth century however focused primarily on the development of turnpike roads leading North; between Newcastle and Morpeth (1747) and Newcastle and Ponteland (1753) (Brand 1789:433). The lack of serviceable roads across the Town Moor effectively isolated the city from easy communications northwards to Northumberland and Edinburgh, a problem easily overcome through the construction of modern turnpike roads. Like the haining of the Leazes, the creation of these roads did not incur any resistance from the Burgesses suggesting that the modernization works on the roads were not objectionable as they benefitted the entire city, in which the Burgesses each had vested interests as tradesmen.

A further, development of the modernization of the road network north from Newcastle was the 1764 William Ord grant already mentioned above. This was a 99 year lease at 1s per annum to create a wayleave across the Moor (See. Fig.19). Attached to this was the right for Ord to hang two gates in the hedge between his Fenham estate and the Town Moor to restrict access to his estate from the road that he had constructed (Brand 1789:435). This clearly indicates an insecurity which Ord harboured about the proximity of his improved and structured estate to the unimproved and dangerous Town Moor landscape which lay beyond. The gates erected by Ord can thus be interpreted as materialisations of his anxieties, visibly and materially separating himself and his estate from the Town Moor.

Contrary to the apparent assent given by the Burgesses to the construction of the turnpike roads, Ord's wayleave elicited spirited resistance from the Freemen cited by Murray as resulting from William Ord's presumption to construct a metaled carriageway as opposed to a rough earthen bridleway (1774:22). In response, the Burgesses embarked upon a campaign of destruction of the carriageway, digging it up and returning the ground to a natural state and prompting Ord to prosecute 'Whitby' the figure head of the Freemen's cause (NCA- NRO 00324/f/2/27). Whilst the Burgesses lost this court action, the parallels with the later course of action pursued by the Burgesses in response to the leasing of land to Joshua Hopper in 1772 are striking.

It is apparent from this incident that the Freemen opposed both Ord's actions and the autocratic, executive action of the Common Council who had arranged a lease unsuitable to the burgesses whom they theoretically represented. Ord's wayleave marked the first time in which the Town Moor was leased to a private individual for the purpose of their own private enterprise. Ord's interest in the moor differed greatly from the turnpike roads as it was for private benefit as

opposed to for the communal benefit of the Freemen and city more generally. The 1764 Ord lease and its successful defence in court thus set a precedent for the Corporation to lease land without recourse to consulting the Freemen and that they were legally vindicated in doing so.

Following the Ord controversy, the Common Council returned to its policy of improving the moor with a view to improving the city in general, appointing a committee on 17th December, 1767 to examine 'how and by what means this town can be better and more properly supplied with good and wholesome water than it is now…' (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.24). The improvement of Newcastle's water supply was a central concern of the Corporation who, following the findings of the water committee, on the 19th July, 1770 leased a parcel of land 'situate at the foot or south end of the Town Moor with liberty to dig and make a reservoir and to enclose the same and erect, set up and make one-hundred fireplugs… to be used on all occasions for extinguishing all sudden, casual fires that shall happen in or about the said town…' (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.96). Again, this act of improvement did not meet with any resistance from the Burgesses as it benefitted the city as a whole.

This desire amongst the Common Council to improve the Moor with a view to benefitting the City is perhaps best exemplified in the findings of a committee appointed by the Corporation to 'view the unimproved parts of the Town Moor and to consider and report the best means of cultivating the same.' (TWA – MD/NC/2/6 p.135). The report of the Committee to the Common Council read as follows:

> that they had view'd that part of the said moor which lies on the West side of the Western-Turnpike Road there containing about eighty-nine acres… had consulted persons skilled in agriculture and considered with them **the best manner of improving the same;** and having thereupon recommended for that purpose a lease be granted of the said ground to some proper person or persons…
>
> (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.135 emphasis my own)

It was as a direct result of this committee's findings and consultations that on the 31st December 1771, the Common Council ordered its most contentious improving act; the leasing of a parcel of the western Moor to be farmed.

4.3.3 The Town Moor as an Improved Landscape

It is clear that by 1772, a significant part of the Town Moor had already been the target of improvement as shown in Table.4. Throughout the course of the eighteenth century, beginning with the haining of the Leazes in 1710 and concluding (for the purposes of this chapter) with

the leasing and enclosure of 89 acres west of the Ponteland Turnpike in 1772 (Brand 1789:433), a gradual process of piecemeal enclosure was enacted by the Common Council on the Town Moor with the explicit aim of improving the ground. The character of the Town Moor thus changed greatly in the 70 years preceding the famous court case; from an open heath crossed haphazardly by rough roads, to a more formalised space divided and enclosed, visibly materialising and spatialising the process and ethic of improvement. The Corporation's act in leasing land for improvement in 1772 was therefore part of a process of improving the Town Moor which had been underway for at least 70 years.

The process of improving the Town Moor should not however be simply considered as an elite imposition upon subordinates, but rather as a process in which both Corporation and Freemen had a valuable stake. Of the eight improvements to the Moor listed in Table.3, six were explicitly involved in improving the ground to benefit the Burgesses both in their grazing rights and in their interests within the City's economy. A further, although later, indication of the Burgesses' support for improving the moor is recorded in a letter dated 1785 from the Company of Masters and Mariners at Trinity House regarding the establishment of a new water reservoir (the location of which is visible in Fig.21 to the South of the large reservoir established in 1770) (TWA – GU.TH/16/2). This letter records that in a meeting of the Stewards of the Guild (not, note, the Common Council) it was agreed that a lease be granted to the waterworks to **improve** the City's water supply. Further, it was stipulated in the terms of the lease that 'non-Freemen shall not be employed in the work', demonstrating both that the Guilds were not against improvements to the Moor and that they were actively engaged in materially transforming the Town Moor from unimproved scrub-grazing land to an improved asset of the City. It is important to consider the Freemen's engagement with the material transformation of the Town Moor as a series of statements articulating their belief in their traditional rights in the land. The reasons for the Burgesses' resistance in both the Hopper and Ord incidents at least partly stem from the perception that their privileges in benefitting from the Moor were being eroded by the Corporation through the leasing of the ground to private individuals such as William Ord and Joshua Hopper. Furthermore, neither Hopper (from Tursdale near Durham) nor Ord were Freemen or residents of the Newcastle and to add insult, Hopper was also a Quaker (non-conformists were banned from membership of certain Guilds).

Accompanying this diminishment of the Burgesses' privileges in the Moor, there was an associated disenfranchisement of their role within the Corporation. In particular the Corporation had, in the cases of Hopper and Ord, acted executively and contrary to the wishes of the Burgesses who according to Murray (1774:14), had requested that the same ground be enclosed

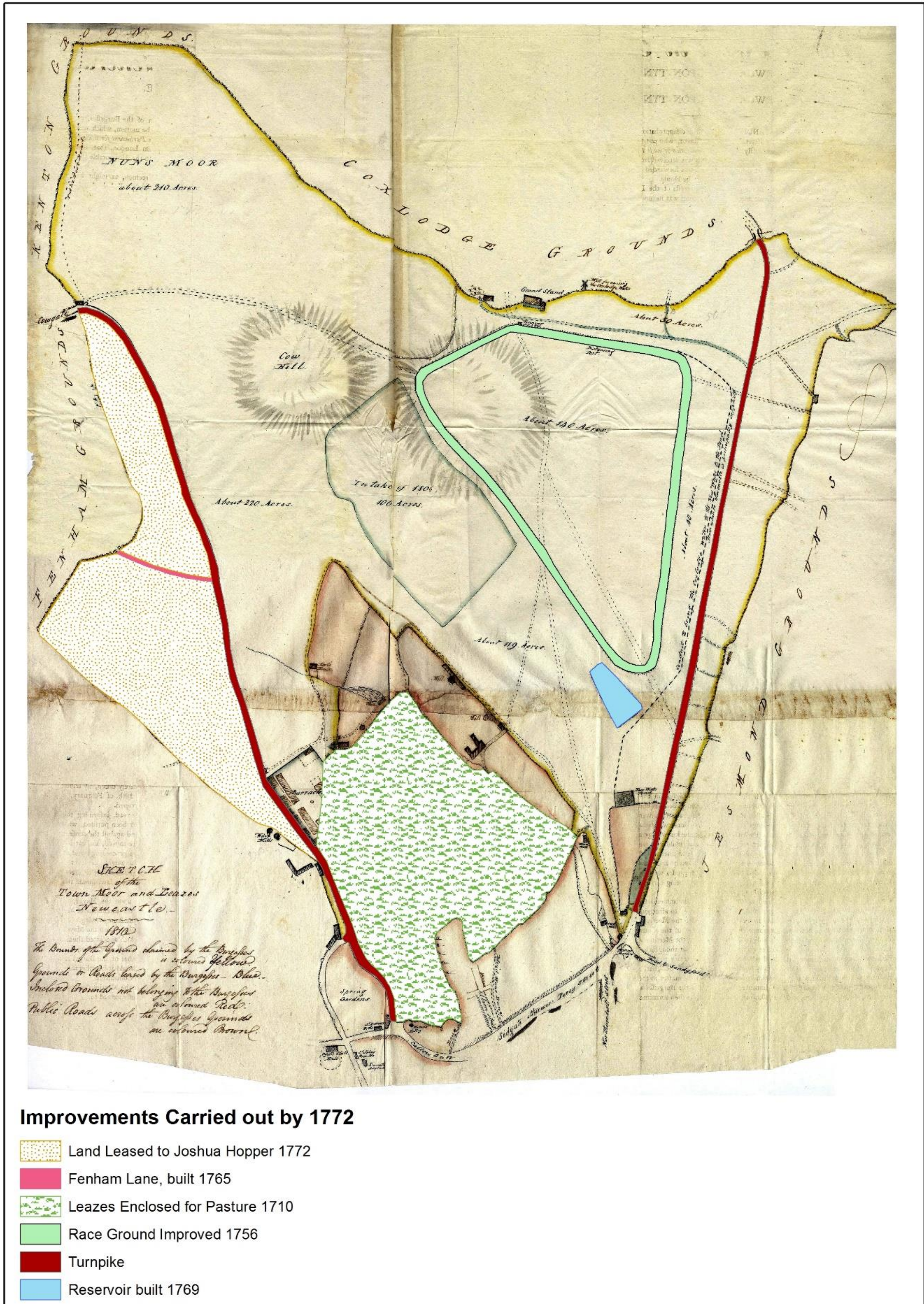
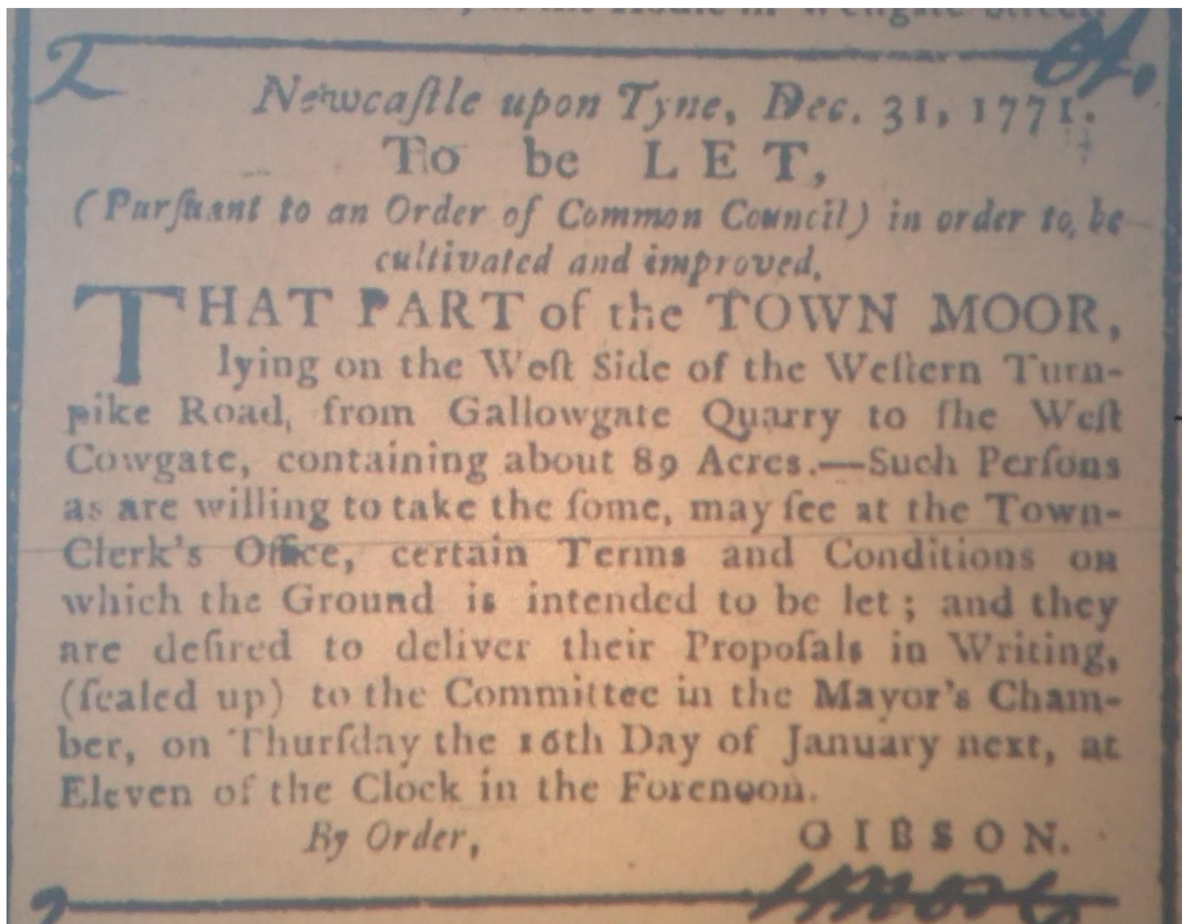


Fig. 21 *1810 Sketch Map of the Town Moor annotated to illustrate the improvements carried out by 1772 (base map NCA- SANT/BEQ/5/1/9)*



Newcaſtle upon Tyne, Dec. 31, 1771.

To be LET,

(Purſuant to an Order of Common Council) in order to be cultivated and improved,

THAT PART of the TOWN MOOR, lying on the Weſt Side of the Weſtern Turnpike Road, from Gallowgate Quarry to the Weſt Cowgate, containing about 89 Acres.—Such Perſons as are willing to take the ſame, may ſee at the Town-Clerk's Office, certain Terms and Conditions on which the Ground is intended to be let; and they are deſired to deliver their Propoſals in Writing, (ſealed up) to the Committee in the Mayor's Chamber, on Thurſday the 16th Day of January next, at Eleven of the Clock in the Forenoon.

By Order, GIBSON.

Fig. 22 *Advertisement for the lease of a parcel of the Town Moor (Newcastle Journal January 4th 1772 p.3)*

with themselves as benefactors. It is apparent therefore that far from protesting against the improvement of the Town Moor, the Burgesses' greatest concern lay with the privatisation of the grounds and its exploitation for private profit at the expense of the Burgesses' traditional advantages enjoyed since time immemorial.

4.4 Negotiating Ownership of the Town Moor

The contest over the ownership and management of the Town Moor resulting from the lease of the ground to Joshua Hopper should not necessarily be considered solely in terms of the Burgesses resisting the actions of the Corporation in enclosing the land. A more valuable way to think of the affair is as a negotiation in which both parties, Burgesses and Corporation, deployed a variety of strategies with the objective of consolidating their interests. As is demonstrated below, both the Corporation and the Burgesses manipulated the material space of the Town Moor in a sustained effort to assert control over the ground, particularly through the implementation and subversion of the material technologies of enclosure.

4.4.1 The Materiality of Enclosure

In contextualising the resistance to the 1772 enclosure and leasing of the moor, it is necessary to explore the physical characteristics of the leased and enclosed parcels of land. The advertisement for the 1772 lease (Fig.22) and Common Council minutes deciding the terms of the lease (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.135) state that that the land was that portion of the moor to the west of the Ponteland Road between Gallowgate to the south and Cowgate to the north (See Fig.21 for plan). A further description of the character of the 1772 enclosure is offered by Murray in his account of the Town Moor affair recording that the land was 'fenced', 'gated' and had a house within (Murray 1774:25). The term fenced here must not be taken at face value as denoting a boundary of posts and rails as a modern fence and rather should be understood as a generic term meaning 'To inclose; to secure by an inclosure or hedge' (Johnson 1798).

The lease (for twelve years) between the Common Council and Joshua Hopper was signed in January 1772, and was offered at an annual rent for the whole ground of 1d for the first two years and then £100 for the subsequent ten. 'The clear rents of which shall arise from the said ground be paid to the stewards of the several companies of this Corporation as the same shall be [damaged] by them to [damaged] distributed amongst the poor of their respective companies.' (TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.135 The Common Council minute book also encloses an extract detailing the terms of the lease as it was signed by Joshua Hopper (*ibid.* p.138).

> That Mr. Joshua Hopper of Tursdale near Durham was the best proposer, the [damaged] tenant and had offer'd the best rent and most advisable terms and conditions for the [damaged] and effectual cultivation and improvement of the grounds, as well as satisfactory security for the performance thereof. (*ibid.*138)

Hopper further agreed to the following covenants in the lease [summarised and paraphrased]:

1. To clear the ground of all Brambles and underwood with all convenient speed.
2. To fill and level all pit holes and other holes in the ground and to have the whole land under tillage by the end of the third year except land between Fenham plantation and West Cowgate (seven acres) which was to be done as best as is possible by the end of the fifth year.
3. To build a six-foot ditch with appropriate hedge or fence on the inside with the purpose of keeping cattle from trespassing – to run along Ponteland Road, along Fenham Road on both N and S. sides to be six foot from the carriageway.

4. Trespassing cattle are not to be impounded and the damages incurred from trespassing livestock will not be eligible for redress or recompense by the Corporation.
5. The erection of buildings, housing and conveniences are to be covered from the lessee's own expenses.
6. 'To till and work all the said ground in due course of good husbandry' – advocating good fallowing practice and crop rotation with liming and manuring of the land in good measure.
7. To fallow a third part of tillage every year or to fallow the whole every third year.
8. To sow fallow with hay and/or white clover.
9. To have two-thirds of ground under grass three years before the end of the term and to have the other third in grass two years before- and then to leave it wholly in grass at the end of the term.
10. To well manure the ground over the last three years of the term.
11. To have the hedges and fences in good repair with the ditch well cut at the end of the term.
12. 'That Mr. Joseph King of Kenton shall be bound with him (Hopper) for his performance of the covenants.'
    a. That the tenant may win stones at the quarry for the purpose of building and may remove any buildings at the end of his term as he may see fit.
    b. That ploughing may begin immediately before the next February.
    c. That he may take appropriate shrubbery for the purpose of repairing his own hedges and fences from other parts of the Moor.
    d. That the tenant may become a scavenger of Westgate, Newgate and Pilgrim Street wards – enjoying the same rights as all other scavengers to win manure for manuring his land.
    e. That the roads of the Leazes and moor shall be kept in good repair.
    f. That the tenant may peaceably enjoy the premises during the term.
    g. The lease was non-renewable.

(TWA- MD/NC/2/6 p.138)

These lease terms, considered in combination with other descriptions of the enclosure, allow a strong impression of the material and spatial character of the Hopper's intake to be constructed; suggesting a landscape wholly juxtaposed in character to the rest of the Town Moor. The materiality of the enclosure and the change of use in the land divided the Town Moor into two materially and ideologically opposed spaces. One was a landscape with wide open spaces, the other closely controlled and demarcated; one open with common access, the other closed to protect private interest within; one under rough pasturage, the other neatly ploughed for arable farming; one improved and one not.

In considering the symbolic importance attached to the enclosure of the common, it is useful to draw on Nicholas Blomley's work on the significance of hedges in enclosure (Blomley 2007). A central tenet of Blomley's argument is that 'The hedge both helped to concretise a new set of controversial discourses around land and property rights, and aimed to prevent the forms of physical movement associated with the communing economy' (Blomley 2007:5). The very materiality of the hedge is considered as a statement articulating the discourses and ideals which the enclosers wished to promote; embodying privacy, control and discipline, all facets of the discourse of capitalism and power. If Blomley's arguments are applied to the Town Moor, where the ground leased to Hopper was rapidly enclosed with a ditch and fence demarcating his private property, it is immediately apparent that if the fence embodies the ideals of the encloser, then Hopper and the Common Council were clearly championing rationality, improvement and privacy.

Whilst the materiality of the boundary was an important articulation of the ideological imperatives of order and control, it also served a functional purpose in separating spaces and in making travel between the two difficult for both humans and nonhumans. In this way, Hopper's fence established a system of control over the land, disciplining actions through restrictive access, exclusion and division (*ibid.*9). It can thus be suggested that the Corporation, in ordering the enclosure of part of the Town Moor, was imposing the structuring principles and discourses of the city, based around concepts of demarcated private property and control, onto the pseudo-common of the moor.

The material form of the enclosure thus materialised profound tensions between the interests of the Freemen, the Corporation and the lessee: the Freemen, the benefactors of the relict common; the Corporation, perceiving the land as wasteful and at odds with the modernity of improvement; and the lessee, demarcating his privacy and possession of the land. These tensions are palpable in the covenants of the lease and the substantial character of the dividing

enclosure 'To build a six foot ditch with appropriate hedge or fence on the inside' (TWA-MD/NC/2/6 p.138), a term intended as a statement of the Corporation's control of the Town Moor, physically excluding the Freemen from part of the land.

A further indication of the divergent ethics of the Burgesses and Magistracy was materialised within the interior of the enclosed parcel. The use of the land within the fence was markedly different from that without and thus articulated a sense of legitimacy by the lessee, who constructed for himself a house, c.2.5km of fence (based on the western edge of the moor being already hedged as at Fenham Hall) and invested in improving the land for cropping. Hopper's considerable investment, in time, labour and finance, must be interpreted as being an articulation of the perceived legitimacy of the lessee and his determination to make the land both productive and, importantly, bounded.

In terms of the symbolism of the lessee's actions, the act of ploughing in the context of negotiating enclosures has been discussed by Briony McDonagh (2013:48) who argues that ploughing 'visibly inscribed the disputed land with a new use'. The act of ploughing completely subverted the landscape both literally and in terms of its meaning and use, to restore the land to pasture after it had been ploughed is a long process requiring the land to be left idle to recuperate. This act of ploughing on the part of the lessee should therefore be considered as an expression of the control which the Corporation had in making the decisions on how the land was used and managed, quite contrary to the opinions of the Burgesses who understood management of the ground to be their right.

As a statement asserting corporation power, Hopper's enclosure would have been almost monumental, intended to be seen and understood by an audience of subalterns including the Freemen. As Hall argues 'The performance of power has an audience, and … the form of the performance implies the nature of those to whom it was directed.' (Hall 2000:19–20) The fencing, farming and development of the enclosure must therefore be considered as a material statement asserting the veracity of the elite discourses of improvement and property in the face of a subaltern other (the Freemen) who might subvert that discourse through a transcript of resistance built on tradition. The magnitude of the enclosure must therefore be considered also as betraying elite anxieties over the precarity of their control over the ground; the scale of the boundary being an elite pre-emptive move to counteract a perceived threat of resistance from the city Freemen.

The construction of buildings, hedges and ditches on the land as material actualisations of the ideologies of Hopper and the Corporation also constituted a legal boundary which could be

transgressed and upon which a legal charge could be brought. A charge of trespass where a material boundary had been crossed and which could be visibly shown to have been damaged was far surer footing for a legal case than if the boundary was solely conceptual. In this way, the materiality of the enclosure boundaries and the buildings within could be used as evidence of damage or trespass in a court case and as markers of a clearly demarcated private landscape. The hedges which surrounded Hopper's lease articulated a challenge to the Burgesses, that if the Freemen were to challenge the lease through means of trespass and destruction, they would have to cross the material boundary and in so doing would be risking a legal challenge.

In this way then, the enclosure of the Town Moor by the Corporation and the subsequent actions of Hopper must be considered together as material articulations of the ideals and aspirations of both parties. In summary, as Macpherson argues

> In making and remaking property more generally, material things are put to work, such as barbed wire, paper, bodies, Geographic Information Systems, or hawthorn hedges. Things do material work, recording, marking and blocking. Things also signify, and often in ambiguous ways. Yet things complicate property. Fences fall down, paper records rot, rivers and coastlines move. Thus, the hedge can be a defensive barrier or an encroachment. It can materialise private property's right to exclude, and thus conflict with common property's right not to be excluded.
>
> (1975:106-10 cited in Blomley 2007:16)

The role of enclosure as materialising of ideology in the eighteenth century is a theme well explored by Tom Williamson who argues particularly that 'in the late eighteenth [century], commons, and especially the more extensive commons, were seen as a threat to social order. This was because they attracted squatters, gypsies [sic.], and other undesirable elements, and allowed the poor a measure of independence from labour discipline.' (Williamson 2000:72). To evidence his point here, Williamson draws on Raunds in Northamptonshire where the enclosure of the Common was fiercely resisted as it impinged on the traditional rights of the villagers (*ibid*.). Although such rural communities as Raunds, and other examples commonly cited in discussions of enclosure and resistance, differ greatly in the social composition to the urbanite community of Freemen in Newcastle, it is apparent that enclosure was an ideological, as much as economic endeavor on the part of elites. The hard boundary, dividing common land was thus a materialisation of a *mentalitée* which regarded the traditional rights of commoning as antiquated, unproductive and threatening to elite power .

4.4.2 Direct Resistance

Following the 1772 enclosure, the Burgesses employed a variety of strategies of resistance. Murray relates that in the immediate aftermath of the enclosure 'the Burgesses pulled down the house, demolished the fence and set fire to the gates.' (Murray 1774:25).

> Sunday se'nnight [week past] in the afternoon, during divine service, the new hedge lately made for enclosing a part of the Town Moor at Newcastle, was set on fire, and as the wind was from a quarter parallel to it, the fire run along with amazing rapidity, and consumed near a mile of the hedge in two or three hours.
>
> *(The General Evening Post,* 12th May, 1772 p.4)

These acts of resistance encapsulate two common resistance strategies employed by subalterns, included in Scott's 'weapons of the weak' (1990:149); anonymous destruction and anonymous arson. The anonymity in these acts was an important theme and it is notable that the burning of the hedge was perpetrated during 'divine service', exploiting Hopper's religion, absenting him from his premises whilst attending the Quaker meeting house. Furthermore, the amount of labour which would have been required to undertake such damage as Murray recounts (particularly the infilling of the ditch), suggests that they were communally carried out by a group of Burgesses whose anonymity was protected by their community. Indeed, as Scott argues 'Where resistance is collective, it is carefully circumspect; where it is an individual or small group attack on property, it is anonymous and usually nocturnal.'(ibid.). Whilst the arson and destruction were obviously the handiwork of the Burgesses, as they notified the lessee of their intention (Murray 1774), the fact that only two individuals were subject to prosecution suggests that a degree of anonymity was possible through the solidarity of the Freemen.

A further strategy employed by the Freemen involved sending their cattle into the enclosed land, as referenced in Baillie's (1801:172) account ;'which they (the Freemen) did by breaking down the hedge inclosing the field then growing corn, and turning their own cattle into the inclosure'. This returning of the cattle to the land which had been turned over to arable is a deeply symbolic gesture on the part of the Freemen, simultaneously exercising their perceived right to graze the cattle and destroying the crop through eating and trampling. This strategy of resistance to enclosed land and the changing use of the fields is paralleled in early twentieth-century Scottish examples from the 'Highland Land Wars' during which cattle and sheep were commonly allowed, by displaced crofters, to stray into the newly enclosed and exclusive deer parks and forests of the elites (Robertson 2016:49).

The anonymity of the individual in acts of destruction is a carefully chosen strategy designed to protect the actor from repercussions. Anonymity is particularly employed in circumstances where there are asymmetrical social relationships wherein the subordinate is disadvantaged legally and is vulnerable to reprisals (Scott 1990:149). Anonymous destruction is a strategy abetted by strong horizontal community bonds, particularly noticeable in the case of the Town Moor where the identities of individual protestors were protected by their immersion within the community of Freemen and Guilds; institutions founded upon protection of trade, loyalty, and fraternalism. The Guilds therefore provided fertile ground for strong horizontal bonds to be forged.

Communal action in this way is well recognized by Scott as a 'weapon of the weak' (1990:149) and suggests the presence of complex web of 'infrapolitics' amongst the Freemen, governing their solidarity and community. As Scott argues, infrapolitics exist in unofficial organization through kin, friends, neighbours and communities with the innocence of meaning in these organizational groups providing structure and cover for resistance (1990:200). The Guilds of Newcastle and the relationships between its members thus provided the ideal framework around which a concerted strategy of resistance could be constructed. The existence of such infra-politics further suggests that the Freemen as a whole (beyond just Bayles and Gibson) shared a hidden transcript resisting the Corporation's encroachments on their traditional rights and liberties.

The acts of pulling down the house, destroying the hedge and burning the gates are themselves deeply symbolic; they are protests which are not aimed directly at bodily harming[10] the lessee but rather at returning the land to its previous state (i.e. un-enclosed and without structures). By engaging in these actions the Burgesses clearly considered themselves as the legitimate guardians of the Town Moor and were drawing on a play-book of everyday resistance strategies designed to emphasise traditional rights of access to the land (Whyte 2009:120). By targeting resistance on public transcript statements which materialised the discourses of improvement, land ownership and capitalism, the burgesses were able to subvert the power of those statements and thereby subvert the power of those who made them and the discourse which they embodied.

By emphasising the longevity of access rights, the Freemen were using a strategy of resistance which Briony McDonagh (2013:39) and Alison Whyte (2009:120) also identifies in the context of sixteenth-century and also by Navickas (2011:72) in early-nineteenth-century protests over

[10] Carl Griffin however argues that there could be a great deal of trauma, terror, and disembodied pain caused by acts of property destruction as part of protest (Griffin 2010:162).

enclosure. As McDonagh argues ‘In continuing customary practice they (protesting commoners) also protected their common rights against later legal challenge. A customary right that was given up was, after all, no longer a custom.’ (*ibid.*). This observation is particularly relevant when it is considered that the Burgesses’ protest was centered on their traditional use of the ground for grazing cattle. The parallels with sixteenth-century enclosure protests are further evident in McDonagh’s argument that those involved in negotiating agricultural change did not only pursue one strategy but rather *all* parties adopted multiple strategies combining direct action with litigations (*ibid.*:51).

It is essential to note here that many of the case study examples of resistance to enclosure explored above are taken from the Midlands and Southern England. This is due to a relative dearth of study into enclosure and resistance in North-East England. The most recent work aiming to redress this has been that by Ronan O’Donnell who specifically focused on enclosure in North-East England, however even this work largely neglects to consider acts of resistance (O’Donnell 2015). Of the (only) two articles published in *Archaeologia Aeliana* relating to enclosure (Butlin 1967; Harbottle 1995), only Butlin makes reference to resistance and that only in passing. Butlin in discussing the enclosure of waste and moorland in sixteenth-century Northumberland simply notes that ‘In townships where the size of the common waste or moor was small… enclosure of such intakes was vigorously opposed.’ and no further reference or discussion is made (1967:160). Harbottle further argues that ‘few commons were enclosed in Northumberland before the mid-eighteenth century’ (1995:4).

The reasons behind the stilted progress of common land enclosure in Northumberland are thus quite unclear, however Harbottle, O’Donnell and Butlin each make particular note of the strong influence of rights of commoning and grazing which had prevailed since ‘time immemorial’ as being potential hurdles to enclosure (O’Donnell 2015; Harbottle 1995:4; Butlin 1967:160). This same right, held since ‘time immemorial’ was also held by the Burgesses of Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the Town Moor and was repeatedly highlighted by the Burgesses during the trial of 1773 as part of their defence (Murray 1774). That resistance to enclosure hinged upon the preservation and continuation of these traditional rights in both early modern Northumberland and Newcastle may thus indicate a shared understanding of traditional rights in the land. It may therefore be suggested that, by the time of the Town Moor Affair, there were established strategies for resisting acts of enclosure upon which the Freemen were drawing with confidence, as being legally vindicated.

4.4.3 Material Strategies in an Ideological Contest

It is thus clear that the materiality and spatiality of the Town Moor were central themes in the strategies deployed by both the Corporation and the Burgesses in their contest over control of the ground. For both parties the uses of the ground took centre stage in their campaigns, with the Corporation erecting hedges as material statements of their conceived right of ownership and control and the Burgesses subverting and destroying them in efforts to return the land to its traditional form and use. Both Corporation and Freemen drew on an established tradition of material and spatial strategies designed to articulate carefully constructed transcripts; a public transcript constructed by the corporation to assert the discourse of capitalism and improvement and a dissident hidden (or, at least, guarded and circumspect) transcript emphasizing the Freemen's traditional rights.

The Common Council minutes reveal that on 16th June, 1772 Joshua Hopper petitioned the Corporation that he be allowed relinquish his lease of the land and that he should be compensated for his losses arising from the 'frequent mischiefs and damages' that had been done to him by some of the Burgesses of Newcastle. This petition was however declined by the Common Council who instead suggested that the Chamberlain encourage Hopper to bring a charge of trespass against the perpetrators and further offered to cover all of the legal charges in bringing about such an action (TWA- MC.NC/2/6 p.135). This denial by the Corporation may be understood as a reassertion of legitimacy and power, a refusal to acknowledge any liability or failure in the enclosure. As Scott argues, public concessions from a dominant party articulate elite fallibility and anxiety and may offer encouragement to further resistance, likewise acknowledging subaltern resistance 'requires a public reply if the symbolic status quo is to be restored.' (Scott 1990:57). By denying Hopper to quit his rent, the Common Council maintained their public transcript of power and control, acknowledging neither the resistance from the Freemen or their own fallibility.

The Burgesses' strategies in mobilizing the material landscape were likewise directed at bringing the matter to trial, as is clearly evidenced in a quote by Baillie (1801:172) that the Freemen, having decided that the Corporation's enclosure of the land was an illegal act, 'took the advice of able counsel in London, who recommended them to commit a trespass upon the alterations made by Hopper, which they did…'

It is clear from this case study therefore that far from being a collection of acts of rage and opportunism, the Town Moor was in fact mobilized as an integral part of a well informed and strategic campaign by both Corporation and Burgesses; using the materiality of the space to

articulate disparate conceptions of the Town Moor as a place and understandings of their own roles within its management. The strategies employed drew upon a long tradition of negotiations over land ownership and the rights of enclosure and common stretching back at least as far as the sixteenth century and yet still relevant in the second half of the eighteenth century.

4.4.4 Legal Means

Murray (1774:25) further describes a second form of protest on the part of the Burgesses: 'The Burgesses acted another way with more propriety and moderation, though with equal spirit, they summoned meetings of the companies, subscribed money and almost unanimously agreed to try the issue at law'. This choice of a legal approach correlates with McDonagh's (2013:39) argument that direct action was often coupled with litigation and is also testament to the perceived 'right' of the Burgesses in stewarding the Town Moor. It is interesting to note that the Burgesses' committee chose to bring the matter to trial through the issuance of a formal notice claiming responsibility for the damages being done to the enclosed land, and thus throwing down a challenge to the Lessee and Magistracy to take them to court.

It is significant therefore to observe that the two individuals who were prosecuted by Hopper for trespass were also members of the committee who had been orchestrating the legal strand of the protest. These individuals were Nathaniel Bayles and Henry Gibson, both members of the Barber Surgeons' Guild and reasonably prosperous members of the city's elite social milieu[11]. It is likely therefore that, as individuals of means, the pair were selected (or volunteered) to ensure that the character of the acts of resistance could be represented as respectable acts of protest perpetrated by respectable individuals and thus making ambiguous any attempt by the prosecution to represent the defendants as a riotous mob and also giving greater significance to the trial. Bayles involvement in this litigation is significant as his office as Sword-Bearer to the corporation, not only offered respectability to the Freemen's cause but also articulated the fragmented transcript of the Corporation, weakening their claim to power and authority over the Town Moor (Scott 1990:56).

The labour required infill a six foot wide ditch to the extent to allow cattle to pass onto the land is significant and suggests that Bayles and Gibson did not act alone. It can therefore be reasonably assumed that the attacks on the enclosure boundary were carried out in a sustained campaign of high intensity acts (one of which was the burning of the hedge) otherwise they

[11] Nathaniel Bayles was 'Sword-Bearer' to the Corporation (1745-1790) and later went on to invest in trans-Atlantic trading (NML-MA – DX2396)

would have been discovered and halted, and the damage repaired between acts. Bayles and Gibson were therefore likely assisted in their trespass by other members of the Burgesses' community, members who were then anonymised and protected from prosecution.

The communality of the challenge offered by the Burgesses to the Corporation also enabled the Burgesses to 'pool their resources' as is apparent in the minutes of several of the Guilds which voted money to the committee for the purpose of challenging the Corporation (TWA GU.CW/2/3 -30th June, 1772, 29th December, 1772, 27th July, 1772). The Bricklayers', Wallers' and Plasterers' Guild were particularly incensed by the action and went so far as to explicitly vote 'the sum of twelve guineas to support any action that shall be commenced against any free Burgess that thinking himself aggrieved by the letting of the said lease shall pull down or destroy [sic.] any part of the fence erected for enclosing the said ground.' (TWA GU.BR/3/4 2nd July, 1772). Such was the Bricklayers' engagement with the affair that, in a later donation of 20 guineas to the committee, a clause was added in the minutes that all Guildsmen were expected to contribute four instalments of ten shillings to this donation to help defray this cost on pain of being debarred from the Guild if they should refuse (TWA GU.BR/3/4 28th July, 1773).

The general unity amongst the Guilds (only excepting the Merchant Venturers who firmly supported the Corporation and Magistracy thus incurring the hatred of their sibling Guilds) augmented their legal position greatly and allowed them, through the intercession of local radical activist George Grieve, to solicit the services of the leading lawyer and esteemed Wilkite, Serjeant John Glynn. Glynn was the ideal choice for counsel for the defence as he sat as the recorder of the City of London Corporation – a recorder is a lawyer charged with assessing and ensuring the legality of Corporation actions. Glynn therefore already knew the intricacies of the operations of the Corporation and the legalities surrounding the rights and liberties of Guilds, Corporations and Freemen (Thomas 2004b:Online). In this way through the employment of Serjeant Glynn, the Town Moor Affair was inextricably linked with the wider national issues which comprised the Wilkes and Liberty movement, issues which centred on the abstract concept of English liberty.

4.4.5 1773 Newcastle Assizes - 10th August, 1773

Glynn's successful defence of the Burgesses' rights of management and access to Newcastle Town Moor at Newcastle Assizes was widely celebrated and reported within national newspapers including the *London Evening Post* (14th August, 1773 p.1), and *Craftsman's Say* (21st August, 1773 p.4). The Town Moor affair and the Burgesses victory in the defence of their

traditional rights had developed from a dispute over a hedge to a landmark case significant of the inalienable rights and liberty of Englishmen to enjoy their property.

The immediate result of the assize however was an order that an Act of Parliament be sought to confirm the rights of the Freemen in to the herbage of two milk cows each (Brand 1789:652). This finally agreed Parliamentary Act also included numerous additional clauses regulating the leasing of grounds on the moor, ultimately establishing that no more than 100 acres were to be leased at any one time, that no lease extended longer than seven years, and that the rents collected from leases were made available to the Guilds to be distributed as necessary between the infirm and widowed members (*ibid.:* 652-654)

The newfound security of position and confidence which the Burgesses of Newcastle gained as a result of the trial is well exemplified in a minute from the Cordwainers Guild which voted that a letter be sent to Mr. Ord [of Fenham who had built the controversial access road across the Town Moor in 1765] suggesting that if he should want to build his road, he should now make a formal request to 'those persons who by act of Parliament are empowered to let partitions thereof [Town Moor] for Improvement' (TWA- GU.CW/2/3 7th September, 1774). The wording of this minute is both strongly indicative that the Freemen were now fully in control of managing the uses of the Town Moor and that they were interested in improving it to the advantage of all Burgesses.

4.5 The Wider Impact of the Town Moor Affair on Newcastle's Radical Geography

The significance of the role of the Town Moor affair in contributing to the development of a radical sentiment within the city must not be underestimated. Whilst the significance of the affair in terms of the character and control of the Town Moor itself has been explored above, this subsection focuses on how it impacted the material and metaphorical landscapes of power in Newcastle-upon-Tyne generally. The arrival and presence of Serjeant Glynn in Newcastle and his victory in the Town Moor case sparked a wave of radical sentiment which swept through the city. A deeply illustrative way of charting the extent of this radical sentiment is through examining the construction and development of radical places within the city, coded as loci of protest. In particular this subsection explores the development of radical taverns and loci within the city in the years following 1773.

Fig. 23 Map showing the locations of venues in Newcastle with known Wilkite association. (Base map Hutton's 1770 Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

4.5.1 Rumblings of Radicalism – Radical sentiment in 1760s & early 1770s Newcastle

As briefly explored in chapter three, radical and Wilkite sentiment in Newcastle had simmered gently but persistently, throughout the 1760s and early 1770s producing, to use Kathleen Wilson's figures, (1998:357) sixteen political clubs, five petitions on Parliamentary corruption and reform, a remonstrance to the throne, two sets of parliamentary instructions, several different subscriptions (raising money for Wilkes), a dozen addresses and a few street demonstrations, along with one gentleman of the city who annually sent his first caught salmon of the season to Mr. Wilkes himself (*Newcastle Journal,* 27th May, 1769 p.3). Although the character of the Wilkes and Liberty movement in Newcastle has already been well examined in chapter three, this chapter deepens the preceding discussion by focusing particularly on the spatiality of the movement within the city.

During the early 1770s much of the activism in Newcastle was focused around two key locations; the Sandhill and the Forth House (see Fig.23). Significantly, these venues were both sites materialising the power of the City Corporation, the Sandhill being the seat of the Corporation in the Guildhall and the Forth House being a Corporation owned property and favourite haunt of the city's socio-political elite. Both of these locations were however also venues of pro-Wilkite activism. The Forth House was the centre of attention in 1769 when the City's Freemen met to sign a petition for the dissolution of Parliament in support of Wilkes (Sykes 1833:103) and likewise the Sandhill took centre stage in 1770 when, a subscription of support for Wilkes was opened at several coffeehouses in this area: Nelly's, The Exchange and Katy's (*Newcastle Journal,* 21st April, 1770 p.3) (Fig.23).

By opening Wilkite petitions and subscriptions within these heartlands of the Corporation, a powerful statement was being made, mobilising the example of John Wilkes' campaign against the Government as a threat challenging the equally oligarchical and autocratic character of the Corporation. It is perhaps also significant that these venues were places which can be understood as statements of elite discourses of style, taste and power (see section 3.5). Coffee-houses were the loci where members of the literati gathered to catch up on the news and to discuss matters social, political and economic (Barrell 2004:211) and likewise the Forth House was a place where elite businessmen regularly met and socialised (Brand 1789:418). The particular mobilisation of these places may therefore be an indication that those who supported reform, radicalism and the Wilkes and Liberty through these petitions were of a middling-sort; literate, and engaged in metropolitan and national politics through the consumption of the print culture widely available in coffee-houses. This argument is further supported when it is understood that the nature of the protests being engaged in at the Forth and Sandhill were

themselves well suited to elite support; subscriptions requiring disposable income and petitions being only open to the city's electorate. These conclusions are well supported by the discussion in section 3.5.2 of the Wilkes and Liberty dinners in Newcastle.

These more elite (or at least dominant to a lower other (see chapter three)) forms of Wilkism are juxtaposed to the forms of agitation employed by poorer persons, the best example of which from Newcastle occurred on the 4th June, 1771.

> Betwixt eight and nine o'clock the effigy of the Brentford priest (in a clerical habit) seated upon an ass, was carried through the streets into the Fleshmarket, and there, directly under **the sign of Mr. Wilkes' Head,** committee to the flames. On the breast was affixed a label with these words, *This is the reward of my lying, slandering and treachery;* and on his right sleeve a Middlesex Journal, the vehicle of the Parson's malicious invectives against the supporters of the Bill of Rights.
>
> (*Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal* June 15th, 1771 p.1)

This event is indicative of subaltern engagement with the Wilkes and Liberty movement in Newcastle, involving an effigy burning in The Fleshmarket particularly focused on a tavern with an obvious Wilkite association, a loci quite different to that of the Sandhill or the Forth (see Fig.23). The twin strands of Wilkes and Liberty; dominant and subaltern, as argued in section 3.6 are thus again apparent in the context of 1760s and 1770s Newcastle. What is perhaps most clear however is that during the later 1760s and early 1770s there was growing engagement in radicalism throughout Newcastle society and that activism was being focused on specifically selected loci. What was needed to further mobilise Newcastle's radical scene however, was a catalyst.

4.5.2 The Significance of Sergeant Glynn – Movement

The catalyst that arrived was of course the Town Moor affair. The festivities and celebrations with which Serjeant Glynn was welcomed into the City on the 6th August (in advance of his defence of the Burgesses in the Assizes) are strongly indicative of the importance attributed to the civic spaces of the city as potential arenas in which the discourse of power and control in the city could be contested. As recorded in the *Newcastle Chronicle* (14th August, 1773 p.3):

> Friday Mr. Serjeant Glynn, Recorder of London, (who was requested by the Bill of Rights Society to plead the cause of the Free Burgesses here, in defence of their right to the Town Moor) was met by some committee at Durham; but did not reach this town till eleven o'clock at night, by way of privacy. The Freemen and

> inhabitants of Gateshead, who were equally animated on the occasion, having learned that the Serjeant was expected in that night, assembled in great bodies, and having got possession of the churches, planted their guns, &c. Sent a messenger to Chester-le-Street, who returning, gave the signal of the Serjeant's approach by firing a gun at the turnpike-gate; upon which Gateshead and Newcastle bells struck up, several rounds of guns were fired, and before the chaise reached the Bank-head in Gateshead, it was surrounded by a great croud [sic.], who, in the fullness of their joy (in spite of all solicitations) took the horses, and drew it themselves, (amidst the loudest huzzas of the multitude) down the Battle-bank, along the Bridge and the Sandhill, up the Side, the Middle-street, along West-gate to the Sergeant's lodgings at the Forth, where, after three loud huzzas, they all retired almost instantaneously. Thos [sic.] who know the exceeding steepness of the Battle-bank and the Side, may guess at the Serjeant's apprehensions on being thus escorted down and up them, if he had time to form such amidst such congratulatory tones of our Newcastle dialect as must have highly diverted him, but at which we have not room to give our readers. After this the Serjeant never went out but in a chair, accompanied by Mr. Grieve (whose good offices on this occasion will never be forgotten) or some of the Committee, whose conduct was highly commendable in keeping all their brethren in the greatest decorum.
>
> (*Newcastle Chronicle,* 14th August, 1773 p.3)

This description goes to great lengths to describe the exact events and routeway which constituted Glynn's Grand entry into the City. Fig.24 depicts this route overlaid onto Hutton's 1770s map of the city. From this map it is immediately apparent that the venues within the city which had featured in earlier radical activism were being referenced in the choice of route. The Sandhill, the seat of the Corporation; The bottom of Flesh-Market, where the Wilkes Head was located; and the Forth House, where the petition to dissolve Parliament had been signed in 1769. Additionally the route navigated other venues in the city which materialised the power and authority of the Corporation, particularly the Bridge which had been rebuilt by the Corporation in 1772 following a great flood in 1771 in which it was washed away and St. Nicholas' Cathedral which was the ecclesiastical heart of the city.

In this grand entry, it is therefore apparent that the people of Newcastle were using movement as a strategy contributing to the recodification of these loci as radical spaces or at the very least to erode the significance of these sites as articulations of the corrupt, autocratic and oligarchic

governance of the City Corporation. The people of the City were iconoclastically breaking the Corporation's stranglehold over large-scale festivities taking place within the streets. The public spaces of the city had traditionally only been venues of celebration on selected event days sanctioned by the city's socio-political elite; particularly specific birthdays, saints' days, and anniversaries (Rogers 2001:237; Navickas 2015:177). These official celebrations were intended to visibly reinforce the Corporation's power within the city through carefully orchestrated theatrical processions and festivities; commonly from the Mansion House (the mayoral residence) to the Guildhall; or from the Guildhall to the Cathedral.

By taking it upon themselves to take to the streets in procession the crowd which welcomed Serjeant Glynn mimicking the Corporation's civic ceremonial movements. As Nicholas Rogers (2001:37) argues, 'Taking their cue from bourgeois radicals, plebeian subjects developed new forms of popular politics that broke the parodic conventions of crowd action and advanced more democratic notions of citizenship'. Likewise Navickas (2015:177) has eloquently and succinctly argued that 'processions are politics on the move.' It is clear then that through processing Serjeant Glynn through the city streets and in particular, past some of the key civic establishments of the city, the Burgesses of Newcastle were making a deeply nuanced and articulate statement in the discourse over who had the rights of access, ownership and control of the public-spaces of the city.

The very act of unhooking the horses from Glynn's carriage and drawing it by hand through the streets is an important radical statement of intent, linking this moment and equating its importance with the moment that John Wilkes departed the King's Bench Court having been cleared of outlawry in 1768 (Both events involved the horses of the respective carriages being unhitched and the carriages being hand drawn by a crowd.) (Cash 2006:66). A further parallel can be drawn between Glynn and Wilkes in that where John Wilkes' was viewed by his supporters as restoring liberty to London, Serjeant Glynn's was heralded as restoring liberty to Newcastle. This is particularly apparent for Glynn as materialised in a ring celebrating his victory in the Town Moor Case which depicts Victory carrying a cap of liberty aloft (Fig.26). This ring is discussed in greater detail below.

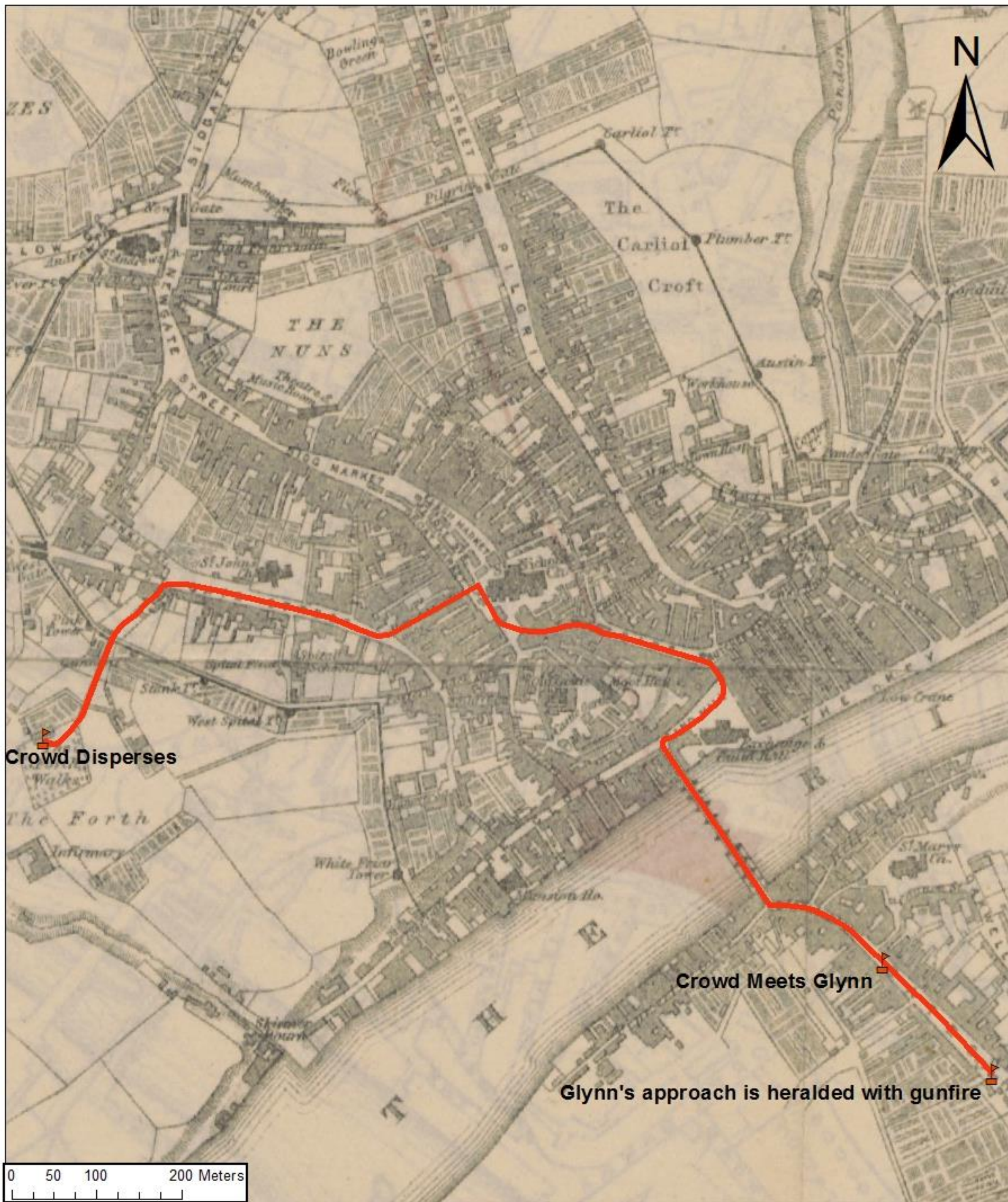


Fig. 24 *Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne showing the route by which Serjeant Glynn entered the city on 6th August 1773. – (Base map Hutton's 1770 Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)*

4.5.3 Serjeant Glynn's Victory

Following Serjeant Glynn's successful defence of the Freemen's cause in the Town Moor case (10th August, 1773), the victorious Freemen took to the streets in celebration;

> This is a Jubilee day here; the town is all in an uproar; our Freemen have won their trial and defeated the Magistrates entirely; nothing but Serjeant Glynn is to be heard in the streets. I wish their kindness and gratitude may not hurt him; it was with the greatest difficulty that he could get to or from Court; and he has been dragged all along the streets in his coach, by the Freemen into his lodgings. He has done their business effectually; and they have agreed to have a print of him put up in every Company's meeting house in the town.
>
> (*London Evening Post,* 12th August, 1773 p.1)

Likewise *Craftsman, or Say's Weekly News* (August 21st, 1773 p.4) printed an article recounting the whole proceedings of the case concluding with a description of the celebrations which read:

> This agreement gave universal satisfaction to the Burgesses, who testified their joy by ringing of bells, firing of guns, illuminations at night, &c. &c. Large parties paraded the town the whole day with music, and decked with blue ribbons; and their expressions of gratitude to the worthy Serjeant, who was escorted back to his lodgings by many hundreds of them with continued acclamations, cannot be described… and though many houses were illuminated (on the event) yet none were molested which were not so; nor was any individual insulted of what party soever [sic.]. Thus Liberty seemed to reign in its genuine purity; and all were permitted to act as they pleased – *A noble example of what Englishmen should be!*

Between these two accounts it is apparent that the fervency with which the people of Newcastle celebrated the Burgesses victory in the Town Moor Case was on a seemingly unprecedented scale. What is most significant in the context of the present study is that the meanings of Newcastle's public places were being renegotiated through these acts of processional and public celebration. As noted above, celebratory processions in eighteenth-century England were typically only held on specific occasions sanctioned by the city's socio-political elite (Rogers 2001:237). The jubilations following the Town Moor case however were spontaneous, and saw the people of the city venerating a decidedly non-establishment figure. On this occasion, in direct contrast to the officially sanctioned festivities, the majority populace of the city were celebrating their own cause, their own power and their own hero. By undertaking these

celebrations in the public spaces of the city the burgesses were, beyond simple frivolity of jubilation, articulating a clear statement challenging dominant control of the streetscapes of Newcastle. The point was being made that the streets were not exclusively domains controlled by the Corporation but rather that they were (or should be) ideologically unrestricted spaces.

That the streets were being transformed into (or perhaps restored as) places of liberty in thought, speech and act by these acts of movement is supported by the fact that even those who did not illuminate their windows in support of the Freemen were not molested nor were any individuals insulted regardless of their party (*Craftsman, or Say's Weekly News,* August 21st, 1773 p.4). Freedom of expression was seemingly the order of the day and was in marked contrast to the Corporation-enforced censorship of political expression within the Guilds which had characterised the months before the trial (Wilson 1998:346).

The concept of liberty being reintroduced to the streetscapes of Newcastle was further materialised in the rings which were presented to the Freemen's Committee, by the Taylor's Guild, following the Town Moor case (Fig.26). These rings, one of which still survives in the Freemen of Newcastle's collections, were made of gold, with an enamel signet set under a crystal and with the names of the Freemen's Committee engraved around the interior of the band, on the reverse of the signet was engraved 'vox populi, vox dei'. The signet itself depicted the goddess liberty triumphantly striding out of what can be interpreted as Newcastle Guildhall (though also interpreted as her Temple (Bradley 1990:261)). She is swathed in a blue robe (the cardinal colour of Wilkes and Liberty) and carries aloft the cap of liberty. The rings thus articulated the idea that victory in the Town Moor Case had freed liberty to roam the streets of Newcastle; clothed in blue making a clear linkage between Wilkes, the defender of liberty and the Town Moor case.

In these instances of street politics and celebrations then, the public spaces of Newcastle were being recoded to articulate a new popular sentiment of liberty and freedom of expression. The power of the Corporation to sanction and censor what took place in the streetscapes of the city had been undercut by their defeat in the Town Moor affair. Whilst these processional and jubilatory street politics were bold statements in the discourse over power relations within the city's body politics, they were inherently transient in nature, short lived events which whilst they may have helped in the construction of a communal memory left little or no material trace within the landscape.

Fig. 26 *Gold signet ring presented to each of the members of the Burgesses Committee to mark their victory in the Town Moor Case. The back is engraved 'Concordia Parvae res Crescunt' and 'Taylor's Comp to…' (naming each member of the committee). The exterior band is engraved 'Vox Populi, Vox Dei'. (collection of the Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne) [c.20mm ring Ø]*

Fig. 25 Glass sleeve-button insert with 'Phipps and Delaval' Slogan. (Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum MD – USA)

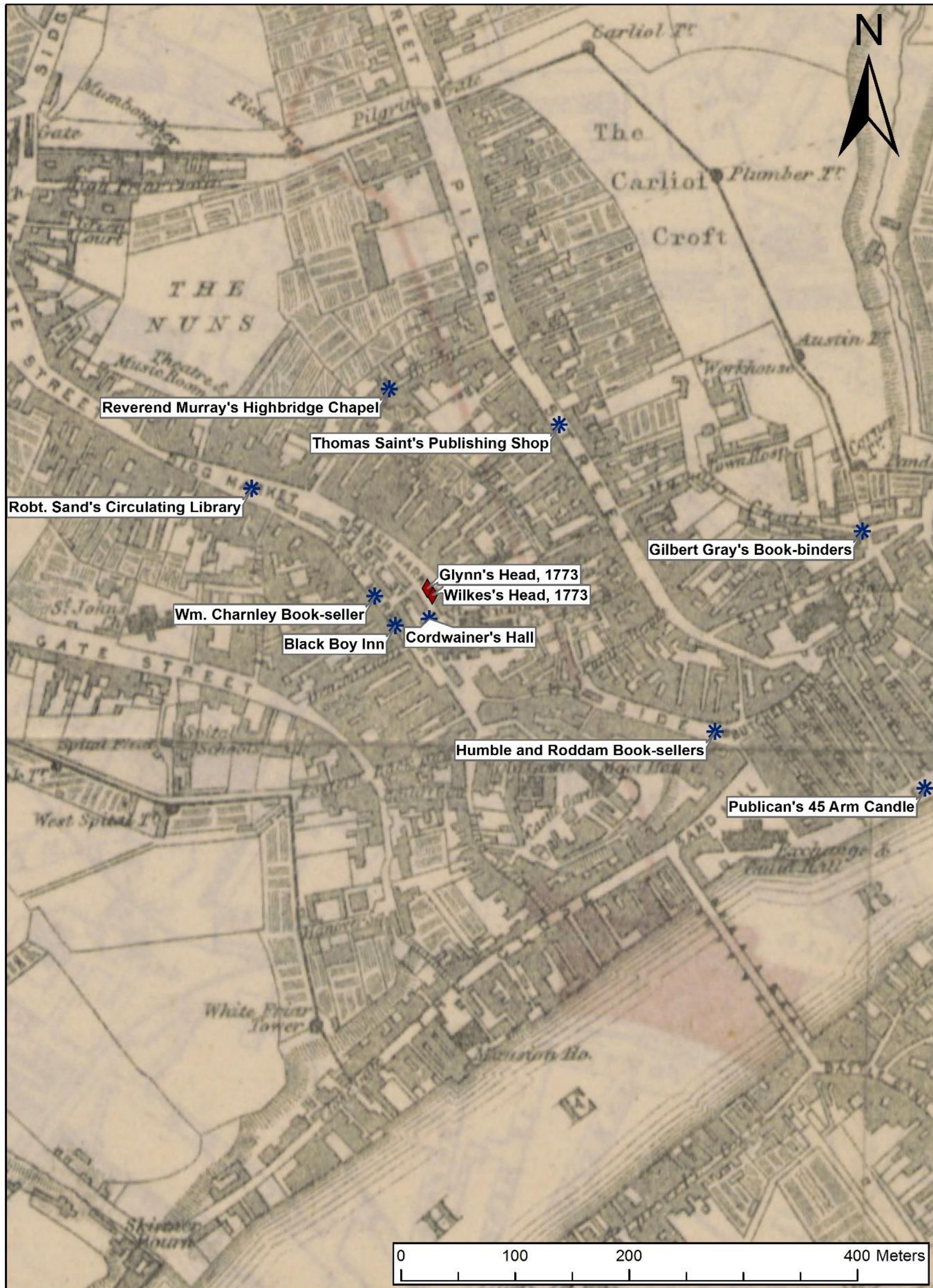


Fig. 27 *Radical Nexuses in Central Newcastle c.1773-4*

4.5.4 Cementing Radicalism in Newcastle's Streetscapes

Once the immediate festivities over the Town Moor Case had settled, Newcastle was left with a streetscape which had been ideologically, but not materially, altered. The buildings remained the same, the cobbles remained the same and the day-to-day activities carried out therein remained the same. On the 9th October, 1773 however, the City's principle Wilkite tavern, The Wilkes Head in Fleshmarket, was joined by another, the Glynn's Head also in Fleshmarket and replete with 'an elegant new sign of the worthy Serjeant Glynn (half length)… which is much admired for a piece of masterly execution' (*Newcastle Chronicle* 9th October, 1773 p.3).

It is worth nothing that it is highly likely that other taverns frequented by Wilkite sympathisers existed within the city such as 'the Sun', on Quayside where the 45 branched candle had been installed for the 1770 celebrations of Wilkes' freeing from the King's Bench Gaol. This case study however focusses on the taverns of the city, which asserted their political sympathies boldly and publicly, through naming and signage. It is notable the new 'Glynn's Head' also opened in the Fleshmarket, particularly given the area's existing heritage as the focus for the 1771 popular Wilkite demonstration in which the effigy of John Horne Tooke was burnt beneath the sign of the Wilkes Head [see above][12]. Additionally, the taverns would have been opposite the Cordwainers Hall, one of the main guilds which supported the Burgesses' cause in the Town Moor affair – and indeed which commemorated the Town Moor committee through hanging a brass plaque in the hall listing their Names alongside a portrait of Glynn himself (TWA – GU.CW/2/3 :August 23rd, 1773). Within a 150m radius of these two Wilkite taverns there were also three printing houses and lending libraries where radical print culture was readily accessible, and Rev. James Murray's High Bridge Chapel (see Fig.27).

It is apparent then that these two taverns existed within a nexus of radical loci clustered around the City's market area; an area which by its very character as a market was frequented by individuals of all social classes and was an inherently public space where individuals from around the country came to buy and sell, simultaneously exchanging ideas, philosophies and news. Mirroring this liberality in place, Scott argues that tavern spaces were similarly privileged venues 'for the transmission of popular culture – embodied in games, songs, gambling, blasphemy and disorder - that was often at odds with official culture' (Scott 1990:121). It must be noted here that Bakhtin also argued that markets (in Medieval Europe) offered spaces for antihegemonic discourse, as venues where gatherings of subalterns could take place without

[12] Horne Tooke was formerly a close ally of Wilkes but from 1770 onwards became an increasingly vehement critic of Wilkes' politics, character and motivations.

ceremony or elite orchestration and could therein engage in communal subversive acts (Bakhtin 1984). It is therefore apparent that, in direct contrast to the Sandhill where the Guildhall, Corn Exchange, and Merchant Venturers' hall existed and mediated authority and control over trade in the city, the markets of Newcastle were places which mediated resistance and liberty of expression.

Between the years 1773 and 1778, there was only one further Wilkite public house opened in Newcastle (Whitehead 1778:6) and this instance seems to be an outlier which defies explanation and is in fact only mentioned in passing in the description of the location for the premises of William Allinson – Attorney, whose offices were 'near Glyn's Head, Quayside' (*ibid.*).

Between 1778 and 1782 however a further two Wilkite establishments opened, both Glynn's Heads with one on Westgate Road and one of Battle-Bank in Gateshead (Whitehead 1778; 1782:30, 53). The gap between the opening of the first Glynn's head in 1773 and this second wave after 1778 is peculiar but it may relate to a waning of public interest in Glynn as a man no longer of the moment. The renaissance of 'Glynn's Heads' may then relate Glynn's death in 1779 and the taverns being opened as memorials to his memory within the City consciousness. This idea is further supported when, through looking at Fig. 32, it is understood that both of these later inns were situated along the route by which Glynn was given his grand entry to Newcastle in August 1773. It is also further apparent that the Wilkes head which had opened in the Fleshmarket in 1773 had closed or rebranded by 1782 as it does not appear in Whitehead's directory for that year, likewise the Glynn's head mentioned on Quayside is missing from this later directory (Whitehead 1782).

In the years following the Town Moor case, it is discernible that the ideologies and sentiments expressed during the victory celebrations and during Glynn's grand entry were being materialised as public houses. The ideology of liberty and the renegotiated relationship between Corporation and Burgesses was being made manifest in Newcastle's streets for all to see. Significantly, the people of Newcastle were venerating a new, self-chosen hero, elevating Glynn to the same level as those who more traditionally graced tavern signage, national heroes and royalty such as the Marquis of Granby, Admiral Vernon, the King, or the Queen (all of whom according to Whitehead's 1778 directory had public houses named after them in Newcastle).

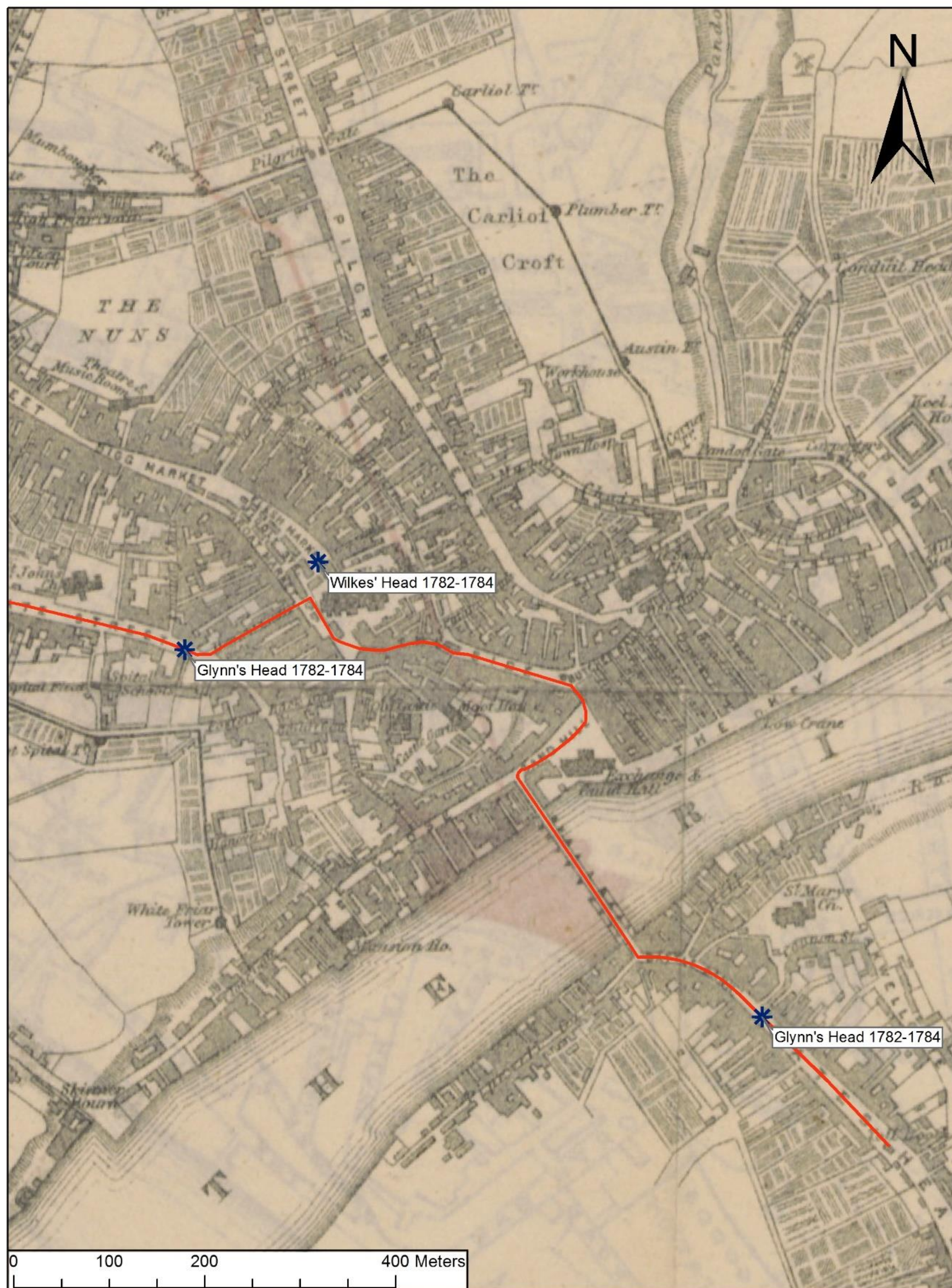


Fig. 28 *Wilkite Taverns Mentioned in Whitehead's 1782-4 Directory of Trade for Newcastle and Gateshead. (Base map Hutton's 1770 Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)*

A further indication of the importance of taverns in the codification of Newcastle's streetscapes as radical places can be read in the Corporation's 1781 crackdown on subversive ballad singers through banning singing-clubs in taverns (Uglow 2011:131–122). As has already been demonstrated in chapter three, taverns were essential venues in facilitating subaltern articulations of protest and dissent, through singing, toasting and communal reading/listening. The Corporation's proscription of singing clubs in taverns is therefore a clear indication that sequestered radical taverns were also facilitating Newcastle's subalterns to express subversive statements in the late 1770s. Whilst the songs that were being sung are not recorded, given the political character of the time and well progressed radical appropriation of Newcastle's streetscapes in 1781, it can be well surmised that the songs were generally subversive and anti-corporation / magistracy. That the Corporation felt it necessary to specifically proscribe 'singing-clubs' may further be taken as an indication of an underlying anxiety amongst the Corporation that they had lost control of the streetscapes and that their position of power was being undermined by popular political songs and music.

The Town Moor affair which had started out as a contest between two discrete bodies the Burgesses and Corporation of the city over land rights on a plot of ground over which only they had vested interests had spread into the material fabric of Newcastle itself. The taverns which emerged post-August 1773 materialised the memory of Serjeant Glynn's participation in the affair and the memory of the townsfolks' participation in welcoming this national radical figure to the city.

The fact that by 1782 there were four Glynn's Heads to only one Wilkes Head in Newcastle is a strong indication of the importance attached to the local presence of Glynn during the Town Moor affair. Wilkes had never travelled as far north as Newcastle and so remained an abstract figure to the townsfolk. The very act of Glynn's travelling to the town, brought the majority of Newcastle's population into direct contact with a leading national radical activist for the first time and meant that, Glynn became synonymous with the local radical politics of Newcastle. Likewise and vice versa, the political battles over the Town Moor thus also became entangled in wider national radicalism and particularly the Wilkes and Liberty movement.

4.5.5 1774 Election - Referencing the Town Moor and Creating Radical Places in Newcastle.

In the years following the Town Moor affair, and as a direct result of its success and association with Serjeant Glynn, the vein of radicalism in Newcastle deepened as the burgesses (unsuccessfully) stood radical candidates in both the 1774 general election and 1777 by-

election. This intensification of radical sentiment in the city was no doubt abetted by the establishment of the taverns and inns and the development of the Fleshmarket area as a radical nexus within the city. As Navickas (2015:32) argues that ‘popular politics originated in the pub… The public house encapsulated political associational life…’

Significantly, supporters of the radical candidates for the 1774 election drew upon the traditions of radical and Wilkite expression which had been established in the previous few years in the events surrounding the Town Moor affair. When the candidates – Hon. Capt. Constantine Phipps and Thomas Delaval Esq. – to be nominated by the Burgesses as electoral candidates Phipps and Delaval were treated to a grand entry in exactly the same manner as that afforded to Serjeant Glynn the previous year

> Wednesday evening, between nine and ten o’clock, the Hon. Constantine Phipps and Thomas Delaval Esqrs. (in consequence of an invitation from the meeting of the stewards of the incorporated companies) arrived here from London --- The streets and road from the Bigg Market to Gateshead turnpike-gate (upwards of two miles) were lined with the greatest number of people ever collected together on any occasion here supposed to the amount of 10,000, all expressing the greatest anxiety for their appearance ---- when they arrived at the turnpike-gate, a number of sailors and mechanics (Freemen of the town) **stopped the carriage, and, notwithstanding, all the endeavours of the gentlemen, took out the horses, and drew it from thence,** with amazing celerity, to Mr. Nelson’s the Black Bull, in the Bigg Market, where they alighted. The acclamations of the people as they passed along, stand unequalled on any event; whilst the ringing of bells and firing of guns, contributed not a little to heighten their exultations.
>
> (*London Evening Post,* 12th July, 1774 p3 emphasis my own)

Likewise, when the pair returned to Newcastle to celebrate the 10th August – the anniversary of the Burgesses victory in the Town Moor Case- Capt. Phipps was again given a grand entrance in the same manner with Thomas Delaval only escaping the dubious privilege through arriving by surprise the night before.

> Tho. Delaval, Esq; with his Lady arrived here on Monday afternoon. They were saluted after their arrival, with the ringing of bells, &c. As the town was not apprised of the time of his coming in, he passed to his lodgings without the usual plaudits of the Burgesses. And, on Tuesday night, about eleven o’clock, the Hon. Capt. Phipps

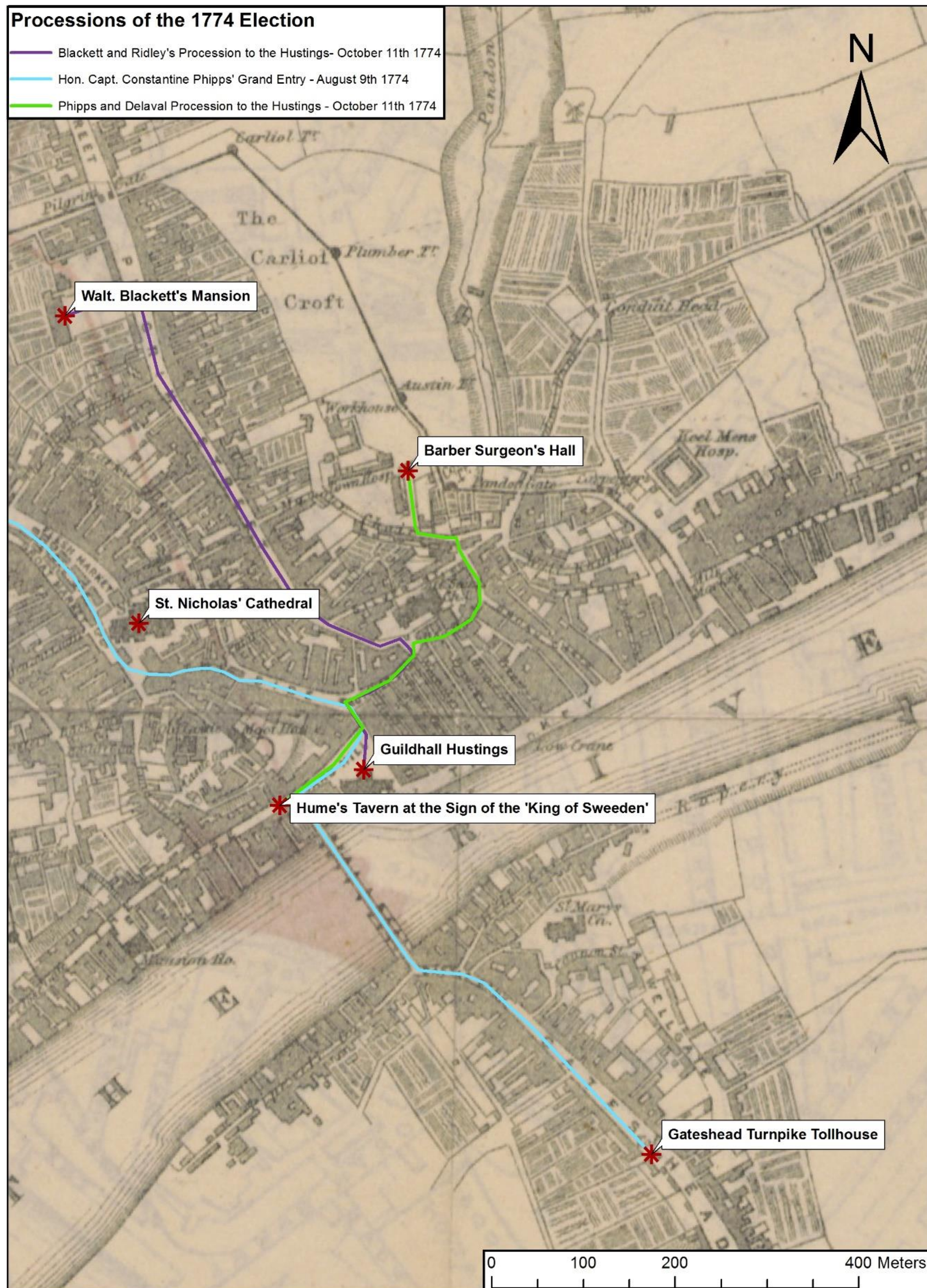


Fig. 29 *Processions made by the parties contesting the 1774 General Election in Newcastle with the origins and termini marked (Base map: Hutton's 1770 Map of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)*

> also arrived here. Tho the night was exceeding dark and wet, yet some hundreds of the burgesses, who had got information of his coming in, waited on the road almost as far as Gateshead turnpike, where they received him with loud acclamations **took the horses from the carriage, and with flambeaus carried before them,** drew him from thence to Mr. Nelsons in the Bigg-Market; after he alighted, they gave him several huzzas, and then departed in an orderly and becoming manner. The bells of St. Nicholas and Gateshead rung on the occasion, accompanied with several rounds of gunfire.
>
> (*London Evening Post,* August 13th, 1774 p.4 emphasis my own)

Whilst the route differed in its terminus from the procession given to Glynn (see Figs.28 and 33), the character of the festivities were much the same. It seems apparent therefore the route used to welcome Serjeant Glynn had become established as a radical routeway through Newcastle's streetscapes and was being re-mobilized to indelibly link Phipps and Delaval with Newcastle radicalism and therein with the Town Moor affair. It is further significant that Phipps was deposited at lodgings in the Bigg-Market; part of that radical nexus of the city which had been established in the market area.

The significance of procession and the coding of the city streetscapes as radical loci was also demonstrated clearly during the hustings on the 13th of October, 1774 when Phipps and Delaval's entourage of supporters, comprised in large part by the poor as is emphasised in the account of the event, processed from the Barber-Surgeon's Hall to 'Hume's Tavern' (likely at the sign of the King of Sweeden [sic.] at the east end of the Close (Whitehead 1778:40)) all sporting green and buff coloured badges (see Fig.29). In contrast, the incumbents' (Water Blackett and Matthew Ridley) procession with the elite of the city led from Walter Blackett bart.'s own house at the top end of town to the Guildhall all wearing purple and red coloured badges (Wilson 1998:351) (see Fig.29).

There is a clear significance to the origins and termini of these processional route ways. Blackett and Ridley's route linked two places which visibly and obviously articulated the power of the established socio-political elite milieu of the city whilst Phipps and Delaval's procession united two places which articulated power of subaltern infrapolitics and hidden transcripts in the city; the tavern and Company Hall. Indeed the choice of the Barber-Surgeon's Hall as the starting place for the radical candidates is itself significant in that Bayles and Gibson, the pair who were charged with trespass in the Town Moor Case, were themselves Surgeons and members of that guild, again overtly associating Phipps and Delaval with the Town Moor Affair.

In these processions it is also clearly apparent that material culture and visual articulations of sympathy and support played important roles as the badges which the followers wore were instrumental in mediating their identity. Much of the material culture of the Phipps and Delaval campaign drew upon the established repertoire of objects which had been successfully employed in the Wilkes and Liberty Movement as mediators of political sympathy; sleeve-buttons (cuff-links), cockades and badges. In particular a single sleeve-button inset recovered from Baltimore County (Maryland USA), bears the inscription 'Phipps and Delaval' (Cofield 2016) (Fig.25). This piece of political material culture, a singular survival of Newcastle's 1774 radical election campaign, demonstrates clearly the existence of a material dimension to the electioneering. Sleeve-buttons as mediators of political sympathy were an established form of propaganda by 1774 and this particular example is similar to other Wilkite examples which bear inscriptions of 'No 45', 'Wilkes and Liberty 45' and 'Liberty'.

As pieces of portable material culture, designed to be worn openly on the cuff of a shirt, which according to 1770s fashion would have been visible below the coat cuff (Styles 2007). The sleeve-buttons therefore indicate that the message of Phipps and Delaval was not intended to be confined to secluded and sequestered spaces away from the eyes of the authorities but rather to visibly express their wearers' sympathies in whatever place they were occupying. These artefacts were therefore part of a process of liberalizing the public spaces of Newcastle. In the wake of the Town Moor affair, as has been explored above, the Corporation's control over activities carried out in the city's public spaces had been eroded and now material culture with overt political sentiments subverting the city's traditional socio-political elites. Likewise, ribbons and badges of recognisable colour and form are immediately obvious and legible expressions of political sympathy and constituents of the repertoire of political symbols deployed as statements in the discourse on control and liberty within the public spaces of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

A further indication that the Radical election campaign of Phipps and Delaval in 1774 was closely linked with the Town Moor Affair is a report reproduced in the *London Evening Post* (11th August, 1774 p.4). The report relates that on the anniversary of the Burgesses' victory in the Town Moor Case, some of Newcastle's Freemen, then in London, met at the Hole in the Wall Tavern on Fleet Street to celebrate the occasion; all of whom were specifically mentioned as being friends to Phipps and Delaval. As well as demonstrating the relationship between Phipps and Delaval and the Town Moor Case, the fact that this meeting was held in the Hole in the Wall Tavern at number 45 Fleet Street is highly significant as this venue was a radical hub within later-eighteenth-century London and regular haunt of Newcastle radicals whilst in the

City**.** The Town Moor affair was therefore, clearly tied intimately to national radicalism and indeed held an interest to all 'Friends of Liberty'.

4.6 A Deeper Story to be Told

This chapter has told the story of how later-eighteenth-century Newcastle-upon-Tyne was constructed and negotiated as a place (that is with implicit meanings in its materiality) through a series of contests between the Freemen and which drew strongly on both the urban streetscapes of the city and extra-urban 'Town Moor'. This chapter has particularly highlighted how these places and their meanings were mobilized and negotiated as key weapons in the power struggles fought between the Corporation and Freemen of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and how these struggles themselves were materialised throughout the city and the Town Moor. The spaces of Newcastle-upon-Tyne however were not just mobilized but were actively shaped and negotiated in their meanings through statements made by both sides of the struggle, articulating different ideological messages and discourses. Beyond simply reflecting the ideologies of the Freemen and Corporation, the landscape was implicit in recursively structuring how these two parties identified themselves in relation to both the urban and extra-urban spaces of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Through considering sources in combination, this chapter has advanced the story of later-eighteenth-century Newcastle-upon-Tyne beyond that which can be revealed from textual sources alone. By considering the diverse source materials which this chapter has drawn on equally as entwined in transcripts, this chapter has elucidated some of the anxieties and tensions which were materialised in Newcastle's urban and extra-urban landscapes; the anxieties materialised in William Ord's gates, Joshua Hopper's ditches and hedges and the hidden agency of the crowds recoding the meanings of the city-streetscape in support of Serjeant Glynn. Such resistance and anxiety is rarely legible in textual sources alone, nor is it legible from examining the spatiality of the Town Moor and Newcastle in isolation. Thus neither source can claim greater importance or value as it is only though the deep contextualization of each in combination that the nuances of how discourses of power, improvement and domination were negotiated in later-eighteenth-century Newcastle-upon-Tyne become clear.

Chapter 5 Marsden Grotto

This case study focusses on the role played by Marsden Grotto as a statement of protest and resistance in the discourse on private land ownership, landlord-ship and tenancy in later-eighteenth-century England. Marsden Grotto is one of the many naturally occurring caves in the limestone cliffs between South Shields and Sunderland on the coast of modern day Tyne and Wear (formerly County Durham) (see. Fig.30). The grotto is still extant, though much altered, as a restaurant and can be accessed by a lift taking customers down the 35 metre high cliffs at Marsden. The episode of the long history of Marsden Grotto on which this case centres concerns the period between 1782 and 1792 when the premises were first permanently occupied by John (Jack the Blaster) and Jessie Bates in the wake of a dispute over tenancy in South Shields.

5.1 A Story of Smuggling, Treasure and Foul Play

The history of Marsden Grotto is complex and entangled with legends of treasure, smuggling, piracy, murder and secret tunnels into the cliffs; it is a history which has captured the minds of generations of individuals who have lived on that stretch of the Tyne and Wear coast. The actions of Jack and Jessie Bates in establishing for themselves a home at the site however all-too-often constitutes a mere footnote in a story largely concerned with them being the first people to live there.

The primary objective of this case study is to demonstrate that Marsden Grotto was a place articulating protest and resistance over land ownership in the later-eighteenth century. This objective is achieved through researching the life stories of Jack and Jessie Bates in order to reveal the nature and methods of their resistance and of the hidden transcript of protest which existed within later-eighteenth-century tenant communities.

The only extant dedicated work researching Marsden Grotto is a book by Michael Hallowell (2013) which focused on the folkloric elements of the story of the grotto and its inhabitants. Hallowell's book is predominantly concerned with pursuing the narrative of Marsden Grotto itself, focusing on its size, form and function over the years. His primary motivation, as a journalistic writer, is telling a story; one of treasure, smuggling, piracy and intrigue and his discussion of the causes behind the Bates' decision to inhabit a cave is restricted to a few functionalist sentences:

Fig. 30 *Ordnance Survey Map Showing Location of Marsden Grotto in Relation to South Shields*

> Without warning their landlord suddenly increased the rent on their home to an exorbitant degree and, at the age of 80, Jack and his Wife found themselves facing homelessness. He tramped the streets of South Shields, Whitburn, Cleadon and the surrounding areas desperately looking for a dwelling…At the foot of Marsden Cliffs there was a large cave… He quickly realised that it could be transformed into an unusual but reasonably comfortable home.
>
> (Hallowell 2013:42)

There are however also a small number of eighteenth-century newspaper and personal accounts referring to the Bates' presence at Marsden which provide key evidence as to the nature of the Bates' habitation and their motives in moving there (*Newcastle Chronicle,* 15th March, 1783 p.2; *Newcastle Courant,* 20th July, 1782 p.2; *Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.1; Spence 1794-1795). These primary accounts are predominantly concerned with describing the situation of the Bates for readers and generally give only the detail considered necessary to evoke the romantic and unusual nature of the Bates' home. These short evocations of the Bates' life at Marsden are interrogated below, using Hall's approach to read between the lines of these elite-produced sources and reveal greater details about how the Marsden Grotto should be considered as a place of protest.

In addition to these primary source materials, secondary sources provide further (although often conflicting and ambiguously sourced) information about the Bates and Marsden (Sykes 1833:323; Yellowly 1887:126; Hodgson 1903:430). These secondary accounts are largely derivatives of the primary newspaper accounts with some anecdotal material added to 'flesh out' the story. The occasional conflicts which occur between the primary and secondary sources are investigated below and are interrogated to reveal inconsistencies and ambiguities in the transcripts of the dominant parties who wrote the official histories of Jack the Blaster and the Marsden Grotto.

One further piece of evidence in the story of Jack the Blaster and Marsden Grotto is the still surviving troglodytic home of the Bates' although it has been much enlarged and altered over the centuries. As a piece of surviving evidence, the grotto must be understood as a palimpsest altered over the centuries to respond to and articulate changing discourses. The meanings of the Grotto were/are therefore not fixed but contingent to the discourses which it embodied. It is therefore necessary to try and regress Marsden Grotto as a site to its earliest form to explore its

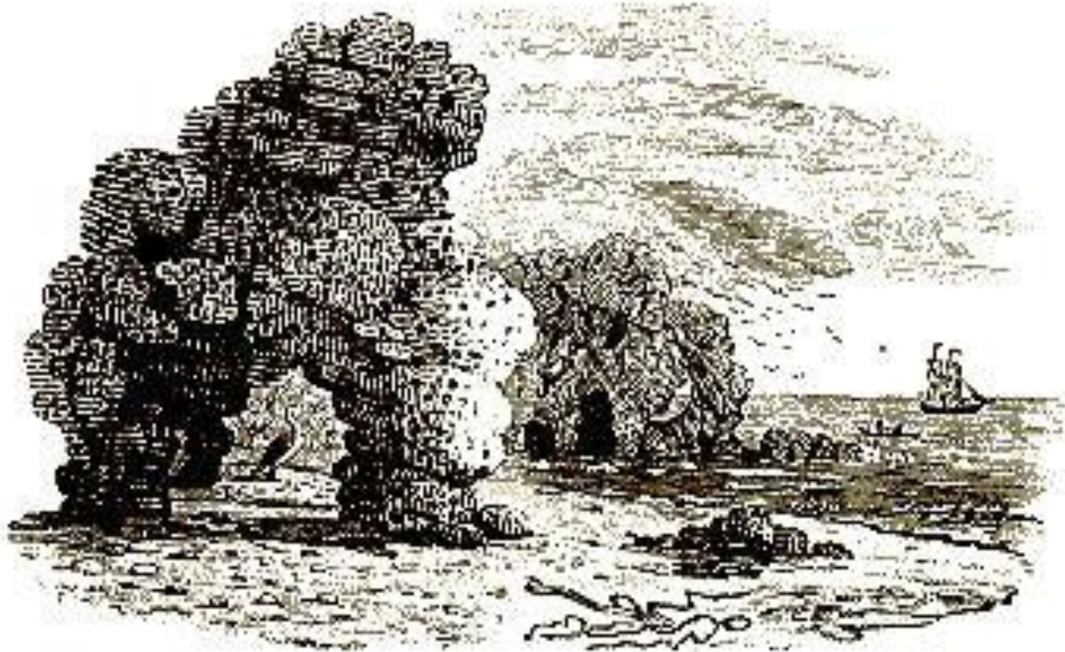


Fig. 31 *Thomas Bewick's engraving of Marsden Rock (Bewick 1804)*

Fig. 32 *'View of Marston [sic.] great rock' by William Beilby c.1772-7 – Circle marks location of possible aperture in the rock near the site of the original Grotto. Duke of Northumberland's Collection– Volume Record Number 03396*

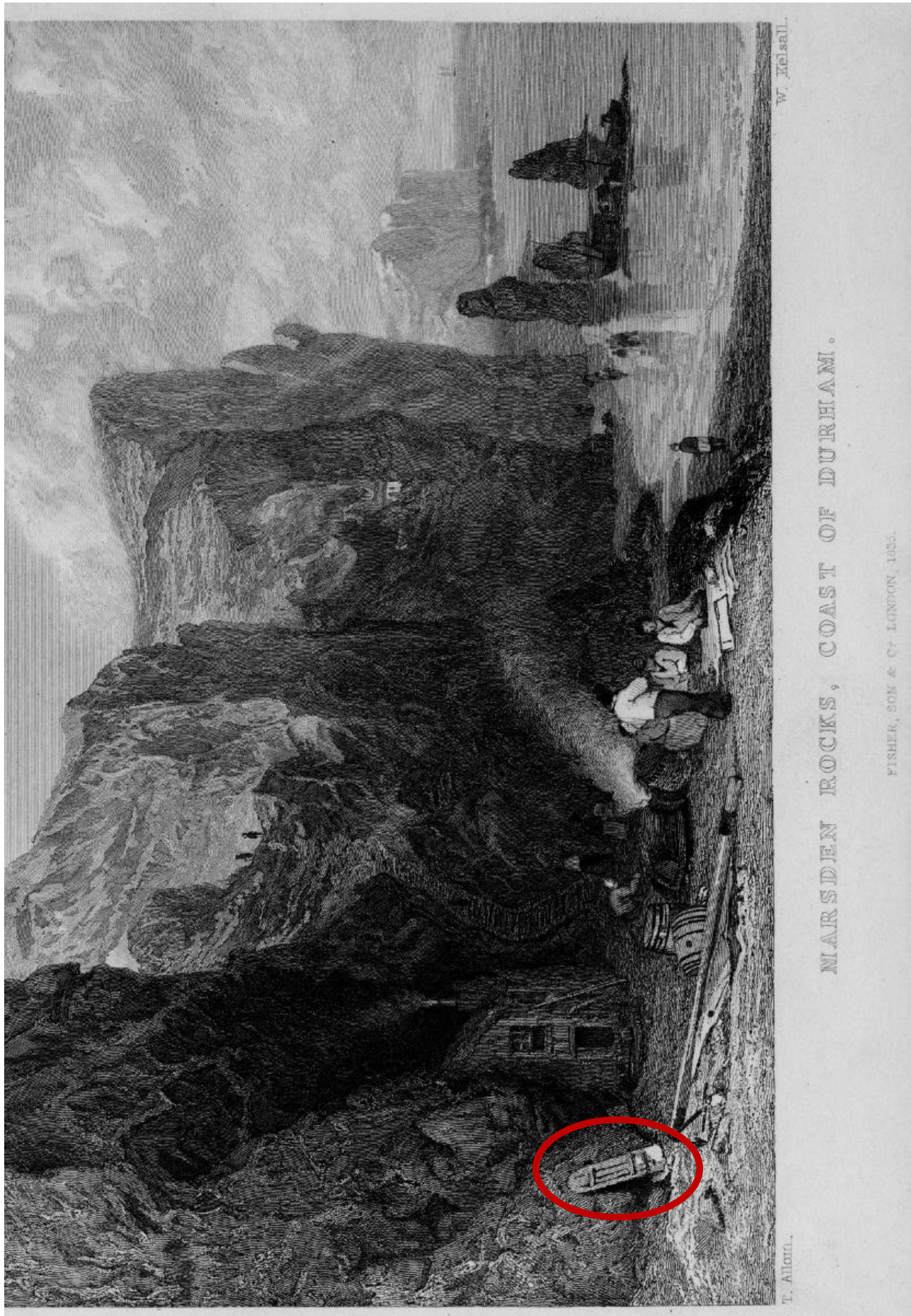


Fig. 33 *Engraving of Marsden Grotto by Thomas Allom c.1832-5 - the doorway into the rockface (circled) is possibly the original entrance to the Bates' home. (Rose 1832:176)*

development as a place of protest in the later eighteenth-century. The Marsden Rocks area was usefully captured in a watercolour by William Beilby c.1772-7 (Fig.32) however this was at least 3-4 years before the Bates arrived. It is however tempting to consider that a dark speck painted on the cliff face to the left of the great rock (circled) represents the original grotto aperture, the mark being in roughly the right place. Marsden rock was also illustrated by Thomas Bewick c.1797 in a woodcut for the first edition of Bewick's 'History of British Birds' (see. Fig.31 (Bewick 1804)). Unfortunately, however, Bewick's engraving does not depict the Bates' home at Marsden but nonetheless provides a useful illustration of the character of Marsden Rocks as a wild and rugged, picturesque and romantic situation.

Fig.33. Provides a further useful and detailed illustration of Marsden Grotto – although significantly later (c. 1832) The illustration shows a set of stairs reputedly carved out by Jack himself and also a tantalizing image of a doorway into the rockface which may be the original entrance to the Bates' home. The sequencing of the features in this image are further explored throughout this chapter.

A combination of the anecdotal and folkloric evidence gathered by Hallowell, the primary and secondary source material from the newspapers, Spence, Yellowly &c. and the materiality of the dwelling itself therefore enables an interdisciplinary approach to be taken to the case of Jack and Jessie Bates allowing us to unpick and examine the nature of the grotto as a statement of protest within the discourse of tenantry and land ownership in eighteenth-century England.

5.2 A Landscape of Domination

5.2.1 Landlords and Tenants; Improvement and Stagnation

In order to fully understand how the Bates' actions in establishing themselves at Marsden Grotto articulated a statement of protest, it is primarily important to establish the nature of the landscape of domination in which the Bates lived. The chief influencing factor in the Bates experience of domination and most commonly cited cause for their move to Marsden Grotto was their relationship with their landlord. The landlord-tenant relationship was pervasive in later-eighteenth-century society, with the majority of the working class, and indeed many members of the elite renting homes. This system of landownership was intrinsically a system of domination and subordination with the landlord dominant and the tenant subaltern.

The forms and terms of tenancy however varied from *copy-hold* based on the traditional manorial and customary feudal grounds, to *lease-hold* where a fixed term of rent and occupation was agreed upon, to *tenant-at-will* where the tenancy was contracted on a short term basis with

frequent renewals but little security. The most common of these tenancy forms by the later eighteenth century were lease-hold and tenant-at-will tenancies (Clay 1985:207) and certainly these are the most applicable forms of tenancy for industrial, non-agricultural, workers such as the majority were in South Shields. It is likely therefore that it was under such a tenant-at-will lease that the Bates occupied their premises in South Shields, and certainly this form of tenancy would allow them to depart and relocate freely, an ability which they seem to have exercised in moving to Marsden.

Research on landlord tenant relationships in the later eighteenth century has increasingly focused on urban and industrial contexts, in particular research by archaeologists including Michael Nevell (2011), Eleanor Casella (2005), Caron Newman and Richard Newman (2008), Paul Belford (2001), and Sarah Tarlow (2007:127) have offered important insights into the living conditions and circumstances of the urban laboring classes. The contribution which archaeological research makes to the scholarship on eighteenth-century urban housing, and tenancy is of immense value as Nevell argues 'archaeology is now the only way of revealing the extent and quality of this housing in most of these industrial cities' (2011:595). Archaeological interest in urban and industrial housing is however not solely predicated on the quality and extent of the housing and several studies have additionally considered the concepts of 'enforced' top-down improvement and resistance to this, focusing on the ways in which resistance to elite promoted improvement was enacted by subalterns in domestic spaces (see for example Belford (2001) and Tarlow (2007)).

Research on non-urban and non-industrial tenancy has however also received significant attention, particularly research on interactions between tenant farmers and estate owners (Stead 2003:173). With particular significance to this study, Adrian Green (2000; 2008; 2010) has undertaken a limited study of habitations, contrasting County Durham (including South Tyneside) and Norfolk as case studies and illustrating the nature of housing in proto-industrial and rural communities in the later-eighteenth century. Green characterizes the County Durham landscape as one in which the population lived on the margins of collieries, agricultural land and established villages, and experienced fragile employment and frequent mobility (Green 2010:125). Green's broad characterization of the landscape of County Durham here is immediately concordant with what is known of the Bates; that they were known to be mobile, originating in Allendale, and moving to an area where industry, agriculture and established villages existed cheek by jowl. Green's broad characterization here further suggests that the Bates' experience was not unique and was shared by many.

In addition to the forms of traditional tenancy detailed above, Green highlights one further form which was common in eighteenth-century Durham, tied housing (Green 2010:135). Tied housing refers explicitly to housing provided by industrialists for their employees and was particularly common in lead and coal mining communities though it was also present within salt making, agriculture and manufacturing (Green 2008). Tied housing represented a similar form of domination to that of traditional tenancy but the level of control which could be exerted over the workers was much greater. Work by Jeffries *et al.* (2009) on nineteenth-century working class housing in London and by Mary Beaudry (Beaudry 1989; Beaudry et al. 1991) on nineteenth-century tied 'boarding' houses in Lowell Massachusetts has demonstrated however that regardless of how regulated the lives of the tenantry was supposed to be, resistance was still covertly practiced through means such as alcohol consumption, at odds with the promoted ethics of temperance (Beaudry 1989:28; Jeffries *et al.* 2009:339).

David Petts remarks upon the presence of tied-housing in his research into non-conformity in the North Pennines, noting that the lead mining companies purchased existing towns and established new ones for their workers (Petts 2011:465). Through controlling the domestic spaces of the towns in which their workers lived, the lead mining companies were able to advance their religious and temperance policies amongst their workers; no public houses were built in the new company towns but ecclesiastical, and educational provision was made easily available (*ibid.*). The company towns of the North Pennines and the domination which accompanied them would undoubtedly have been experienced first-hand by the Bates in their time working in the lead mining communities of Allendale and as Green (2010:135) argues would not have been unusual in other communities which relied on tied housing.[13]

Whilst tenancy and tied housing in particular were contractual arrangements which exploited the most basic of human needs for shelter, to suggest that they were constantly the subject of tension and resistance would be misleading. The lack of security in tenant-at-will and similarly in tied-housing contracts (whereby loss of job equalled loss of home) certainly contributed to tensions though it also facilitated freedom of mobility and often benefitted the tenant in that they were not held responsible for repairs or maintenance of the property- the landlord being responsible (Clay 1985:209). Likewise whilst tied housing bound individuals to a place of work, employers often undertook to gain the support of their employees through a paternalist stance of providing education, good quality housing and other facilities (Green 2008) a theme

[13] E.g. Sir Thomas Blackett *Bart*., a mine-owner in Allendale, built housing in Allenheads during the later eighteenth-century for the purpose of accommodating his workforce (English Heritage 2017; Finlayson & Hardie 2009:10)

commensurate with the ethic of improvement as detailed by Tarlow (2007:127). The tenant occupying tenant-at-will and tied housing was also in a position of great discursive power in negotiating their relationship with the landlord, the option to leave the letting was always available as leverage and indeed both David Stead and Christopher Clay demonstrate, albeit in reference to tenant farmers, that a known tenant even in arrears was considered preferable for a landlord to an unoccupied property and the accompanying expense of finding a new tenant (Clay 1985:211; Stead 2003:209).

Sir Frederick Eden's *The State of the Poor* (1797), which compiled and related the conditions of poverty throughout parishes in England, provides a valuable account of the poor in South Shields Parish highlighting what Eden considered to be the rude standards of living therein. Eden's account provides a useful insight into both the character of the system of tenantry within the parish and the character of the parish itself. 'The town is ill paved, and very dirty: the houses are ill built; a circumstance, which in an opulent sea-port, is ascribed to the leasehold tenure under the church; and it is supposed to be owing to the same cause… that the land around Shields scarcely exhibits a single tree.' (Eden 1797:164). The leasehold system of tenure was one whereby a fixed term and contract of tenure was agreed between landlord and tenant. That this was the most common system of tenure within later-eighteenth-century South Shields however made the inhabitants a captive market for the single major landlord (the Dean and Chapter of Durham). Many of the tenants then sublet their properties further resulting in as many as ten to twelve families occupying a single- often poor quality- dwelling in South Shields by the end of the eighteenth century (Green 2000:78).

The domination which the Dean and Chapter of Durham had over South Shields is exemplified in the fact that the houses were ill built with little regard for the inhabitants and that there was little landowner interest in improving the town despite there being 'a great public spirit in the inhabitants for improvement, and could the tenure be changed or commuted, (a measure which seems to be practicable, even without diminishing the revenues of the church) this port would very soon rival Liverpool and Bristol.'(Eden 1797:165-166). These suggestions by Eden, himself a member of the landed gentry indicate the exploitative nature of the Dean and Chapter of Durham as landlords for South Shields. As estate managers, they disassociated themselves from the mundanity of their responsibilities; allowing their properties to be sublet by local land-lords with limited accountability. This 'hands off' management style allowed a level of ambiguity in the contracts as to responsibilities which facilitated the exploitative nature of sublet tenancy in South Shields (Green 2000:78).

Of relevance here is the work of Sarah Tarlow on the ideology of 'Improvement'(Tarlow 2007), since it is clear that Eden was documenting the state of the poor with a view to effecting their improvement. Tarlow argues that it was a widely held belief amongst later-eighteenth-century improvers that 'The moral improvement of the town could thus be addressed by changing its physical features. First to make the town more like the (idealised) morally pure 'countryside'; and secondly by making it physically clean and light' (Tarlow 2007:100). Belford (2001:106) likewise argues that it was the views of outsiders that have been used to colour in the blank space of what was known about subaltern communities and that the idea of these urban-spaces as needing improvement reflects an elite view of these communities rather than the views of the communities themselves. I argue therefore that Eden's work documenting the state of the poor arose from his desire to improve their situation and reform the poor morally, based on an elite perspective of what the community of South Shields should be.

It is important to note here that Eden was also strongly critical of the exploitative landlords in South Shields as stifling the town. Eden did not however regard the landowning Dean and Chapter of Durham as maliciously dominating but rather considered that the poor conditions under which the tenantry lived resulted from the Dean and Chapter's *laissez faire* approach to landlordship facilitating exploitative subletting. As an institution, the Church represented a decidedly old fashioned concept of improvement the chief objective of which was the spiritual and moral improvement of the soul with the aim of getting to Heaven – an objective which could be achieved primarily through attendance at church services, not through living in clean and light environs. The improvement of the housing in South Shields would therefore have been low on the list of priorities for the Dean and Chapter of Durham.

5.2.2 Poor Laws, Prisons, and Workhouses

As a background to the landscape of domination through tenancy, it is essential to appreciate the role of the poor laws and debtors prisons which existed to catch those who fell foul of the system and found themselves homeless or in arrears. The parish poor laws operated on a system whereby the parish provided basic rent-free accommodation in exchange for work. This accommodation commonly comprised either small cottages or dedicated workhouses which could be allocated to those who were eligibly 'of the parish' a status achievable either through baptism within that parish or by writ of magistrate (Broad 2000:152). Whilst there has been a significant amount of archaeological research on workhouses, much of this has focused on the buildings of the 1834 'New Poor Law' (See for example Morrison 1999; Lucas 2002; Newman 2013; 2014). Archaeological studies of pre-1834 poor-law workhouses are however

significantly fewer in number with Morrison's (1999) overview and gazetteer of these early institutional structures offering the best insight into their value as an archaeological resource.

For the Bates living in the Parish of St. Hilda's in South Shields the alternative to employment and tenancy was a poor house, the provision of which was 'farmed out' as a commercial enterprise to one Richard Rain in November 1782. The details of this arrangement are related in Hodgson's 1903 history of the Borough of South Shields:

> Richard Rain undertook 'during the space of one whole year, at his own proper costs and charges, to find and provide for all such poor people as shall be duly registered in the poor-book kept for the said township, or lawfully entitled to relief, collection and maintenance, and be sent by the Churchwardens and Overseers to the Poor House for the township of South Shields, good and sufficient meat and drink according to the Bill of fare signed by the parties.' He was to provide washing, fire, physic and wearing apparel, pay the expense of removal of paupers from the township (law costs excepted), and of paupers whose settlement had been saddled on the township, in being brought thereto. He had to meet all other charges except funeral expenses, rates, and taxes. He was to reside rent free in the poorhouse with his family, employ the paupers for his own benefit, and receive from the township £400 per annum. According to an inventory attached, the poorhouse, which appears to have been meagerly furnished, consisted of sixteen rooms and a bake house.
>
> (Hodgson 1903:130)

It was against this background of poor relief that the poor of South Tyneside contended and indeed this system of 'farming out' the poorhouses for private enterprise and gain was not uncommon across England (Murphy 2013:1). The commonality of the pauper farm system was matched by its reputation for poor treatment and exploitation of 'inmates' and indeed many paupers therefore preferred to make their way as best they could without having to resort to falling on the privatized pauper farms (*ibid.*6). Parish welfare was not always however to be disdained and in many parishes it provided a respectable retirement plan for the elderly and infirm (Broad 2000:155).

Within the confines of the poor house, the domination of inmates by the overseers was nearly total, as Joseph Harley (2015:88–89) argues, with particular reference to Beaminster Workhouse but widely applicable, order and discipline were most important to the parish.

Harley further observes through looking at the material possessions of paupers inside and outside the poorhouses that discipline and order was enforced inside through punitive measures and the denial of independence through the centralised provision of mandated uniform clothing, lack of privacy and division of the family unit. The inventories of Beaminster workhouse demonstrate that paupers inside the workhouse had limited access to many of the comforts which they had enjoyed outside, including tableware, private property and personalized clothing (*ibid.* 87, 89). Through contrasting the possessions and potential agency of inside and outside paupers, Harley skillfully demonstrates the harsh and exploitative nature of the workhouse where simple independence and liberty was restricted to the extent of the denial of candles within the bedroom to enforce sleeping hours more fully. As Tarlow summarises from her analysis of the dominating nature of the Old Poor Law 'The deterrent function of the work house was therefore to provide no more than an absolute "last resort", so that paupers would be encouraged to do all they could to avoid "going to the parish"' (Tarlow 2007:140).

The case for South Shields however demonstrates that the Bates and other residents of the Parish were caught between a rock of tenancy and a hard place of the poorhouse. This gave the poor little negotiative power to exercise in their relationship with landlords; to leave tenancy without secure employment was to risk entering the poorhouse, to threaten to leave was to risk having a bluff called. This may partially explain the Bates' decision to inhabit a cave rather than risk falling upon the parish in their infirmity.

The situation of South Shields' poor law system and its poor-house is further detailed in a document dated 1776 which lists the parish as having one workhouse with accommodation for fifty individuals (House of Commons. 1777:46) yet in 1797 this institution is listed in Eden's *State of the Poor* as having 73 inmates and paying out-pensions to the weekly sum of £20 (Eden 1797:168). In his account, Eden notes that South Shields had no common land except for a few acres along the coast (*ibid.*) further indicating the near total domination which the landowner (the Bishop of Durham) had in the parish.

For the Bates, who had relocated to South Shields from Allenheads, a further source of concern in the system of Parish relief may have been the threat of being returned to their parent parish. This threat was due to the fact that it was the legal responsibility of a pauper's parent parish to provide for their relief and interloping paupers were for this reason returned to the parish where they were legally listed as resident. The reality of this threat in South Shields is evidenced in the cost of £2.14.6d incurred by the parish for 'litigations concerning

settlements and removal of paupers' (House of Commons. 1777:46). This threat of separation from a community of friends and colleagues which an individual may have developed through residence in an alien parish may be considered to constitute a powerful coercive measure in dissuading reliance on parish poor relief. As a further backdrop to this threat, whilst it may be considered that the Bates would be returning to Allenheads where they may still have had friends or kin, the poor relief provision in Allendale Parish did not include a local poor-house.The 'inside poor' (those who were resident in a poor-house) were therefore to be lodged in Hexham poorhouse sixteen miles distant (*House of Commons*. 'Abstracts made by the Overseers of the Poor' 1777 p.134). This practice is evidenced in the cost of boarding the poor in Hexham in 1777 being listed as £1.9.11d per annum (*ibid.*).

It is clear from the above discussion, in terms of either receiving poor relief in South Shields or being removed back to Allendale, that the Bates occupied a vulnerable position within society. The ever present risk of falling upon the parish would certainly have loomed large in their lives with South Shields boasting its own poor-house to serve as a stark reminder of the results of vagrancy. It should be considered therefore that the later-eighteenth-century system of poor relief contributed to the domination of land ownership, providing a punitive measure for those who were unable or refused to adhere to the socially normative system of tenancy.

5.2.3 Resisting the Domination of Landlords in the Everyday

It is clear from the above discussion that the system of tenancy in eighteenth-century South Tyneside and the North-East of England was highly pervasive and that with it came parceled a system of domination which had the potential to leave the tenant open to exploitation. In order that the landlords could not ride rough shod over the subordinate tenants, tenancy agreements necessarily existed in a discursive framework of statements of resistance and domination with which tenants and landlords alike negotiated the character of lettings. The balance of power within this discursive framework was however tipped heavily in the favour of landowners who held a far stronger social and legal position to enforce terms of lettings; the tenantry were thus restricted to articulating their statements of rebuttal through covert strategies of resistance.

A discursive framework for landlord-tenant relationships was particularly important in negotiating the terms of tenancies-at-will and tied-housing which were particularly open to exploitation on the part of the landlord. Whilst it may be considered dangerous for a tenant to challenge a landlord outright, risking eviction and blacklisting, a discrete infrapolitics of

everyday resistance could constitute a far safer means of rebutting a dominant landlord. As was briefly mentioned above, one way to challenge the domination of landlords was through 'threatening' to leave the property due to grievances which the landlord might then be inclined to rectify rather than lose a tenant (Clay 1985:211). Other and more discrete methods of resistance are hard to demonstrate. Clay (*ibid.*212) however describes one instance in which a tenant who had engaged in a variety of agricultural misdemeanours was able to engage in such actions due to the terms of his tenancy at-will and 'consequently not liable to be called to account for running the farm so prodigiously out of order.' But 'if he had been a tenant for a term of years, the case would then have been altered.' (Salop RO, 112/2.698 – reproduced in Clay 1985:212). In this instance, in the absence of a definitive written contract forbidding damaging land usage, the tenant actively did so whilst remaining safe from financial penalties. Thus it was a common clause in tenancy-at-will agreements that the tenants were not liable to pay for repair work on a property, although they could be called upon to undertake the work if provided with the necessary materials and remunerations (*ibid.*).

Tenancy by lease however involved a different system of domination and resistance. As a tenancy form defined by its highly structured and termed contract of lease, there were obligations and responsibilities entailed which could be exploited by both landlord and tenants in the negotiation of their relationship. In establishing a covenant between the landlord and tenant, transgressions were far more easily defined and identified making it easier for the landlord to impose sanctions. A landlord responsible for repairing a property, for instance, who reneged on this agreement was likely to be subject to criticism from his tenantry who could take it upon themselves to enact measures aimed at restoring or establishing a more advantageous position in the relationship between dominant and subordinate (Scott 1985:349; 1989:40; 1990:199). The criticism to which a disgruntled tenantry may have subjected a seemingly negligent or cruel landlord is well demonstrated by Scott who draws on a range of examples where an ill regarded landlord was treated with disdain; ranging from 'Old Tiennon' in nineteenth-century France (Scott 1990:2) to the invented character of Mrs. Poyser in George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, a character designed by Eliot to ape the reality of landlord tenant relationships in the early nineteenth century (*ibid.* 7), and to Malaysian peasant communities (1990:262). Certainly in the case of later-eighteenth-century South Shields Eden (1797:165) observed that the inhabitants of the town possessed a mutuality of public spirit for improvement, suggesting a strong desire amongst the townsfolk to better their circumstances.

Corrective measures on the part of the tenantry might also potentially include such acts as payment evasion, foot dragging or sabotage, all methods intentionally designed to avoid direct conflict with those in a dominant position. Such measures are often visible in the context of later eighteenth-century land rights and tenantry in the proliferation of acts such as poaching and squatting which discretely challenged land ownership and would certainly have been visible as a normal part of the world within which Jack 'the Blaster' operated. Gateshead Fell, Spennymoor and Raily Fell (a lead mining squatter community in the North Penines) (Green 2010) were all upland areas with well establish squatter settlements in the later-eighteenth century.

With regard to the immediate case study of Jack 'the Blaster' and Marsden Grotto, It is almost impossible to demonstrate convincingly whether such covert forms of resistance were being employed either by Jack or indeed within the local community. A point made by Scott however is that 'the "explosions" of open conflict which typically dominate the official record are frequently a sign that normal and largely covert forms of class struggle are failing" (Scott 1989:50). With this point in mind, it may be suggested that the covert methods of resistance being employed by the Bates in their tenancy at South Shields had failed and that they were forced into 'making a stand'.

5.3 A Singular Abode – Marsden Grotto

> 'A man who had been a farmer, and also a miner, and who had been ill-used by his land-lords, dug a cave for himself by the sea side at Marston Rocks [sic.], between Shields and Sunderland, about the year 1780, and the singularity of such a habitation, exciting the curiosity of many to pay him a visit, our author was one of that number. Exulting in the idea of a human being, who had bravely emancipated himself from the iron fangs of aristocracy, to live free from impost, he wrote extempore above the fire place of this freedman the following line:
>
> Ye landlords vile, whose [sic.] man's peace mar,
> Come levy rents here if you can;
> Your stewards and lawyers I defy,
> And live with all the RIGHTS OF MAN.'
>
> (Spence 1795:250)

The above passage written by Thomas Spence as an addendum to his song 'The Rights of Man for Me' (*ibid.*) includes important details regarding the nature of and intentions behind the actions of Jack 'the Blaster' in relocating himself with his wife to live in a cave. Despite having been singled out by Spence as inspirational in his refusal to submit to landlords and in having 'emancipated himself', this is the only allusion made to Jack 'the Blaster' (not even mentioning him by name) in all of Spence's writings.

From Spence's account, we learn quite simply that Jack 'the Blaster' was homeless due to an unscrupulous landlord and that he opted to live in a cave rather than submit to the landlord any further. The rest of the details are the result of Spence exploiting the Bates' situation as a case study in support of his own political philosophy regarding everyman's right to land, Jack 'the Blaster' as emancipating himself from the 'iron fangs of aristocracy'. It is important therefore that Spence's political motives in relating the case of Jack 'the Blaster' are considered critically here as not necessarily representing the Bates' true intentions.

Combining Spence's account with other period sources it is possible to corroborate and extend knowledge of the Bates' situation and to develop an understanding as to the intentionality and motivations of their actions. The *Newcastle Journal* for 20th July, 1782 for instance provides an invaluable account of a visit made to Jack 'the Blaster' at Marsden and is reproduced in full as follows:

> A correspondent writes from North Shields, that last Saturday afternoon he, in company with a friend, took a trip to Marsdon Rocks [sic.], to view, as he has several times done some years ago, the large and spacious caverns, with other romantic and entertaining scenes of Nature, which are to be met with upon the sea coast there; and what gave him an additional pleasure, being quite new, was an interview with an old man, seemingly near 80 years of age, who told him that in the earlier part of his life he was a miner in the lead-mines at Allon Heads [sic.], had for some years past lived in South shields: but, to avoid the charge of house-rent, and to have the privilege of being furnished with coals for fire without any expence [sic], he and his wife formed a resolution to make one of the caves under these rocks the place of their residence, which, the beginning of this summer, they accordingly did, and have furnished that in which they reside with two beds, tables, chairs, a convenient fire-place and furnace, &c. Being out of health for some time, it came into his mind to try if he could for the support of himself and his wife, vend a little ale and cyder [sic.], which, upon trial, he finds to succeed far beyond his

> expectation. He can accommodate his visitors with hung-beef, bacon, eggs, cheese, butter, tea &c. The romantic situation of the place and the singularity of the thing seem at present to bring him plenty of company and he entertains hopes not to want some eve during the winter. While our correspondent and his friend were refreshing themselves in the cave a carriage arrived with two gentlemen and two ladies, attended by their footman, on purpose to drink tea there.
>
> (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2)

It is clear from the primary sources above in combination with an understanding of the landscape of domination as it existed in later-eighteenth-century South Shields (above) that the Bates' choice to inhabit a cave rather than resort to the alternative options of falling on the Parish or finding a new landlord demonstrates a clear intentionality in their actions to improve their circumstances; avoiding 'the charge of house-rent, and to have the privilege of being furnished with coals for fire without any expence [sic.]' (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2). The free-coals mentioned in this quote is likely a reference to sea-coals which are common along the stretch of coast around Marsden. This direct action by the Bates to improve their circumstances constitutes an important public statement in the discourse of land ownership and tenancy as it was in later-eighteenth-century England. The *Newcastle Journal* account gives further indication as to the intentionality of the Bates' action in that it states 'he and his wife formed a resolution to make one of the caves under these rocks the place of their residence, which, the beginning of this summer, they accordingly did' (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2). The wording of this account suggests that the Bates' choice to move to Marsden was not spontaneous but was rather it was the product of 'a resolution' fed by the endured domination which they had experienced at the hands of landlords. This idea of the Bates' decision as an intentional resolution is discussed later with regards to the role of fantasy in practices of resistance (see below pgs. 156-7).

A further argument in demonstrating the intentionality of the Bates' actions in living at Marsden is in the labour which they invested in making the cave habitable. Caves are a common feature of the coast around Marsden due to the karstic limestone geology of the area and this provided a ready canvas upon which the Bates printed their statement. Whilst the cave into which the Bates moved was likely pre-existing, it is unlikely to have been immediately comfortably habitable, certainly not to the extent where it would be suitably welcoming for visitors of a higher social class as the *Newcastle Journal* (20th July, 1782 p.2) account relates happened. The extent to which Bates altered and improved the cave however is unclear, a painting of Marsden

Grotto by Thomas Allom from c.1835 depicts two key structures, a 'house type structure built up against the rock face in the background, and a simple door into the rockface in the foreground (see. Fig.33), which of these structures were inhabited by the Bates' is unclear (through the house-type building in the background certainly post-dates the Bates' residency it cannot be ascertained whether it is an annex to an earlier cave dwelling. A photograph of the Bates' cave home believed to have been taken in the 1840s (Fig.34) shows certain features which have been altered and cut into the rock including a door and windows however the foreground door in the 1835 painting, appears unaccompanied by windows, suggesting the original, Bates' dwelling to being then masked by the later house-type structure. Whether the Bates' home was behind the foreground door or behind the background house, the alterations necessary to have made the cave habitable must to some extent have relied on Jack using his mining and quarrying experience (gained in the lead mines in Allendale (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2; Spence 1795:250)). That such determined alterations were made by Jack may be taken as evidence that the cave was not a home of expediency and rather was intended as a permanent escape from the domination of land-ownership which accompanied tenancy.

Fig. 34 *The Bates' Home at Marsden Grotto as it would have appeared c.1840 (Photo taken shortly after a change of ownership to Peter Allan.) (Hallowell 2013:Colour Plate 10)*

The most convincing evidence that Jack 'the Blaster' engaged in active resistance against exploitative and dominating tenancy is Spence's explicit statement that Jack 'the Blaster' 'had been ill-used by land-lords…bravely emancipated himself from the iron fangs of aristocracy'

(Spence 1795:250). Although this quote must be read with a pinch of salt as being the opinion of Spence, a committed radical propagandist, it seems highly probable that Spence's act of writing above the fireplace demonstrates a degree of agreement and understanding between Spence and Bates with regards to the motivations and factors which led to the Bates' resettling at Marsden. That Spence, who originated from a similarly low class background to Jack 'the Blaster'[14] perceived that the Bates were engaging in active resistance potentially also indicates a more widely shared perception of the Bates as ill-used individuals making a statement protesting the nature of tenancy in later-eighteenth-century South-Tyneside. This can then be further understood as pertinent anywhere where domination through rent was exploitative.

In opting to pursue a new lifestyle free from landlords, the Bates had made a statement of protest through means which were strategically designed to impact on the landlord in two ways. They had deprived the landlord of income in withdrawing their custom, a tactic of resistance commonly employed by those who are in a position of choice (and it would seem that the Bates were actually in a position of choice). Additionally, they had also broken the barrier of the normative public transcript in which there was a highly structured order to the landlord tenant interactions whereby the landlord called on the tenant, requested money and the tenant paid the agreed sum. This structured interaction, as Scott argues, reduced the risk of insubordination and promoted normative behaviour on both sides (Scott 1990:56). The social norms of the public transcript may, in the case of the landlord raising the rent and the Bates' refusal to pay, have been broken by both parties. The normal relationship between tenant and landlord comprises a fairly rigid social contract, where the landlord provides shelter in exchange for rent. The Bates' landlord, having '*ill-used'* them (Spence 1795:150), the landlord may have been perceived to have betrayed his part of the contract and ergo had voided the normative landlord-tenant relationship allowing the Bates break the taboo and to accomplish and actively realise what had certainly started as a fantasy of resistance and protest nominally a fantasy in which they had resolved to establish a home for themselves free from the onus of rent and where they could get free coals for their fire (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2).

The role of fantasy in resistance is a theme on which Scott focuses a great deal of attention, arguing that 'The inventiveness and originality of these fantasies lie in the artfulness with which they reverse and negate a particular domination.'(Scott 1990:44). Certainly the Bates' fantasy to live in a cave free from landlords is both inventive and original. The fantasy in its crudest

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[14] Spence's parents were impoverished Scottish émigrés, his father a fishing net maker and his mother a stocking seller living in Newcastle's Quayside area probably in rented accommodation (Bonnett & Armstrong 2014:2).

form provides an element of escapism for those who are in subordinate positions, it allows them to imagine a world where domination is not necessarily integral, natural or inevitable to life. This then can be taken further as being an argument against the success of a thick hegemonic dominant ideology as might be expected to exist in a community where land-lord tenant relations were typical and structured interactions.

The grotto at Marsden Rocks, as a realisation of a fantasy of freedom from landlords, articulates a hidden transcript of resistance to unfair landlords and land ownership consistent with the sentiments which Spence chalked above the fireplace. Jack Bates did not however completely remove himself from the prevalent social order and was known to welcome curious visitors to his house, offering them refreshment and food. Indeed we are informed by the *Newcastle Journal's* article of 1782 that the Bates' provided, beef, tea and bacon and that local 'elite' ladies and gentlemen attended by servants were travelling by carriage to visit the Bates on purpose (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2).

Evidently then, the Bates' situation was very much in the public eye and was remarked upon occasionally in newspaper accounts, (*Newcastle Courant,* 20th July, 1782 p.1; *Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2; *Newcastle Chronicle,* 15th March, 1783 p.2) as being a curiosity of the area. A newspaper article in the *Newcastle Chronicle* in March 1783 describing the devastating effects of a storm upon the shipping on the North-East coast takes particular care to observe that:

> The sea tide, after the storm last week, was the highest upon the coast between Ryhope and Shields that has been known for many years; yet what is very remarkable, Robinson Crusoe, and his Female Friday, remained quite undisturbed in their cave at Marston, although the habitation is within a few paces of the usual high-water mark.
>
> (*Newcastle Chronicle,* 15th March, 1783 p.2)

That the Bates could be referred to as 'Robinson Crusoe and his Female Friday' in a popular newspaper suggests that the pair had by March 1783, less than a year after having first relocated to a cave at Marsden, gained an element of notoriety in the locale of Tyne and Wear. The popular reference to Robinson Crusoe, which was incidentally playing at a theatre in the Bigg Market in Newcastle at the time (advertised in the same edition of the *Newcastle Chronicle,* 15th March, 1783) perhaps further indicates the closeness of the

Bates' actions at Marsden to North-Eastern popular culture of the early 1780s. The reference to Robinson Crusoe also offers an important link between Marsden Grotto and Spence as in 1782 Spence published a second edition of his pamphlet explaining how his radical 'Plan' might be implemented entitled *A supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe: Being the History of Crusonia or Robinson Crusoe's Island* (Spence 1782). Spence however made no obvious reference to the Bates in this publication so the link cannot be proven.

In taking possession of the cave as their own, and adapting it into a comfortable home (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2) complete with furniture, a conscious point was being made by the Bates regarding the validity of ownership of land. The Bates had strategically taken possession of the cave at Marsden Rocks as it occupied a liminal land/seascape position with ambiguous ownership, being not quite on the foreshore legally owned by the crown and not quite on the land dominated by landlords and gentry. It was uninhabited (although with an established history of use by smugglers and wreckers) when the Bates arrived and in making it their own they had made a statement about land acquisition and its development out of opportunism without a mandate. Charging visitors to experience the interior of the space (which until before Jack and Jessie arrived had been free to access) for a few moments further compounds this point as to the absurdity of paying to occupy a piece of land.

Whilst the ambiguity of the ownership of Marsden Grotto may have enabled the initial occupation and construction by the Bates, the masking of the hidden transcript of resistance within the public transcript of amiability to visitors would undoubtedly have been a tactic designed to ensure that they were safe in their possession, ensuring that they did not come into direct conflict with or antagonise those who may have been able to evict them. This was a problem faced by Peter Allan – the subsequent occupant at Marsden Grotto. Allan was ultimately obliged to pay the landowner above (Andrew Stoddart) a statutory lease for 20 years at £10 per year, thus ensnaring the Marsden Grotto within that domination by landlords which Jack 'the Blaster' had set out to evade (Yellowly 1887:130). The cause of Allan's embroilment with the legalities of ownership was, at least in part, the result of how he was perceived by those who dwelt on the land above and surrounding Marsden Rocks. Allan was regarded with suspicion by local landowners and indeed Andrew Stoddart had opened a rival 'house of entertainment' on adjacent land (*ibid.*). The local authorities' negative perception of Allan and suspicion of his involvement with smuggling certainly would have contributed to the motives

behind his being forced to pay rent. He had been suspected of involvement with smuggling since the early days of his occupancy at Marsden, having been apprehended by the excise men for selling liquor without a license and was closely monitored by the coastguard for the rest of his life (*ibid.* 127).

Ultimately, the key difference between Jack 'the Blaster' and Peter Allan lay in their ambition. Whilst Jack 'the Blaster' had resolved to live at Marsden to escape from the domination of landlords and to live a life free from having to pay rent (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2), Peter Allan had sought to develop a commercial enterprise (Yellowly 1887:127), excavating an entire inn and farm complex in the cliff face, and thus vastly expanding Jack the Blaster's simple home. It is therefore most likely that the reason why Peter Allan was obliged to pay rent where Jack 'the Blaster' had avoided it, was that the former's operation was much larger, more organized and focused on commercial gain. The scale of Allan's work at Marsden drew the attention of the local authorities and rival business owners who were in a stronger legal position to exact a fee for rent from Allan. In this way, to return to the arguments of Scott, Allan was being openly insubordinate, contesting the formal definitions of hierarchy – successfully establishing an inn without adhering to the normative rules of land ownership (Scott 1985:33). The punitive response on the part of the dominant in this instance was to bring Allan back in line with the hierarchy and normative structure of land ownership through the exploitation of the legal system. Jack 'the Blaster' however managed to avoid this punitive reaction on the part of the dominant parties by keeping his operation small scale and by not openly challenging the dominant local land owners through channels which they would be able to understand or instantly perceive.

To return to Tarlow's work on the ethic of improvement and in particular the significance of independence and self-reliance it becomes apparent that the Bates, in relocating to Marsden, were taking upon themselves the task of improving their circumstances. They had removed themselves from the dark, dirty, old fashioned and unimproved townscape of South Shields to a romantic and picturesque situation by the sea at Marsden, benefitting from clean air. The importance of self-reliance in improvement is well exemplified in the work of both Girouard (1990:87) and Porter (2000:392) who draw on a wide collection later-eighteenth-century texts and in particular the work of Adam Smith to argue that it was to the general good for individuals to work towards their own private interest. Indeed a direct quote from Smith's *Wealth of Nations* argues that once a tenant becomes independent 'the great proprietors were no longer

capable of interrupting the regular execution of justice', justice that is the liberty to pursue his own interest in his own way (Smith 1776:112).

The Bates' actions at Marsden Grotto therefore conform with the ideal that improvement (in terms of the moral self) was the product of self-reliance and individual liberty (Tarlow 2007:24). It is possible therefore that the expression of self-reliance, as opposed to dependence on parish relief, would have secured some support for the Bates from the middling and upper classes who would have perceived Marsden Grotto as a dwelling articulating the ideals of Improvement. Morally it articulated a focus on self-reflection through its location and seclusion, referencing a hermitage; and economically it articulated a independence and self-reliance through the Bates' avoidance of dependence upon the parish by selling refreshment for support and income. This outward conformity would have allowed the Bates' a degree of security in their holding as it is unlikely that the landowner would wish to chastise one who was exhibiting an interest in improving their circumstances and who was demonstrating an eagerness in contributing to as opposed to receiving relief. The apparent complicity with the ethic of Improvement which the Bates were demonstrating at Marsden was however not necessarily the primary objective of their residence and may have represented a tactic of disguise for their protest, masking the elements of their home which articulated resistance and protest.

The Bates' transcript of resistance to domination by landlords and gentry at Marsden may well have been only partly legible to those in dominant positions as the gentry were still quite happy to visit the grotto and to pay to look round (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2). Indeed such was the success that Jack and Jessie met with in opening up their home to visitors that, as Hallowell (2013:46) argues, they were quite comfortably well off by the time they died. In this way, Marsden Grotto was successfully operating as a statement of protest constructed from a hidden transcript of resistance to domination, and hidden carefully and cleverly within a public transcript of amiability to those in socially dominant positions; echoing Scott's argument that 'By the subtle use of codes, one can insinuate into a ritual, a pattern of dress, a song, a story, meanings that are accessible to one intended audience and opaque to another audience the actors wish to exclude.' (Scott 1990:158). This concept of hidden meanings is a point which Scott presents as constituting an important tactic in resistance practices, providing a line of retreat in case of challenge yet also challenging the boundaries of the normative social order (Scott 1985:246). Scott's argument is that this is the pragmatic approach to enacting resistance in circumstances where the subordinate is still reliant on the good-will of the dominant for

benefaction, a situation certainly true of the Bates who relied on those in dominant positions to visit them and provide them with income and also for those in dominant positions not to challenge their authority to live at Marsden.

The ambiguity of the Bates' property was further emphasised through the objects, and furniture which were used inside the dwelling. Hallowell attests that their furniture was all made from re-purposed driftwood (Hallowell 2013:43) but the foundation for this claim is unclear and the *Newcastle Journal* (20th July, 1782 p.2) account describes the dwelling simply as 'furnished… with two beds, tables, chairs, a convenient fire-place and furnace, &c*'*. It is however apparent that the door was a re-purposed ship's rudder as this vestige of the Bates' home survives in the modern Marsden Grotto public house. If it is considered that the interior furnishings were outwardly conventional in form and appearance, though differing in origin and fabric, to the extent that they were unremarkable to the correspondent in the *Newcastle Journal*, it is interesting that they differ from the unconventional outward appearance of the dwelling.

Fig. 35 *The Hermit at his Morning Devotion' Sketched by Johnson, 1795, Engraved and Printed by Thomas Bewick (BM 1882,0311.2883)*

The unconventional exterior of the dwelling is depicted above in Fig.34 but may also be reflected in a 1795 engraving by John Johnson- apprenticed to Thomas Bewick in Newcastle. This engraving titled 'The Hermit at his Morning Devotion' (Fig.35) and although it is not explicitly of the Marsden Grotto, Johnson was a local of Tyne and Wear and would almost certainly have been aware of the existence of Jack the Blaster at Marsden – Johnson being the apprentice of Bewick, himself friends with Thomas Spence, a known visitor to Marsden. It is possible therefore that Johnson drew inspiration for his sketch of the Hermit from knowledge of Jack 'the Blaster', the local contemporary hermit of Tyne and Wear. In this idealized evocation of an eighteenth-century hermit, evoking the vaunted ethic of self-improvement, individual liberty and self-reliance (Tarlow 2007:24), there are clear parallels with the existence of the Bates at Marsden.

I argue therefore that internal/external differentiation described in the structure of Marsden Grotto contributes to the ambiguity of the place and thus contributes to the statement of protest being made by the Bates. The outward appearance of the cave with a repurposed rudder for a door challenges social convention and makes a statement about the mutability of things in functionality and materiality; a rudder is a door and a cave is a home. Internally however the relative conventionality of the cave with all the trappings of a 'normal' home states that although the structure itself is located beyond the domination of land ownership, the occupants are still able to live in a relatively conventional manner with the various home comforts one would expect, illustrating the superfluity of landlords and tenancy to life.

5.3.1 Implicating the Community

The case of Jack 'the Blaster' and Marsden Grotto is reasonably well known in the Tyne and Wear area and constitutes an example of resistance to tenancy which has been cemented within the discourse on tenancy in the later-eighteenth century and beyond. The case as laid out above however focusses narrowly on the actions of the Bates alone. How typical was the Bates' experience of and resistance to domination by landlords and tenancy in relation to other communities in later-eighteenth-century England?

Immediately prior to his retirement Jack was as a quarryman at the nearby limestone quarries surrounding Marsden and before that a miner in Allendale, both of which trades situated him within labouring communities with forged strong social bonds. Hallowell (2013:40) writes (though unsourced) that Jack Bates was a miner in Allenheads (North Pennines) in 1749 and a quarryman living in South Shields in 1752. These details (but not the dates) are corroborated by Spence who talks of Jack as a 'man who had been a farmer and also a miner…' (Spence

1795:250) and by the *Newcastle Journal* account which describe him as ‘a man who had been a miner at Allon-heads’(*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2).

The primary sources of Spence and the *Newcastle Journal*, combined with Hallowell’s composite account then, suggests that the Bates had lived in and around South Shields for at least 30 years before relocating themselves to the cave at Marsden Grotto; thus allowing them the time to develop strong community ties. Both mining and quarrying communities are notably strongly bonded communities, sharing in the day to day dangers and hardships of the work. From these tight knit communities Scott argues; ‘Workers who belong to ‘communities of fate’ are most likely to share a clear antagonistic view of their employers and act with solidarity.’ (Scott 1990:134) and I argue that this was likely the case with the quarrying and mining communities of North-East England. (In referring to communities of fates, Scott is particularly referring to communities who share in dangerous and physically demanding occupations requiring a commensurate degree of camaraderie and cooperation to minimize the danger, thus creating strong horizontal bonds). It is therefore apparent that there likely existed an underlying hidden transcript of resistance to the domination of various forms amongst the members of these communities of fate which had long been present. Additionally in this context, Belford argues that that the social significance of Improvement might have lain more in the establishment of horizontal relations of belonging rather than in hierarchical and exclusive relationships of dominance (2001:111). Belford’s argument here is based on the idea that a shared experience of domination through imposed improving reforms strengthened horizontal relations amongst those upon whom the reforms impacted. This idea is commensurate with the suggestion that shared experience generates social cohesion and I therefore argue that the shared experience of exploitative tenancies and insecure employment in later-eighteenth-century South Shields and more generally in North-East England would have generated strong horizontal relationships. This idea is returned to later in contrasting the case of Marsden Grotto with that of resistance to Highland clearances (5.4.1).

From what can be learned about the construction of the Bates’ house at Marsden Grotto it certainly involved a great deal of labour including the construction of a rock cut flight of stairs ascending the 35 metres high cliff face and the enlargement of the grotto itself to be more commodious (Hallowell 2013:45). With regards to the labour which such an endeavour as cutting a rock stair case would entail, a later occupant at Marsden Grotto in the mid-nineteenth century, Peter Allan, who quarried a staircase to the summit of the nearby Marsden Rock, paid £11 to local quarrymen for the task (Yellowly 1887:130). For the time, £11 was not an

inconsiderable sum (£11 in 1820 was equivalent to 73 days' pay for a craftsman in the building trade (National Archives currency converter for buying power)) and certainly a sum which would have been beyond the 'small means' (*ibid.* 126) of a couple such as the Bates who were struggling to pay rent on a conventional abode. Jack Bates was, an elderly man[15] who had been out of health for some time (*Newcastle Journal,* 20th July, 1782 p.2) and it therefore seems improbable that he could have constructed an entire rock cut staircase alone with no money or assistance. A more plausible scenario is that the Bates were assisted in their endeavour by former colleagues, friends and neighbours who shared in a communal hidden transcript of resistance against unfair tenancies and exploitative landlords.

It is further likely that the name Jack 'the Blaster' which was bestowed upon Bates[16] is indicative of his status as a semi-legendary figure amongst the mining and quarrying communities of South Tyneside. Legendary for his undertaking to establish for himself a rent-free home using only his skills as a quarryman; instead of relying on finances or patronage. Jack 'the Blaster' is a somewhat affectionate title and should be considered as a colloquial expression of how Bates was perceived by his peers. This is as opposed to the newspapers which, through relating him to literary characters such as Robinson Crusoe, present Bates in a way more suitable for the literati of Newcastle and North-East England. That Jack Bates was named for his work in quarrying his new home at Marsden through blasting, rather than being characterized as a hermit, wildman or other form of social outcast is a further indication of the significance placed on Bates' actions as a form of local underdog hero. Other, later cave dwellers at Marsden, in contrast to the Bates, were known locally as 'The Hairy Man of Marsden' also known as 'Peter Allan's Hairy Man' (Yellowly 1887:130), and 'Willie the Rover' (Hodgson 1903:489) both of whom lived far ruder existences than Jack the Blaster and were considered as thorough social outcasts. Neither Willie the Rover nor Peter Allan's Hairy Man are particularly well remembered, drawing far less attention than either Jack 'the Blaster' or Peter Allan himself.

A further indication that the Bates likely enjoyed the support of the local quarrying and mining community is in the detail that he used blasting powder from his former workplace at Marsden quarry (Hallowell 2013:42) to blast the staircase out of the rock and to expand his new home. Whilst this assertion of the use of blasting powder is only made in the literature by Hallowell,

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[15] Bates was reckoned around the age of eighty when he moved to Marsden Grotto- (*Newcastle Journal* 20th July 1782 p.2)

[16] The title Jack the Blaster was certainly in use by 1887 and likely earlier as Yellowly recounts the Bates was known as such (1887:126)

it is a commensurate with the nickname given to Bates of Jack the Blaster. Access to blasting powder in sufficient quantities for the purposes of quarrying would likely have been beyond the Bates' purchasing power; it being a relatively expensive commodity (blasting powder was used infrequently in quarry workings in the eighteenth-century due to prohibitive costs and dangers (Stanier 2000:25)). Whether the Bates obtained blasting powder from a benevolent former employer or whether it was obtained by friends and former colleagues through pilfering is unclear but the latter possibility certainly fits within the context of a strong community using the infrapolitics of protest and resistance to assist the Bates in making a statement against a system of domination in which all were subordinates (Scott 1985:25).

The Bates' statement against the system of unfair and exploitative landlords is made clearer still in that, if we credit Spence's account of his visit as being accurate (Spence 1795:250), the Bates allowed the known radical agitator to capitalise on their circumstances and to chalk a public statement of protest against unfair tenancy above the fireplace. The passage chalked by Spence would have occupied a prominent position within the Bates' house which would have been visible to all visitors (providing it was allowed to remain in situ after Spence's departure, chalk being an easily removable medium, abundant in the magnesian limestone cliffs of Marsden) to the dwelling. Prudence and strategic wisdom may have dictated therefore that the Bates remove it as a part of their tactic of demonstrating amiability to upper- and middle-class visitors and avoiding direct provocation and conflict. That the message however was made manifest in writing for even a brief while must be considered as articulating a statement which had originated as a hidden transcript of protest against landlords.

By allowing Spence to chalk his message above the fireplace, the hidden transcript transgressed into the public arena in unmasked and unguarded form, declaiming landlords as vile and challenging them forthright. For a brief moment, the underlying hidden transcript of resistance and protest to unfair tenancy had broken through into the public arena and even once the message had been expunged from the wall the memory of its existence would certainly have contributed to codifying the grotto as a venue of protest.

5.4 Dispossession and Resistance to Tenantry – Contextualising Marsden Grotto

Marsden Grotto is thus inextricably part of the web of transcripts and statements which constituted the discourse on eighteenth-century tenantry and land ownership. The cave itself is a polysemous statement which, depending on the audience, can be understood as either part of a public transcript of amiability and consent or as part of a hidden transcript of protest and resistance. These antagonistic transcripts must therefore also be considered alongside other

statements in the discourse on eighteenth-century land ownership, such as squatting (Ward 2002), clearance (Dalglish 2003; Symonds 1999; Oliver et al. 2016; Tarlow 2007), the political writings of Thomas Spence (Bonnett & Armstrong 2014; Ashraf 1983; Dickinson 1982; Parssinen 1973), the 1774 Newcastle Town Moor affair and other struggles of dispossession and displacement.

5.4.1 Encoding Subaltern Resistance in Place

The case of Jack and Jessie Bates is in many ways comparable, on a micro-scale, to the experiences of the highland clearances, which have been well studied by historians and archaeologists alike. James Hunter for instance has argued that for those dispossessed and displaced tenants who were able to exercise the power of choice, the emigration from the Scottish highlands was a form of protest, in that they opted to make a new life for themselves away from the domination of landlords in the New World (Hunter 2000:25–26). In his argument, Hunter is specifically referring to the émigrés who exercised their, albeit limited, agency and not those who were coerced into emigration. Those who were coerced into emigration experienced the domination of the elite landowners in a much more controlled manner and likely had greater cause to employ the hidden transcripts and infrapolitics of resistance as their recourse. The full exploration of these infrapolitics of resistance in the context of the highland clearances is however not within the remit of this study and more complete discussions and studies can be found (Dalglish 2003; Symonds 1999; Webster 1999).

Further parallels can be drawn between the Bates ‘experiences and those of tenants evicted in the clearances if the Bates’ are considered as free agents able to emancipate themselves from domination, and their friends, colleagues and neighbours as resembling those who were unable to emancipate themselves from the domination of tenancy due to a lack of means. Those who remained behind (in Scotland or in South Shields) did not necessarily acquiesce to the domination of the landowners and almost certainly continued to resist through those weapons of the weak such as rent payment avoidance, foot-dragging and pilfering.

This theme of resistance is picked up clearly by Chris Dalglish (2003) in his archaeologically driven research into changes in Southern Scottish Highland society during the age of improvement. Dalglish succinctly argues that despite publicly appearing to acquiesce to the domination of improving landlords, the most dispossessed of tenants instead resisted privately in the sequestered spaces of their homes through maintaining ‘old-fashioned’ and traditional house layouts and divisions of space (*ibid.*204). Outwardly however the homesteads of the subaltern tenantry conformed to the landlord’s vision of improvement, which Dalglish argues

was strategic by the tenantry, aimed at avoiding confrontation with the dominant landowner and securing continued occupancy of the land (Dalglish 2003:205).

Protest through architecture is strongly relevant to the case of Marsden Grotto where the abode itself was intrinsically a part of the Bates' resistance. Dalglish's argument that the interior and exterior of a building (though this can also be applied more broadly to objects and artefacts) can be mobilized separately to mediate different transcripts.

The tension between interior and exterior appearance at Marsden Grotto thus reveals a tension in how the Bates intended their home to be understood. Privately for the Bates, it must be remembered that Marsden Grotto was first and foremost a home and as such they were endeavoring to make it homely with comfortable furniture and fittings. Whilst the Bates' actively transformed the grotto interior into a homely space the exterior seems to have been left unchanged as a coarse cliff-face. Marsden Grotto therefore outwardly appeared barbaric and rude conforming to dominant expectations of the troglodytic home of a Robinson Crusoe figure and thus avoiding openly challenging dominant understandings of what could constitute a 'normal' dwelling. Internally however, the Bates' home strived for normality, regularity and homeliness with all the necessary furnishings, as demonstrated above, quite at odds with the outward appearance of the dwelling. The Grotto thus articulated two transcripts; an outward facing, public transcript of conformity with elite conceptions of the Bates' social position (that-is as rough outsiders, living on the edge of society); whilst internally the Bates' used the space to craft for themselves a home, articulating a hidden transcript repudiating and challenging dominant ideas of what should, or even could be a home.

James Symonds (1999) similarly, in his detailed study of the clearance landscapes of South Uist discusses how the landscapes themselves articulate themes of domination and resistance. Symonds argues that as traditional relationships between dominant clan chiefs, estate managers and their subordinates disintegrated those in subordinate social positions employed a range of tactics of resistance with the aim of preserving what they considered as their ancestral rights to the land (Symonds 1999:113). One such tactic employed by the tenantry of South Uist was the naming of the landscape as an act of appropriation and memorialization. As a case study for this, Symonds cites the specific example of the Loch of the Querns 'Loch nam Braithntean' which was named after an episode of quern smashing and dumping in the loch carried out by the land agents (quern smashing was an act of aggression on the part of landowners whereby privately owned querns were forcefully destroyed to encourage tenants to use the larger grain mills) (Symonds 1999:115). That the loch was named after the querns is a memorialization of

the traditional ways of subsistence on the part of the local Gaelic speakers, a crude parallel can be drawn here with the naming of the landscape at Marsden as an act of appropriation and memorialization.

The locally known name of the steps at Marsden which lead from the cliff top to the grotto is ‘Jack the Blaster’s Stairs’, named obviously after Jack Bates, the name has continued in use until the present. The steps therefore are inextricably entangled with the memory of Jack the Blaster and constitute a memorial to how Jack and Jessie Bates appropriated a part of the landscape through the investment of their labour rather than through the dominant method of purchase or rent. This concept of how land can come to be owned through the investment of labour into it is a theme which is apparent in further contexts such as in the widespread belief that as long as a house was built and roofed within one night, it was legally allowed to stand (Ward 2002:5, 10). In this way then, Jack ‘the Blaster’s’ stairs are a materialisation of an underlying ideology amongst the tenantry of South Tyneside, that only the investment of labour legitimized the ownership of land, and that land could be appropriated through this means, just as Jack ‘the Blaster’ had done.

This concept of the investiture of labour in the land is a theory which is central to John Locke’s ideas of legitimisation in the ownership of property in which he argues: ‘Everyman has a property in his own person. This nobody has any right to but himself. The labour of his body and the work of his hands we may say are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property.’ (Locke 1988:II para.27). This concept was prevalent in eighteenth-century intellectual circles and used to justify the acquisition of property, and it is possible that whilst the Bates may not have read Locke they may have conceived of this basic principle.

Locke is further valuable in that he incudes provisos for the acquisition of land which would make the exploitative models of tenancy in place in South Shields illegitimate. As Kristin Schrader-Frechette argues, Locke employed his concept of natural law, in which all had a right to the provisions of a common land, as a way of countering the economic and political power of persons who injure others’ life, health and liberty through their accumulation of vast properties (Schrader-Frechette 1993:212). It is therefore arguable that through their mixing of labour and land in the creation of Marsden Grotto, the Bates were exploiting the same Lockean principle by which the elites justified their properties, and were doing so in a way which,

simultaneously legitimised their right to live at Marsden and critiqued the elites' ownership of the land as injurious to the life, health and liberty of the tenantry.

Whilst I do not suggest that the Bates necessarily conceived of an ancestral right to the land, the concept of the commons is a theme closely linked to Spence's idea that land was not a commodity to be exploited for profit at the expense of others through landlords and tenancy (Bonnett and Armstrong 2014). The ambiguities of the Bates' home further suggests that there was a protest being made by the Bates with regards to ownership of the land and the right to have somewhere to live. Others in South Shields' subaltern community were likely also complicit in the Bates' protest, assisting the Bates in construction and doubtless scorning the unscrupulous landlords who would turn out an elderly couple.

5.4.2 Community Activism

In considering the role of community in the protest at Marsden Grotto, it is also important to consider that the Bates had moved to South Shields from Allenheads in the North Pennines which in the later-eighteenth century was a hotspot of non-conformist religion (Petts 2011:468). In coming from Allenheads, the Bates would certainly have been in contact with non-conformists if not necessarily practicing themselves and would have seen the conversion of their friends and colleagues to a denomination which sought to emancipate the workers from the elite-dominated Anglican Church. The close relationship between the social elite and the Anglican church is further commented on by Thompson (1974:391) who argues that Methodism exploited the failures of the spiritual paternalist hegemony of the Anglican Church in which the church and the gentry had become too closely linked for the Church to portray itself as a spiritual authority separate to, yet concordant with, the hegemonic order. Robert Lee, in exploring the relationship between dissenting Methodism and Anglicanism in Norfolk similarly argues that, in the words of an anonymous commentator from 1817, there was a 'visceral connection between social unrest and religious dissent: perhaps nonconformity was seen as the next best option when riot, as the traditional form of protest, had failed.' (Lee 2003:104)

It is interesting to note then that David Petts, analysing the landscapes of North Pennines non-conformism, observed that 'In Allendale where the local establishment was broadly hostile to Methodism, there were actually more chapels though in remote locations. In contrast, in Teesdale, where the tolerant London Lead Company controlled the industry, there were relatively fewer chapels and those that existed were often in more central locations.'(Petts 2011:477). This is an important observation with regards to the Bates' choice to use a marginal,

remote location to enact their protest over tenantry at Marsden. The Bates' had witnessed the efficacy of exploiting the ambiguity and seclusion of marginal locations in challenging a hostile domination during their time at Allenheads and were seemingly applying a similar technique to Marsden Grotto; appropriating ambiguous space to create a place free from the domination extant within the surrounding social and material landscape.

The extent to which the Bates' protest echoed that of the wider community is hard to ascertain however, it would be misguided to consider that the Bates' experience of the domination inherent in the system of tenantry and land ownership was unusual. Almost all working class people lived under the same system of tenantry and experienced the same domination and so the hidden transcript of resistance to private land ownership and tenantry was therefore likely present at community level. Indeed Thomas Malthus observed in 1817 that:

> It is generally known that an idea has lately prevailed amongst some of the lower classes of society, that the land is the people's farm, the rent of which ought to be divided equally among them; and that they have been deprived of the benefits which belong to them, from their natural inheritance, by the injustice and oppression of their stewards, the landlords. (Malthus 1817:40)

Although Malthus was writing after the Bates' had passed on (Jack died in 1792) it is clear that the circumstances which had led to the appropriation of Marsden Grotto were still being experienced by 'the lower classes' all over Britain. Further to this, Malthus' observation highlights that the lower classes felt a grievance over their domination at the hands of unfair landlords; an observation which Malthus gathers from his encounters with Spencean societies[17]. It is almost certain therefore that the wider community in and around South Shields and Marsden shared in the Bates' protest and that Jack the Blaster's actions at Marsden were only unusual in that it was a public statement of the hidden transcript of protest and resistance shared by all who lived under the domination of private land ownership and tenancy.

5.5 The Enduring Memory of Jack the Blaster

The extent to which the Bates' protest at Marsden Rocks impacted directly upon the practices of tenancy and land ownership is unclear. There is no evidence that rent was reduced or that landlords in the South Shields area undertook to be fairer to their tenants. The indirect impact of the Bates' statement at Marsden upon the wider radical community in later eighteenth-

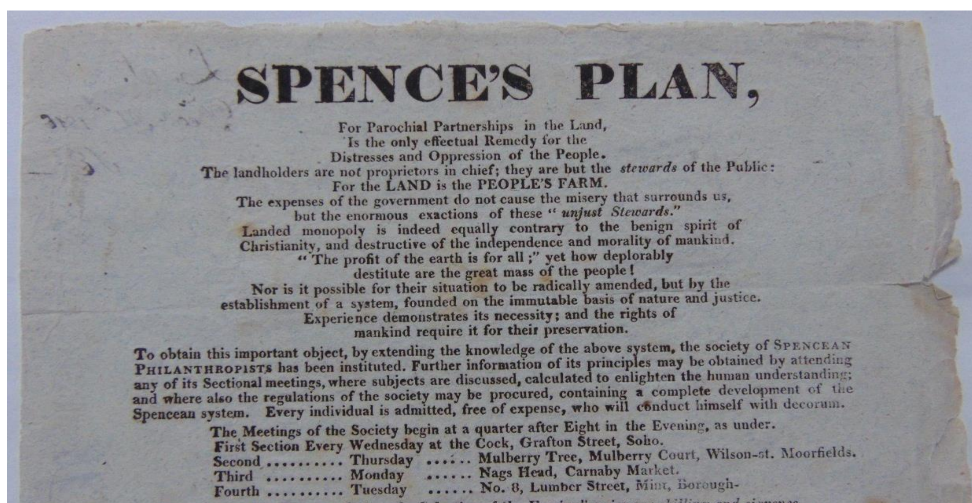
[17] The term '*the land is the people's farm'* is a direct quotation from Spencean rhetoric and was coined by Thomas Spence himself.

century England (and globally) was, however, extensive. The actions of Jack and Jessie were lauded by Spence as casting light upon corrupt and unfair landlords and showing that it was possible to emancipate oneself from that system of domination. The writings and ideas of Spence (see Chapter Six) then inspired his followers to form Spencean Societies which, in 1817, were outlawed by the Government as posing too great a threat to the prevalent social order of private land ownership and tenantry. This impact of the Bates' statement at Marsden on the later Spencean Societies is articulated in the hand bills distributed by the societies such as that transcribed below:

SPENCE'S PLAN,

> For Parochial Partnerships in the Land, is the only effectual remedy for the distresses and oppression of the people. The landholders are not proprietors in chief; they are the stewards of the public: for the LAND is the PEOPLE'S FARM. The expenses of the government do not cause the misery that surrounds us, but the enormous exactions of these 'unjust stewards.' Landed monopoly is indeed equally contrary to the benign spirit of Christianity, and destructive of the independence and morality of mankind. 'The profit of the earth is for all;' yet so deplorably destitute are the great mass of the people! Nor is it possible for their situation to be radically amended, but by the establishment of a system founded on the immutable basis of nature and justice. Experience demonstrates its necessity; and the rights of mankind require it for their preservation.'

(TNA TS24.3.98, Fig.36)



SPENCE'S PLAN,

For Parochial Partnerships in the Land,
Is the only effectual Remedy for the
Distresses and Oppression of the People.
The landholders are not proprietors in chief; they are but the *stewards* of the Public:
For the LAND is the PEOPLE'S FARM.
The expenses of the government do not cause the misery that surrounds us,
but the enormous exactions of these "*unjust Stewards.*"
Landed monopoly is indeed equally contrary to the benign spirit of
Christianity, and destructive of the independence and morality of mankind.
"The profit of the earth is for all;" yet how deplorably
destitute are the great mass of the people!
Nor is it possible for their situation to be radically amended, but by the
establishment of a system, founded on the immutable basis of nature and justice.
Experience demonstrates its necessity; and the rights of
mankind require it for their preservation.

To obtain this important object, by extending the knowledge of the above system, the society of SPENCEAN PHILANTHROPISTS has been instituted. Further information of its principles may be obtained by attending any of its Sectional meetings, where subjects are discussed, calculated to enlighten the human understanding; and where also the regulations of the society may be procured, containing a complete development of the Spencean system. Every individual is admitted, free of expense, who will conduct himself with decorum.

The Meetings of the Society begin at a quarter after Eight in the Evening, as under.
First Section Every Wednesday at the Cock, Grafton Street, Soho.
Second .... Thursday ...... Mulberry Tree, Mulberry Court, Wilson-st. Moorfields.
Third .... Monday ...... Nags Head, Carnaby Market.
Fourth .... Tuesday ...... No. 8, Lumber Street, Mint, Borough-

Fig. 36 SPENCE'S PLAN - Handbill from the Society of Spencean Philanthropists 1816. (National Archives TS24.3.98)

Whilst the above handbill does not directly reference the Bates and their struggle at Marsden, it is born out of the work of Spence who drew on the Bates as an example of the superfluity and indeed illegitimacy of landlords. It is clear that in 'emancipating themselves' from the system of tenancy and landlord domination, the Bates had established an important statement in the discourse of land ownership and tenantry which was continued beyond its immediate audience, through the disseminations of Spence, into the early-nineteenth century as a central facet of the Spencean Societies until their suppression in 1817 (Bonnett 2014:82).

The story of Jack the Blaster has remained an urban legend in Tyne and Wear folk culture. This is well evidenced through the numerous stories of hauntings and legends of murder, smuggling and foul play which prevail around the site of Marsden Grotto (Hallowell 2013).

Following the death of Jack 'the Blaster' in August 1792 (DUSC-DDR/EA/PBT/2/227/403; Hallowell 2013) after which Jessie is said to have moved away, the grotto fell into disrepair. Yellowly (1887:126) however, regardless of this abandonment, argues that the site of the Marsden Grotto never lost its local significance and by and by grew to enjoy greater fame through the activities of Peter Allan who moved there in 1826. The case of Peter Allan has been discussed briefly above with regard to the legalities of ownership at Marsden but deserves greater unpacking here. Whilst above I argued that Allan's primary motivation was commercial gain, it is also apparent that he sought to follow in the footsteps of Jack 'the Blaster' in establishing a home free from rent. Yellowly (1887:130) suggests that Allan took the ruling that he was obliged to pay a lease for the rent of the Marsden Grotto very hard and 'He sank under it, lost heart, took to his bed, and never recovered, dying, after a few day's illness, on the 31st August, 1850 at the comparatively early age of 51. He may truly be said to have died of a broken heart'.

In pursuing his life free from rent, Allan had come from a similar background to Jack 'the Blaster', having worked as a quarryman, a valet to Sir William Williamson (a member of the local gentry), and a game keeper to Lord Londonderry (Yellowly 1887:126), each of which positions would have brought him into direct contact with social elites and placed him in positions of subordination. By working in service, Allan would have been directly subordinated to the social elite who would have provided tied accommodation and controlled a large portion of Allan's everyday life. It is however worth observing that Allan, prior to his relocation to Marsden, was in possession of a home in Whitburn which he sold to help fund his venture (*ibid.*127) his case is therefore not directly comparable with the Bates.

The association between Marsden Grotto and protest arguably grew stronger during the period of Peter Allan's residence. Certainly accounts of association with smuggling were commonplace to the extent that Allan was held, and later released, by the local excise men under suspicion of involvement in free trading (Yellowly 1887:127). Yellowly further records that Marsden Bay was certainly no stranger to smuggling, relating a tale of one ship which in 1875 outwitted the excise by diverting from its intended landing point at Marsden to a cove south of Souter Point where it safely landed its cargo of smuggled tobacco (*ibid.*130). Likewise a folk tale reproduced in Hallowell's volume relates a story set in Allan's bar in which a young smuggler divulged his trade and a number of secrets to an undercover excise man (Hallowell 2013:109). It is clear that there was, at the very least, a perceived association between Marsden Grotto and smuggling; an association which contributes greatly to the continuing perception of the site as articulating a spirit of resistance to the laws of the land.

The enduring association of Marsden Grotto with protest is further suggested by the use of the site in the 1950s as the meeting place for local left wing writers, artists and politicians (Vallance 2008). This revitalization of radical protest at Marsden Grotto, although not explained in any great detail by either Vallance or Clark (2005:301), can likely be attributed to the advantages offered by the Marsden Grotto Inn as a liminal and sequestered space where dissident sub-culture could flourish. Indeed, inns are commonly venues of protest and resistance, providing sequestered spaces where individuals can congregate to articulate their protests (Scott 1990:121) (This theme is further explored in relation to the later-eighteenth century in chapters three and four). The link between Marsden Grotto and Jack 'the Blaster's' legacy, along with the subsequent illegalities that constitute the inn's history also likely helped to codify the grotto as a venue of resistance to what went on aboveground in the domain controlled by landowners and the social elites. In this way, Marsden Grotto has always been, in a very literal way, a place where underground resistance could be developed and articulated.

As a functioning public house, Marsden Grotto continues to trade on the legend of Jack the Blaster, though not in his role as an icon of protest against unfair tenancy but as a paranormal phenomenon said to still haunt the pub (Hallowell 2013:22) and to cause mischief if a tankard of beer is not left out for him. That the paranormal tale is linked back to Jack the Blaster is however a strong testimony to the recognized importance of the Bates in the story of the grotto.

The memory of Jack the Blaster and his relevance in the modern world is well demonstrated in the 2014 novel *The Feisty Professor* by Tony Haymer in the following passage:

> '"I looked it up. A famous bar and restaurant that's been hacked out of the limestone cliffs."
>
> "Hacked out?"
>
> "Mm" she chuckles. "I'm all for free enterprise so this amused me. Evidently, in 1782 a lead miner called Jack Bates, known as Jack the Blaster, moved into what was a small cave in the cliff. He set to and enlarged the cave by blasting. He created a rent-free home."
>
> Stanley grins "By 'eck. Good lad. Way to go, hey?"'
>
> (Haymer 2014:251)

The above passage relates quite clearly the enduring memory of the Bates' struggle against rent and tenancy which, despite the subsequent history of the Marsden Grotto, prevails amongst those who still live under the domination of landlords and exploitative tenantry. For the people of South Tyneside (and since Haymer is a Hull based author, well beyond it) Jack the Blaster is valorised as a folk hero; a role which occupies a central place in protest movements as Scott (1990:41) notes; those who stand up to authority directly and reveal the full hidden transcript to the elite, often resulting in punishment, and those who use cunning and trickery to outwit adversaries and escape unscathed. Jack 'the Blaster' very definitely falls into the second of these categories, as exploiting the ambiguity of his situation to help him evade having to pay rent or suffer the domination of landlords. That the story of Marsden Grotto is embedded within the folk culture of South Tyneside should therefore be taken as strongly indicative of the presence of a hidden transcript of resistance to tenancy and domination as Scott (*ibid.*162) argues 'Nothing illustrates the veiled cultural resistance of subordinate groups better than what have been termed trickster tales.' Through keeping alive the story of Jack 'the Blaster', the very spirit of protest and resistance itself is being simultaneous nurtured and propagated.

In more recent years, the role of Marsden Grotto and Jack and Jessie Bates in eighteenth-century radical politics has been increasingly recognized through the work of the Thomas Spence society. This increasing recognition has included a BBC Radio 4 (2015) segment on Thomas Spence and the Bates, and a series of commemorative events centred on the Marsden Grotto pub/restaurant and its association with Spence and his political agitations. This revitalization of the memory of Marsden Grotto's association with later-eighteenth-century protest and radical activism is largely of purely local interest and the site has yet to be fully recognized as being of

national significance. This case study has highlighted the role played by the Bates and Marsden Grotto in the wider, national discourse on tenancy and private land ownership in England.

A further testimony to the relevance of Jack 'the Blaster' to the modern world is demonstrated in the use of the name, Jack 'the Blaster', as a pseudonym by a reporter for the left wing Morning Star newspaper, contributing articles on topics as varied as Spanish radicalism (*The People's Daily Morning Star,* 23rd March, 2015: online) and the future of the British Museum reading rooms (*Daily Morning Star,* 31st July, 2015: online). A unifying theme which runs throughout all of Jack 'the Blaster's' articles is his/her drawing upon radical heritage as a way of understanding and critiquing modernity and contemporary politics (e.g. Thomas Paine's interest in building bridges, both literal and metaphorical, being used to critique the London Garden Bridge Scheme (*Daily Morning Star,* 31st December, 2014: online)). It appears therefore that the reporter is purposefully evoking the legend of Jack 'the Blaster', although at no point does he/she contextualise the pseudonym- as a model for engaging in resistance and protest.

The reporter's choice of pseudonym is almost certainly not coincidental and therefore must be considered to constitute an expression of the relevance of the original Jack 'the Blaster' in articulating radical protest in the modern world. It is also worthy of note that in using Jack's name as a pseudonym, the reporter is employing that 'weapon of the weak' which best allows an individual to speak out directly against the prevailing social system: anonymity (Scott 1985:273). Whilst anonymity was not a weapon used by Jack the Blaster himself, preferring to mask his protest in mutability and ambiguity of meaning, the employment of Jack's name as a pseudonym is a strong indication of his enduring memory as a figure of protest and resistance.

The memory of the Bates at Marsden rocks endured to the extent that Yellowly, in his brief account of the history of the grotto, observed that 'The spot to which they had given notoriety never from their time lost its local distinction.'(Yellowly 1887:126). Through their creation of a locus articulating a hidden transcript of protest against unfair tenancy and land ownership the Bates had contributed an important statement to the discourse on land ownership in eighteenth-century England. Their actions in establishing a home at Marsden Grotto, whilst seemingly insignificant and opportunistic were, I would argue, a public articulation of the wider hidden transcript of anger and dissent among those who lived under the domination of landlord tenant relations in eighteenth-century England.

Chapter 6 Materiality in Spencean Propaganda

This chapter explores how the radical political visionary and activist Thomas Spence (c.1750-1814) used material and spatial modes of expression to spread his 'Spence's Plan'; a political plan that all land should be reorganised and stripped from private landowners to be instead held collective on a parish basis and rented to tenants for fees payable to the parish (See Spence 1775; Parssinen 1973; Dickinson 1982; Chase 1988; Hammersley 2014 for further discussion of 'Spence's Plan'). Spence was born into a poor Scottish Presbyterian family in Newcastle in the early-1750s, his mother a stocking seller and his father a netmaker (Ashraf 1983:11). Spence grew up in Newcastle bearing witness to the passage of the three previous case study chapters. Indeed Spence specifically cited the influence that the Town Moor affair had on the formation of his ideas during his trial for treason in 1803 (Spence 1803) and also made specific reference to a visit he made to Marsden Grotto in 1782 (Spence 1795:250). Having lived through and experienced the political tumults of later-eighteenth-century North-East England, Spence offers an excellent case study to explore both how and whether he engaged with objects and spaces in ways which can be paralleled in his past experiences.

Although Spence's 'Plan' to abolish private land ownership and reorganise it under a parish system was certainly born in Newcastle, being first presented as a lecture in 1775, he did not remain in the North-East and relocated to London c.1783/4 (Seaman 2018 Online). This chapter therefore offers a wider reaching exploration of how material culture and space were features of protest in England, examining how Spence's experiences of the potential within objects and places to articulate sentiments of protest travelled with him to London and may have influenced the character of the propaganda which he produced to spread his political plan. The propaganda tools which Spence produced and used to spread this plan included such varied media as token coinage, discussion groups, lectures, pub-talks, pamphlets, handbills, and graffiti.

Spence's propaganda however has heretofore been primarily studied through the slogans and imagery which he reproduced to express his message, treating the material substrates which bore them as little more than inanimate conduits. This section however examines the textual and visual messages in combination with the materiality and spatiality of the substrate of Spence's propaganda. It focuses in particular on examining the metal tokens and paper pamphlets which he produced, and the spaces in which they were used, exhibited and engaged with, considering them as more than inanimate conduits and rather as tangible actualisations of his political and economic plan.

6.1 Tokens

The most iconic of all of Spence's propaganda outputs are arguably the tokens which he produced throughout the 1790s in response to the national coinage shortage which was frustrating trade in low cost goods. This crisis caused numerous industries, and merchants to produce auxiliary, non-regal coinage (that is coinage not **officially** sanctioned by the Crown) principally in the values of pennies, halfpennies and farthings. These tokens were not technically legal tender but were rather emblematic of the bearer's ability to pay in legal tender (Mathias 2004:71) and were theoretically redeemable against their given value upon presentation to the issuer or to parties in an agreement with the issuer; for example, a half-penny token issued by Thomas Spence was redeemable at Spence's premises for a half-penny in regal coin but the two were not considered as equivalent.

Exchangeability back into regal coin was not however the principle function of these tokens; rather they were issued to facilitate low level commercial transactions, and particularly to provide 'change' in vis-à-vis transactions as in shops, taverns and markets. As Peter Mathias (*ibid.* 80) argues: 'Where daily necessities, mainly of food and drink, were being bought on a daily basis from a number of shops or from daily/weekly markets the average unit of transaction was small and cash sales were the key. Trading at markets and with itinerant sellers also would be more likely to be cash. The same logic applied to purchasing in the bars of ale houses and inns.'

A further consideration regarding the intended function of the tokens however was their value in collectors' markets as will be explored later in this chapter (6.2.1). It is however apparent that token coinage fulfilled many roles in commerce and society during the later-eighteenth century, filling in for the almost complete absence of circulating low-denomination regal coinage.

6.1.1 Production

The technical details of Spence's token production are worth comment here. They were described by one commentator in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (January 1798 p.10) as being made of inferior quality copper and ill struck. Francis Place, in his notes on Spence meanwhile relates that Spence had blank pieces of metal cut out which he struck with a punch (BL MS 27808 f.182). This account however is somewhat misleading as it suggests Spence struck the tokens himself whereas Christopher Dykes suggests conversely that Spence had his tokens

Fig. 38 *Thomas Spence Halfpenny Token showing a coining press. Likely the one used to strike the coin. (BM- SSB,192.89) [29mm Ø]*

Fig. 37 *'The Mint' Ackermann, R. (1808-11) "The Microcosm of London", (London 1808-11) (Plate 53)*

struck for him by Peter Skidmore of 123 High Holborn, a stone's throw from Spence's premises at the 'Hive of Liberty' at 8 Little Turnstile (See Fig.48) (Dykes 2007:253). This proximity between Spence's premises and his manufacturer would have been ideal for the trade incurring minimal transport costs and enabling Spence to have close supervision of the work being undertaken on his behalf.

The tokens were likely stamped using a 'coin press' one of which is depicted in one of Spence's tokens (Fig.37). These were, manually operated screw-based machines able to produce large quantities of regular, standardized coinage in a short period of time. The press illustrated in Fig.37 would have required a minimum of 3 (ideally 5) persons to operate it effectively, two on the fly and one to load and unload pressed tokens (See Fig.38 which shows coin presses in operation at the Royal Mint). This investiture of labour and time in the coin production industry, alongside the capital needed to purchase the requisite machinery would have surely been beyond Spence's means as Spence at this time had barely enough to afford rent on his premises (see. 6.4.2 Fig.50), making it necessary for him to outsource his manufacturing to Skidmore.

***Fig. 39** Spence tokens listing his premises as No.8 Little Turnstile, Holborn, London. (Extract Thompson 1969:Plate VIII) [29mm Ø]*

The majority of Spence's trade in tokens was based at his premises in 'the Hive of Liberty', as evidenced by the tokens themselves: two in particular bear a design reading 'T. Spence Bookseller, Dealer in Prints & Coins. Little Turnstile No.8 Holborn, London.' (Fig.39). It is however also apparent that Spence continued his token trading after he left Little Turnstile, moving to 9 Oxford Street, where he was visited by a gentleman token collector who described his visit in an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (April 1797 p.269): 'Many many thousands of different tokens lying in heaps, and selling at what struck me to be very great prices. These, therefore, could not be considered as struck for limited sale. I confess, considering the number

I saw struck, and what the subjects of them were, I thought myself justified in supposing that it was the intention to circulate them very widely'.

R.H. Thompson (1969:151–2) provides additional evidence of Spence's token industry by drawing on the account book of Sarah Sophia Banks, a renowned collector who compiled a journal of her tokens in which she recounts their provenance. In this, Banks recorded that on '9th April, 1795 she paid Mr. Spence 1s. 6d. for twenty halfpence and eight farthings (mark-up of 6d. for Spence); on the 10th Mr. Skidmore 6d for six tokens, Mr. Spence 1s. 6d. for twenty four tokens; on the 11th Mr. Spence 1s. for sixteen tokens, on the 14th 6d. for eighteen farthings (1½ d. mark-up by Spence) and so on.' In contrast with this, Miss Banks was charged 5s. on the 7th May by another coin dealer for an 'End of Pain/Pandora' token and two days later was charged the same price by Skidmore an 'End of Pain/Wrongs of Man' token (*ibid.*). Sarah Banks' account thus provides evidence both of the location at which Spence was dealing tokens in 1795 (8 Little Turnstile) and that he was indeed selling them to collectors at a marginally inflated price.

6.1.2 Distribution

The above accounts describing Spence's token trade also touch on his distribution methods, his intended audience, and the breadth of his intended circulation. These are topics which have been explored previously by both John Barrell (Barrell 2007) and R.H.Thompson (1969). Barrell argues that Spence intended his tokens solely for the collectors' market due to the fact that he was selling them at 'very great prices' and that 'the bulk of them seem to have disappeared in mint condition into the cabinets of gentleman and lady collectors' where they still remain today (Barrell 2007:18). Barrell's discussion here however is overly simplistic; just because tokens exist in collections today does not mean that all tokens either initially **did** or were intended to do so by Spence.

The obvious immediate contradiction to Barrell's argument concerning distribution is Eneas Mackenzie's (1827:401) account that 'these coins he [Spence] frequently distributed by jerking them from his window amongst the passengers.' Likewise, the above quote from the *Gentleman's Magazine* (April 1797 p.269) suggests that despite their apparent high prices (an apparently unusual feature to have elicited particular comment) the commentator thought himself 'justified in supposing that it was the intention to circulate them very widely' (a fuller discussion of the values of later-eighteenth-century token coinage can be found in Mathias 2004). My contention therefore is, contra Barrell's argument, Spence strategized his use of

token coinage in combination with his other outputs to construct a multi-media and multi-audience propaganda scheme for his plan.

Fig. 40 *Thos. Spence Token, badly corroded found by Nigel Tillings near Loxwood, West Sussex. Pers. Comm. – Obv. Thos. Spence, Thos. More, Thos. Paine/ Noted Advocates for the Rights of Man// Rev. image of pig trampling crown and sceptre with staff and cap of liberty. [29mm Ø]*

A solitary metal detecting find from Loxwood, West Sussex (Tillings pers. comm 28/02/2017-Fig.40) indicates that Spence's tokens were capable of circulating at least that far geographically. The geographical distribution potential of political coins issued in London is further indicated by three additional metal detecting finds, of non-Spencean but similarly radical tokens produced by an unidentified London issuer in sympathy with Messrs Symonds, Winterbotham, Ridgeway, and Holt, radical pamphleteers who had been incarcerated for selling Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*, (one from the Isle of Wight (PAS IOW-273684), one from Wiltshire (PAS WILT-0EAFD4), and one from Surrey (PAS SUR-AFE855) further illustrate the potential spread of London issued political tokens.

The relative dearth of political tokens recovered from the ground has however further caused Barrell to argue that because it is only predominantly unworn, mint-condition examples still existing, there is little evidence for wide circulation of Spence's tokens (2007:18). Thompson however argues quite the reverse that 'Spence intended his tokens to circulate in the currency' and that 'their denominations would have made them of most use to those laborious poor' (Thompson 1969:152). I further contend that the scarcity of worn, circulated examples is almost certainly a side-effect of the fact that most of the thousands which had been in general circulation as currency were gradually run out of use by the Government's recoining policy of the early nineteenth century (Dykes 2002:173; Thompson 1969:153) and that those presently

residing in museum collections are the ones which were acquired by collectors precisely for their 'mint condition'. In Birmingham, for example 'many persons who had quantities of them [old tokens] received in the way of business were at considerable loss by selling them for old metal at less than half their nominal value' (Dykes 2002:174). Thus far from it being the case that Spence only distributed his tokens to collectors; it is probable that many of his tokens were melted down for scrap during the recoining drives of the 1790s and 1800s.

It is also important to consider here the social stratas among which Spence intended his tokens to circulate. The *Gentleman's Magazine* account from April 1797 (p.269) again provides several interesting indications as to the intended circulation of Spence's coinage. Whilst it is apparent that the author of the account was a gentleman collector; what he records as seeing are heaps of 'many many thousands of tokens' – far more than would be necessary to cater for the elite-collector's market (*Gentleman's Magazine* April 1797:269). There is therefore a disjuncture here between Spence throwing his tokens to passers-by, yet also selling them to collectors which requires further consideration.

The eighteenth-century shop was not the same fixed-price environment of its modern counterpart; prices were rarely displayed, and costs were negotiable (See for example– *The Complete Tradesman* (Wright 1786:62–3) which advocates the necessity of haggling in shops). Although the cost of a half-penny token should be assumed to be a half-penny it is apparent from Sarah Sophia Banks' book that they were being sold by Spence and by other token dealers at inflated prices (Thompson 1969:151-2). It is therefore likely that the determined collector, probably hailing from an elite social milieu and thus easily identifiable from appearance and mannerisms, presented Spence with an opportunity to inflate the price of the tokens on the spot according to demand; a 'saw you coming' scenario. Between the *Gentleman's Magazine* account of tokens being sold at 'grossly inflated prices', Sarah Sophia Banks' collection handbook, and Eneas Mackenzie's account, it seems apparent that Spence was distributing his tokens at different price points to individuals of differing social strata.

The lack of any further source materials from which to establish detailed price-points for specific tokens or from which to establish a tighter chronology for where, and for how much he was selling tokens for, precludes taking this argument any further. It is however apparent that Spence was bankrupted in 1796, at which point he passed on some of his tokens to fellow dealer Peter Skidmore (*Gentleman's Magazine* February 1798:122). He was however also still giving tokens away to his customers as late as 1814 when at the back of his latter-days journal '*Giant Killer or the Anti-Landlord'* he advertised that 'With every first number sold will be given an

appropriate medal wrapped up in a song, GRATIS' (Spence 1814). Spence also retained sufficient tokens for them to be distributed among the 40 mourners at his funeral and the crowds who gathered to see the cortege pass by and he was buried with examples of his favourite tokens; one depicting a cat (obv.) and dog (rev.), and another depicting the 'Meridian Sun of Liberty' (Ashraf 1983:91).

Following his bankruptcy, Spence clearly retained some of his stock rather than pass on the surplus for recycling or redistribution by other outlets as many other token dealers did in similar circumstances (Mathias 2004:81). This was certainly not because Spence's coins were unsellable by other dealers as Skidmore continued to use Spence's dies to produce mules (coins using mixed images from a variety of issuers) (*ibid.*). It seems, therefore, that Spence retained his stock on purpose, wishing to continue distributing the tokens himself, being invested in the message which they articulated.

This idea of Spence operating an 'opportunist' business plan, charging elites for a product which he also distributed freely to the poor fits well with Hall's thesis on the ways in which acts of resistance can be encoded into the material ambiguities of objects which circulate within both elite and non-elite spheres (Hall 2000:137). Spence exploited the ambiguities of the ill-defined legal ground in which tokens were legitimate coinage but not of the realm and thus did not have any real value outside their base metal worth. Furthermore, the law was written so as to make counterfeiting regal coinage of any nationality prosecutable, but it did not specifically list any illegality in producing **tokens** which did not avowedly attempt to replicate regal coinage. By using different imagery to that on regal coinage an intermediary ground between counterfeit and legitimate coinage could be exploited without the threat of legal persecution (Mathias 2004:72).

This ambiguity in the legality of tokens meant that as long as Spence trod lightly, he remained un-prosecutable as he was not counterfeiting. Nor did Spence own the tools to engage in counterfeiting (an equally prosecutable offence which carried a £500 fine) having outsourced that side of the business to Charles James, his die cutter, and Peter Skidmore who struck them. By outsourcing the production of his tokens and distancing himself from the machinery of manufacture, Spence may well have been covering himself as a person already known to the authorities and whom the Government had an active interest in imprisoning (alongside the technical reasons discussed above).

Spence's exploitation of this ambiguity resonates with the strategy employed by 'Jack the Blaster' at Marsden Grotto. Jack similarly exploited a space with ill-defined and ambiguous

legal ownership, and which was theoretically accessible to all at no extra cost, but which Jack charged elite visitors to enter and occupy. By distributing his tokens at variable price points [selling them according to demand/opportunity], Spence introduced further ambiguities into their relative value, allowing him to profit from elite collectors whilst simultaneously obliging them to **buy** an object materialising and articulating a political plan which threatened their destruction.

Spence's interactions with elite collectors may therefore be considered as an example of 'everyday forms of resistance', as defined by Scott:

> What everyday forms of resistance share with the more dramatic public confrontations is of course that they are intended to mitigate or deny claims made by superordinate classes or to advance claims vis-à-vis those superordinate classes. Such claims have ordinarily to do with the material nexus of class struggle- the appropriation of land, labour, taxes, rents and so forth.
>
> (Scott 1985:50)

Fig. 41 *Spencean Halfpenny Token showing an ass carrying two sets of panniers, the lower set is labelled 'rent', the upper 'taxs'. The edge text reads "I was an ass to bear the first pair." (BM 1870,0507.16168) [29mm Ø]*

Through the medium of mercantile exchange, Spence was thus able to exploit a position of power in interacting with elite customers. The tokens may in this way be understood as veiled surrogates for land/housing, and the elite collector occupying the relative position of the tenant

desirous of a place to live. In this ‘world turned upside down’ situation, Spence could charge the collector/tenant whatever he chose as arbitrarily fit. Whilst this understanding of Spence’s tokens is highly conjectural, the tokens did in some circumstances directly reference these themes, in particular with regards to rent and taxes (see Fig.41 which shows a token bearing imagery of an ass laden with rents and taxes as burdens), both central tenets of his plan (Fitz 2015 – exhibition website).

6.2 Infiltrating Elite Milieus

The above discussion has touched on an important issue worth further inquest: the intended audience for Spence’s tokens. R.H.Thompson argues convincingly that Spence’s use of lower denomination coinage was intended to help his plan permeate as broadly as possible, lower denominations being commonly used by persons of all social strata (Thompson 1969:152). This however has been a contentious point as John Barrell argues alternatively that they were primarily intended as collectables for collectors (Barrell 2007:18)

6.2.1 In a Collection Context

The collectability of Spence’s tokens has attracted significant scholarly interest, with perhaps the most contentious study being that by Barrell who concluded that ‘I [Barrell] don’t see Spence’s tokens, fascinating as they are, as an important contribution to the creation of a visual radical propaganda’ (Barrell 2007:18). This conclusion has already been briefly critiqued above; however a further critique must be offered here. Barrell’s assertion that once Spence’s tokens entered collections they lost their potency as expressions of a political agenda is in many ways a misreading of the source material as shall be demonstrated through this section.

Thompson (1969:151) conversely argues that through classifications of Spence’s tokens within collections ‘rather nebulously as “political pieces”, one cannot help suspecting that this heading was devised in order to put them out of sight and mind in a “in a miscellaneous drawer for such *lusae monetae*”’. I further argue then that through gaining access to this elite sphere of collections and collectors, Spence successfully transcended an audience boundary, engaging social elites with his plan. Spence was certainly aware of the collection potential of his tokens as is clearly evidenced in both his publication of a coin collectors companion (Spence 1795b) and his actively selling tokens to known collectors (e.g. Sarah Sophia Banks, Thompson 1969:152). To suggest however that ‘The Poor Man’s Advocate’ who campaigned to equalize the material conditions of rich and poor had transformed into a purveyor of elite material culture, the very stuff which helped construct social differentiation, presents a disjuncture in his philosophy which requires a deeper consideration.

By capitalising on the emerging collector market for tokens, Spence exploited the propaganda potential of objects which could circulate within elite milieus unlike most of his propaganda (his pamphlets, broadsides, and ballads) which had very limited power to permeate elite, loyalist readerships. Spence's tokens did not cease to function once they had been ensconced in these collections; a point also well exemplified by letters to the *Gentleman's Magazine* which repeatedly condemn their imagery and slogans, advocating that if they must be collected that they should be stored out of sight. 'Contemptible in execution, and infamous in representation; beyond the revolutions of ages and the decay of empire, they will carry the marks of his infamy to the final dissolution of the world.' (*Gentleman's Magazine* February 1798 p.830).

The following quote, again from the *Gentleman's Magazine* (April 1797 p.32) also concerns the ways in which Spence's tokens functioned once they had entered into elite private collections. The writer states that radical political tokens 'Can produce no effect more important than that of licentious caricatures which excite laughter'. Barrell (2007:24) uses this quote to argue for the failure of Spence's tokens to articulate their message, but it may equally be contended that the political messages articulated by the tokens impacted the elite collectors to such an extent that the above writer was recommending the approach of 'ignoring them until they go away'. This attempt by elite collectors to negating the political impact of Spence's tokens resonates well with Scott's argument that 'Patterns of domination can, in fact, accommodate a reasonably high level of practical resistance so long as that resistance is not publicly and unambiguously acknowledged. ' (Scott 1990:57). Accordingly, elite collectors of Spence's tokens were determinedly disavowing any acknowledgement of their potential impact as articulations of resistance, arguing them to be laughable and not worthy of comment.

6.2.2 Sarah Sophia Banks' Tokens

An appreciation of the contexts in which Spence's tokens were collected is essential to understanding their potential impact. Later eighteenth-century collecting practices are in their own right a focus of much research usefully centred on the role of collections in developing and maintaining social dynamics and interpersonal connections among the elite (see for example Leis (2013) and Pelling (2018), both of whom provide excellent summaries of the state of scholarship on later-eighteenth-century collections).

One of the best documented collections incorporating Spencean tokens, was that of Sarah Sophia Banks which, when deposited at the British Museum shortly after her death, contained over 9000 coins. (Eagleton 2013:24). The collection was estimated by her contemporaries as one of the most important numismatic collections in the country (Eagleton 2013:26 citing a

flyer listing 15 of the most important ‘cabinets’ nationally) and several recent studies have appeared on her Struck English Coins, African Money, American Continental Dollars, and on the sociability of her collecting practices generally (Eaglen 2008; Eagleton 2013; 2014; Leis 2013). These studies have shed light on the factors informing interest in token collections and the ways in which Spence’s tokens were engaged with by elite milieus. As Leis (2013:22) argues ‘In semi-public rooms like the great room (at the Banks’ house), items from her (Banks’) collection could be removed from private spaces, such as wardrobes and bookcases and then passed around, enabling visitors to participate in a ritual of decorous sociability animated by intelligent enquiry, amusing personal anecdote, and the latest gossipy news.’ In this way it is immediately apparent that collections were not sterile fossils, permanently shut away and de-contextualised within cabinets of curiosities, but were rather contexts in which objects were circulated to prompt discussion and enquiry. In these ‘rituals of decorous sociability’ a Spencean token being passed around would have facilitated and prompted elite discourse concerning the man and the ‘Plan’ which he advocated.

The methods by which Banks acquired her collection, touched upon above, are worth further enquiry. Many of Banks tokens were purchased direct from Spence, and other dealers (Thompson 1969:127) however she also exchanged numerous coins with other collectors (Leis 2013:23). Banks’ insistent and determined collecting strategy is cited in one exchange as having left the other party feeling ‘pressed to accept an unequal swap of tokens’ (Eaglen 2008:206). This networking with other collectors extended far beyond Banks’ immediate metropolitan social circle, with her frequently corresponding with Matthew Boulton, and various other coin experts and enthusiasts (Eaglen 2008:206).

Significantly, Banks did not only rely entirely on other collectors or specialist coin dealers. Her journal lists the acquisition of a token on 28th January, 1794 from ‘Mrs. Harding, Cook’ (Eagleton 2013:24). The token itself here is significant in that it is a political one with the bust of Thomas Hardy and dated 1794 (likely Dalton and Hamer 1025), thus indicating that political tokens were indeed circulating amongst poorer members of society. Through these informal exchange networks it would have been easy for Spence’s tokens to move far beyond his own immediate milieu both geographically and socially.

Spence’s insertion of his tokens into elite milieus through the collectors' market may be seen as being at odds with his normal target audience, the poor, for whom he stood as advocate but this is not the case. Spence had previously made concerted efforts to share his plan with elite milieus, most notably on its inception in 1775 when he presented it in a lecture to the intellectual

elite of Newcastle-upon-Tyne at the Philosophical Society. Spence's dismissal from the society on account of the 'ERONEOUS and dangerous levelling principles, with which the lecture is replete' (*Newcastle Chronicle,* 25th November, 1775 p.3) must however have made it immediately apparent to Spence that this was not the best way for him to engage an elite audience with his plan. (It was also argued however that he was dismissed for printing and selling his lecture in the manner of a half-penny ballad. See (Ashraf 1983:13) for further discussion.) It was following this dismissal that Spence took to printing political pamphlets and short stories, to disseminate his message, alongside spreading it more generally in meetings and discussion groups.

6.3 Literate and Visual Objects

The distribution, audience and ownership of Spence's tokens having been well explored above, it remains to consider exactly how Spence's tokens operated in conjunction with his other propagandist outputs to influence and communicate with individual consumers.

The material characteristics of Spence's propagandist outputs can be summarized well in Fig.46 which although largely self-explanatory is worth some comment. Each of the four constituent circles are labelled according to four defining characteristics which feature in all of the strategies discussed within this thesis; 'material' (the extent to which a thing is characterised by its materiality), 'visual' (the extent to which a thing is *intended* to be understood as an image or artistic representation), 'textual' (the extent to which a thing is *intended* to be understood through a text component) and, 'spatial' (the extent to which a thing is *intended* to be understood in relation to the space in which it is situated or the extent to which it contributes to creating a novel understanding for that space.)

The diagram demonstrates clearly how many of the strategies of resistance and/or protest explored within this thesis can be understood to draw on multiple of these characteristic facets. With particular reference to the present discussion on tokens, Fig.46 illustrates that they are particularly strongly dependent on their visual and material characteristics to articulate their meanings but also, to a lesser extent, draw on their spatial contexts and textual messages to define themselves.

To fully understand these objects therefore it is necessary to explore their three defining characteristics, as object, text and image. The interplay between these three facets of the tokens can indicate the intended audience for Spence's tokens, their intended usage and reveal how Spence thought that they would operate alongside his other media outputs, each designed to target a specific area on Fig.42.

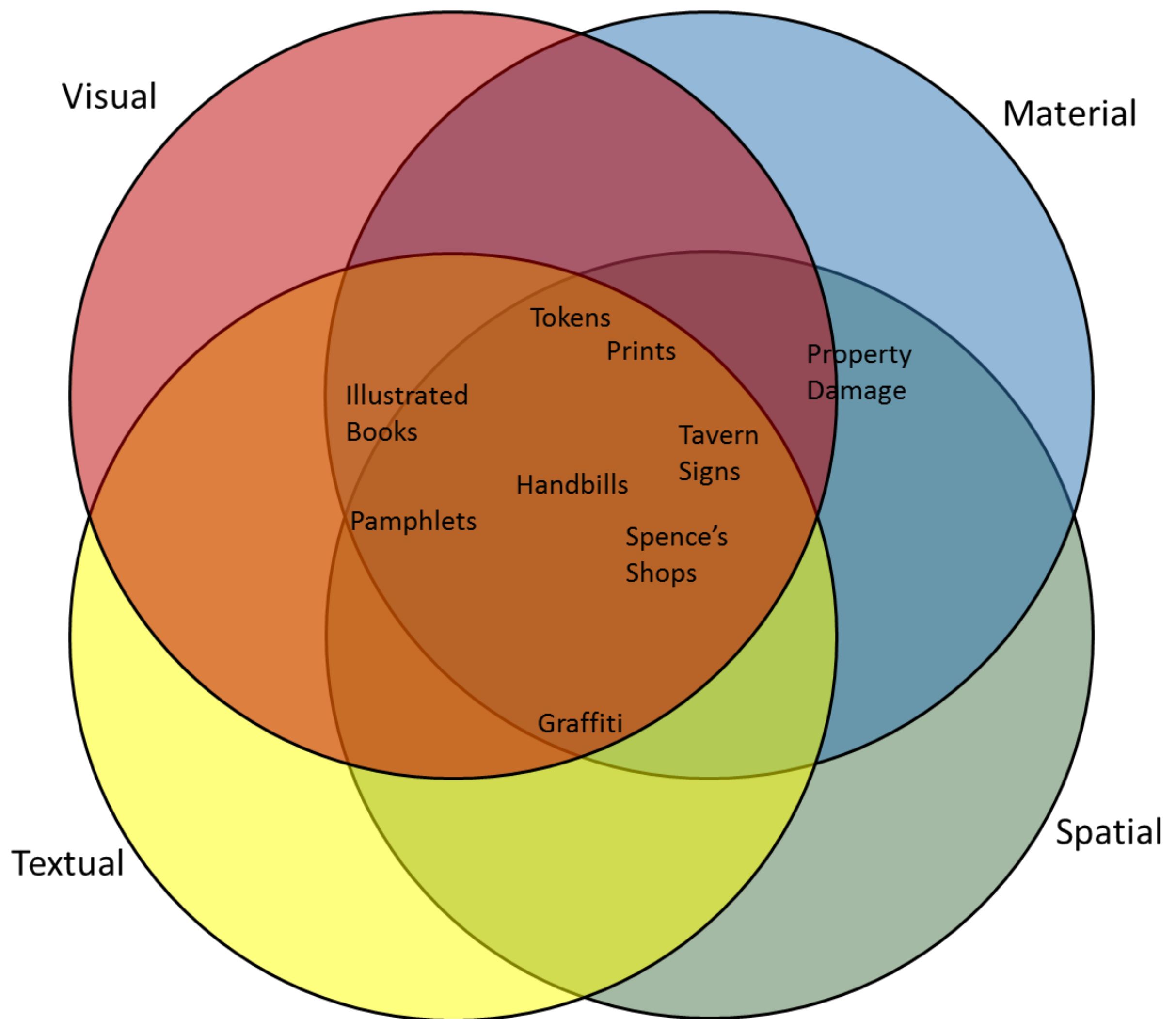


Fig. 42 *Venn Diagram displaying how various strategies of protests/resistance discussed in this thesis draw on textual, spatial, material, and visual attributes.*

The textual messages are perhaps the most accessible to a literate audience, proclaiming such unambiguous slogans as 'Advocates for the Rights of Man: Thos. Spence, Sir Thos. More, Thos. Paine' (Fig.44). Many of the textual inclusions on the tokens are thus intended to function as captions to an associated image; 'The End of Oppression' for example is a caption to an image of two men burning land deeds (Fig.44); 'I among Slaves Enjoy My Freedom' is a caption to an image of a cat (Fig.43); and 'Much gratitude brings servitude' captions an image of a dog (on the obverse to the Cat (Fig.43)). This interrelationship between text, image, and object requires careful consideration in terms of the accessibility of the messages expressed by the tokens to certain audiences. The accessibility of the messages reproduced on Spence's tokens is a theme which ties in closely with the accessibility of the messages reproduced in his pamphlets.

Fig. 44 *Thomas Spence Tokens; [L]- 'The End of Oppression' showing two men burning land deeds. [R]- 'Thos Spence, Sir Thos More, Thos Paine/ Noted Advocates for the Rights of Man' (Extract Thompson 1969:Plate VI) [29mm Ø]*

Fig. 43 *Thomas Spence Token - Obv. showing a dog with text 'Much Gratitude Brings Servitude' Rev. image of a Cat with text 'I Among Slaves Enjoy My Freedom' (Extract Thompson 1969:Plate VII) [29mm Ø]*

6.3.1 Durable Media

Once the tokens had been acquired, whether for the purpose of coinage, collectability or sentimentality (that is, due to the sentiment which the token materialised) its material qualities became the focus of engagement. As David Worrall argues 'there is something fascinating about carrying around a pocketful of subversive messages...' (Worrall 1992:26). Further to their roles as currency their existence as metallic embodiments of Spence's plan gave his plan a durability greater than that afforded by his alternative print and oral outputs. This is clearly demonstrated through the quantity of Spence's tokens surviving collections in contrast with his printed propaganda (initially more numerous and produced over a much longer period of time), which survives in archives relatively infrequently. This durability of medium has the dual function of making the propaganda itself longer lasting and less prone to damage/destruction thus making the message mediated by the tokens seem durable and thus more legitimate.

Spence was acutely aware of this durable materiality of his token coinage, writing in the afterword of his *Coin Collector's Companion* 'There is no other way (than collecting) to preserve them (tokens) from oblivion. Again, some of them, on account of Device, some for neatness of Workmanship, and all on account of their great variety, may, nay will, claim the attention of the curious in after ages.' (Spence 1795b). Whilst Spence was speaking generally of all token coinage here, it is apparent that he was deeply conscious of the durability of tokens as media for disseminating his plan. By referencing their potential appeal to the curious in after ages, it is further apparent that through his tokens he was aiming to push his plan through another barrier, that of time.

Coinage occupied an important position in eighteenth-century British society as the principle medium of exchange and trade. It was also the principal way in which many individuals would have come into regular contact with the image of the monarch and as an object therefore, coins articulated royal power and authority. This role of coinage in later-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Britain is made clear by the way in which defaced coins sometimes had the monarch's image obliterated, focussing a political statement on a handy image of the head of state (see for example Robinson 1987). Spence, by introducing his own coinage into this sphere of authority and legitimacy was materially subverting Governmental and royal power. This subversion of the meanings present in the hegemonic space of regal coinage is perhaps best exemplified on the coins on which Spence reproduced busts of radical and reformist activists in lieu of the monarch, including himself, Lord George Gordon, John Horne Tooke, John Thelwall, and Charles Fox (according to dies listed by Thompson 1969:141-151).

That image and text are commonly reproduced in combination on Spence's tokens is critical to their expression of an intended message. Combining text and image on an object adds an immediately conspicuous meaning to that object which converts it from being a mundane and inherently exchangeable commodity, to use the terminology of Appadurai and Kopytoff (Appadurai 1986:3; Kopytoff 1986:68–9), into a 'singular object'; an object which has a particular significance and value beyond its value for exchange (Kopytoff 1986:82).

Fig. 45 *Thomas Spence Token- perforated for suspension. (Fitz. - CM.TR.1385-R) [29mm Ø]*

Whilst the tokens always retained their exchangeable value, they also had an infungible meaning which could not be exchanged; thus a regal half-penny though theoretically instantly exchangeable with a Spencean half-penny (in Spence's Shop) could not replace the significance of Spence's token as an object materialising a political sentiment. That it was primarily within Spence's shop that regal coin could be exchanged for his tokens is particularly significant as it establishes the place as an interface between 'loyalist' and 'radical' worlds. By exchanging regal coinage for radical coinage, a person was literally buying into a radical counterculture. This concept of Spence's shops as thresholds to the radical underworld of eighteenth-century London is considered in greater detail later in this chapter, however it is important here to note that Spence's print shops occupied a privileged position enabling customers to easily access the material manifestations of Spence's plan.

That the texts and images on Spence's token altered the ways in which they held value is perhaps most clearly articulated by an example in the Fitzwilliam Collection (Fig.45). This token is particularly interesting as it has a perforation at the top suggesting it was intended to

be suspended; such as a pendant on a necklace or watch-fob. The token's conversion from an exchangeable coin into a piece of personal jewellery is a significant step in its biography. Thompson (1969:156) also mentions a perforated token (one of Spence’s counter stamped regal coins), holed similarly so that the textual message of the token would hang the right way up when suspended. A comparative for these tokens is in the convict love token, created from regal coinage as an exchangeable commodity and altered to bear messages of love (Tindal et al. 2015). Many of these tokens were similarly perforated for suspension indicating the shift in significance which occurred when they were altered from simple currency to material articulations of a particular message.

If Christopher Fennell’s methodology for understanding symbolic material representations of belief systems is thus applied to these perforated tokens, it is apparent that they constitute what he terms ‘instrumental expressions’ of identity (Fennell 2007:27). Fennell’s work is particularly appropriate here as he explores how individual material expressions of identities and ideas relate to and derive from more holistic expressions of broader identities and ideas. To explore this, Fennell looks particularly at expressions of religion and magic, exploring how individual facets of a belief system can be abstracted from the whole to articulate particular messages regarding identity or belief. This can be broadly paralleled with Spence abstracting participant facets of his plan into objects designed to articulate particular messages relating to the whole. In this context, ‘instrumental expressions’ refers to objects or actions which are designed as abstractions of a core belief system, using selected and abbreviated symbols to articulate a particular idea in private expressions and/or for personal purposes. Within Fennell’s framework the perforated tokens can therefore be understood as expressions of identity; that an individual was associated with the Spencean movement and was particularly celebrating or extolling a distinct facet of the core beliefs of that movement as materialised by a particular token.

A further instrumental significance of Spence’s tokens was their ability to change in function and legibility depending on the contexts in which they were performed. When persons thus moved from a context in which they were participating in the prevailing transcript to contexts in which they their transcript must be necessarily hidden, the tokens enabled them to ‘continue the exercise of their beliefs through individualized, instrumental expressions in private settings.’ (Fennell 2007:41). As singular objects Spence’s tokens were clearly able to simultaneously to operate in both mundane and ideological spheres, mediating Spence’s economic plan into the everyday world of trade and commerce, providing nodes from which his plan could be spread throughout all strata of society.

6.3.2 Occupying Regal Space

Somewhat separate although closely related to Spence's token minting activities are his activities counter-stamping existing regal coinage with political slogans such as 'Spence's Plans – You Fools', 'Fat Bairns, Full Bellies', and 'No Landlords' (Thompson 1969:155). These counter-stamped coins are cited by Thompson (1969:154) as further evidence of 'Spence's propagandist intent'. Thompson then further argues that 'such an attempt to use currency (frequently, if not always, employed for state propaganda) for propaganda against the constitution, at least as then established in a parliament of landlords, must be, to say the least, unusual.' (*ibid.*) This clandestine activity by Spence has left remarkably little documentary evidence, likely due to its illegality, placing a particular importance on contextualising the objects themselves to decode their meanings, intended audiences, and impacts.

The most significant aspect of these counter-stamped coins is that they constitute a significantly different strategy from minting new semi-legitimate tokens, to purposefully selecting regal coinage for defacement. This use of regal coin is argued by David Worrall as demonstrating Spence's 'revolutionary willingness to take over the sites of the dominant discourse of king and coin' (Worrall 1992:26). Worrall further identifies Spence's adeptness at occupying spaces of dominant discourse which 'had become ramshackle or poorly defined or which could be used subversively' (Worrall 1992:27). This certainly presents an interesting argument which this chapter will take forward into the consideration of Spence's use of space and sites of discourse more generally. Worrall however fails to recognize the importance of considering the denominations on which the countermarking occurred, thus failing to appreciate the implications of denomination on audience reach (explored above 6.1.2).

The slogans stamped onto the regal coins further link these counter-marked coins with other media of Spence's propaganda, particularly in the frequency with which use of the slogan 'SPENCE'S PLAN' is marked. The use of this slogan in countermarking coins can be paralleled with its use in marking walls around London during the latter years of Spence's operations as both circumstances involved the countermarking of property which was not of Spence's production or ownership. A quote in Francis Place's papers articulates the closeness of this link clearly: 'During his latter days, he was zealously employed in disseminating a knowledge of his plan. With this view, he stamped the current coin with the words "Spence's Plan", and his disciples chalked them on every wall in London' (BL Add. MS. 27808).

By marking both walls and regal coinage, Spence was challenging the meanings which they embodied. A regal coin articulated royal prerogative over the economy of the realm, a wall

demarcated property ownership, exclusion, and privacy, ideals commensurate with the emergence of Capitalism and 'Georgian Order' as posited by Matthew Johnson (1996:202). In Johnson's discussion of the material forms of capitalism he argues further that the perceived sameness of material culture (such as coins and walls) under capitalism is only surface deep and falls apart when context of use and patterns of consumption are considered (Johnson 1999a:227). Johnson's argument rings particularly true considering that by chalking or countermarking a new message onto the surfaces of material signifiers, Spence was challenging, subverting and renegotiating their meanings.

There is a clear parallel in Spence's recodification of meanings in material forms here with the actions undertaken during the Newcastle Town Moor affair and the subsequent recodification of the meanings materialised within Newcastle's city streetscape (see chapter four for more detailed explorations of this case study). In this affair, which Spence himself admitted influenced him greatly (Spence 1803), the Freemen of Newcastle recoded the material world of the city and the Town Moor through a range of activities which included the destruction of what they considered to be illegitimate private property and the use of multi-sensory demonstrations to challenge the meanings of the city streetscape (including the use of tavern signage to contend the elite pantheon of heroes).

6.4 Understanding Spence's Tokens

6.4.1 Pedagogy

There is a further argument to be made regarding Spence's pedagogical use of tokens and his combination of text, image and object within them. The significance here is in considering Spence's tokens as abstracts, abbreviating some of the key messages of his wider political and economic plan. They must therefore be considered in close conjunction with the principle modes by which Spence also disseminated his political and economic message; print culture and public orations/discussion groups. It is important here to note in advance that Spence had extensive experience as a teacher, having worked in various schools in Newcastle and Haydon Bridge during the 1770s and 1780s (Ashraf 1983:14-15), and was therefore almost certainly keenly aware of the pedagogical theories and models prevalent during this period.

Spence's use of text and image in combination can be well contextualised within eighteenth-century pedagogical models, a prime example being the strategies for teaching children the alphabet which included letter cards formed by acrobats' contortions; or Locke's argument that learning should use 'dice and play-things with letters on them, to teach the alphabet by playing' (Brown 2006:352). Use of Spence's tokens in such associational learning strategies is therefore

certainly possible, however this means that they essentially cannot be understood as isolated individual object and that they must have been engaged with in contexts where wider understandings of Spence's Plan could be developed (i.e. in accompaniment with a Spencean pamphlet or at one of Spence's 'Free and Easies' (relaxed and informal political discussion groups held in alehouses). The imagery and slogans on the tokens are much too abstract and polysemous to mediate specific messages without contextualization. A token bearing an image of a cat with the slogan 'I amongst Slaves enjoy my freedom' for instance has limited direct association to Spence's plan except for those who have some contextualising knowledge of the plan and Spence's wider publications.

The imagery on the tokens may therefore have been intended by Spence to act as complimentary aids to understanding and remembering the textual messages from his pamphlets and broadsides or as introductions to the deeper messages of his plan. In this way the tokens should be considered as abbreviated abstractions of Spence's plan, designed to materialise and express specific facets as Christopher Fennell argues 'an object emits a stylistic message repeatedly and constantly as it is displayed to an audience that understand the language of the style.' (Fennell 2007:40).

The pedagogical function of the tokens as materialisations of Spence's plan may also have been intended to act as tangible aide-memoirs to Spence's teachings, as Joseph Monteyne has argued with reference to mezzotint prints; 'For the public viewer, it was not even necessary to be able to read the captions, since any literate member of a gathering crowd could be solicited to vocalize the textual elements. The latter were perhaps not even overly important, since it was acknowledged at the time that visual satire had precedence over text – **it remained longer in the mind, and it appealed to sense that lay beyond reason.**' ((Monteyne 2013:12) emphasis my own). The imagery on the token thus provided a sort of metonymic abstract to Spence's teachings, a form of word association in which, for example, the burden of taxes is memorable as a burdened ass (see Fig.41). In this context, Monteyne's argument demonstrates closely the inseparability of tokens, prints, and pamphlets as each performing similar functions expressing messages with each media using different material substrates to achieve similar ends. This concept of metonymic abstraction can again be explored through Fennell's work as he argues that abstracted objects were designed to be understandable only to those who have been exposed to the 'core symbol [which is] usually expressed in its most fully complex and embellished form in the emblematic expressions of public and group rituals' (Fennell 2007:27). Thus the token, pamphlet or print offers a touch-stone reminder of what may have been learnt at one of Spence's lectures or discussion groups.

An alternative function of the tokens' pedagogical role, (though none of these functions are mutually exclusive of each other) is that the tokens could serve to pique interest. Few images are included in Spence's printed outputs, and although several of Thomas Bewick's woodcut prints which exist in the British Museum are labelled with Spence's name, it is unclear which of Spence's pamphlets or books these were designed for (certainly none seem to survive) (BM 1882,0311.3035; BM 1882,0311.3034; BM 1882,0311.3036). Dating from c.1782, and with some further annotated with 'Saint' (Thomas Saint was a printer in Newcastle who Spence used to reproduce some of his works) they were likely in use before Spence moved to London. Their size is also small, measuring on average 33mm x 43mm, suggesting that they were probably intended to be printed or pasted either into larger bound volumes or to be distributed individually as small images.

Spence's use of illustrations only in the fronts of his bound compilation copies of 'Pig's Meat' (Spence 1795a) further suggests that his pamphlets were not intended to be illustrated to compliment the textual messages. Instead it seems likely that the frontispieces (one illustrating a pig trampling the crown jewels (Fig.47) and one showing a bust of Spence in profile) were only added to his bound volumes to lend an element of finesse and legitimacy to the publications, drawing on the well-established literary practice of inserting a portrait of the author into the publication. In terms of economics, this lack of imagery makes sense as the inclusion of imagery in print culture has the dual negative effects of increasing printing costs and reducing the space available for text; text being the prime medium by which Spence's complex political and economic ideas could be conveyed through ink and paper.

It may be suggested therefore that Spence's tokens acted as illustrative accompaniments to his pamphlets, with the imagery used on the tokens comprising abstracts of his political works. The image piques interest and in almost all circumstances raises far more questions than it can answer. The tokens then act as objects of curiosity intended to stimulate conversation as to their meaning, origins, and purpose; not just in elite collector circles as demonstrated above, but also amongst the working classes. In such circumstances, Spence's tokens acted as nodes around which conversations could develop between individuals to facilitate better understandings of what the tokens represented; it is easy to imagine an exchange whereby a person receives a Spencean token in their change at a tavern returning to sit with their company and asking what was meant by 'If rents I once consent to pay, my liberty is past [sic.] away'? (a slogan from one of his tokens (Fig.46)), who minted it?, or where it was acquired?. The token could thereby act as a portal to the radical underworld, piquing curiosity, and establishing a material point of contact to a radical subtext, which was open to further investigation.

6.4.2 An Open Interpretation

There is of course an issue here that an object so open to interpretation may result in a wrong or distorted message being received by an audience. This however is not necessarily problematic as the very act of discussing the meaning of the token can be said to have been just as important as understanding its 'true' meaning. By prompting discussion as to their meanings, the tokens encourage those engaged to question normative assumptions about society and meaning. As Scott argues the process of imagining any counterfactual social order (here stimulated by Spence's tokens) is the first step in resistance to domination (Scott 1990:81). Even if an audience did not comprehend Spence's intended meaning, the very act of their debating and questioning contributed to the demystification of the hegemonic forms embodied in regal coinage.

Fig. 46 *Spence Token showing a Native American with a Tomahawk and Bow. Text reads "If rents I once consent to pay, my liberty is past away" (Fitzwilliam - CM.BI.1917-R) [29mm Ø]*

This use of tokens and pamphlets to promote learning and engagement in Spence's pedagogical model is perhaps most clearly exemplified in his advert from the Giant Killer or Anti-Landlord (Spence 1814 – see above 6.1.2). The phrasing of this suggests that he considered some tokens more appropriate than others to certain tenets of his plan. It follows therefore that the tokens and pamphlets functioned together to facilitate a more nuanced understanding to be made of Spence's plan. Furthermore, the quote adds **song** as third element. By uniting, text, sound, and, object in his propaganda, Spence highlighted the multi-media and multi-sensory approach which he took to disseminating his plan.

It must however be considered that not all of Spence's tokens would have been constantly engaged with in domains where they were easily referenceable against the messages within his pamphlets. As argued above, many would have circulated far beyond these contexts, thus necessitating a separate analysis.

Once divorced from supporting materials, the messages communicated by Spence's tokens become significantly more ambiguous and fluid in their potential meanings, but by no means did they become opaque. As Fennell (2007:126) argues 'An analyst would be short-sighted simply to assume that the instrumental symbolism of one social group would have been incomprehensible to someone from another culture. The multivalence of such symbolism provided opportunities for inter-group communications, even when the conveyed meanings remained to be negotiated. In settings of asymmetrical power relations between groups, such communications could lead to increased tensions and conflict.' The polysemous nature of the symbolism on Spence's tokens therefore meant that they would have occupied a position whereby, even in remote contexts, they could act as abstractions of Spencean thought which may have been at least partly legible to outsiders.

Beyond functioning as conduits for textual and visual prompts to Spence's plan, a contemporary comment on Spence's tokens as 'Most clumsily struck on the basest metals' (*Gentleman's Magazine* April 1797 p.267) suggests a further possible (though by no means definitive) understanding of the tokens as surrogates for bad housing, built on poor land which despite having a nominal and arbitrary value (half-penny or farthing) in reality were being traded for prices significantly greater than that. The slogans and images stamped by Spence on the tokens may have been interpreted as overt written counter-texts to the domination inscribed on the physical landscape of land ownership. By then distributing the tokens at different prices ranging from free upwards, Spence may also be said to have been enacting his plan of equally distributing land (though in this instance not through a parish system), penalising those who wished to keep the land/tokens for their own benefit and not for the advantage of the parish/economy as a whole by forcing them to pay extra. Whether or not Spence deliberately intended this interpretation is almost impossible to prove or indeed disprove definitively.

Interpreting the tokens in this way is certainly consistent with the textual accounts of Spence's operations, and of his own self-assessment as 'the poor man's advocate', Furthermore it resembles the strategy used by Jack the Blaster at Marsden Grotto, repositioning and inverting the normative social order by charging elite visitors to take tea in his cave dwelling (See chapter five).

It is however clearly apparent that in none of the elite commentary on Spence is such a strategy mentioned or posited, perhaps casting doubt on the validity of this thesis but it is worth noting Scott's argument here that 'the importance of avoiding any public display of insubordination [as Spence's token constituted if unchallenged] is not simply derived from a strategy of divide and rule; open subordination represents a dramatic contradiction of the smooth surface of euphemized power' (Scott 1990:56). It may be argued then that the insistence amongst elite commentators on decrying the quality of Spence's tokens for their poor execution, inflated price and their denial of Spence's token vending as being a strategy of resistance to the dominant power structure, is in fact a way of refusing to acknowledge Spence's critiques, thus protecting themselves and their power. This is a strategy was clearly identified by Francis Place who observed that 'personally many were much alarmed at his doctrines and desired to hear as little said of them as possible, and the newspaper people with their usual sagacity refrained from publishing the proceedings in the ordinary way, they gave merely a brief notice.' (Add.MS.27808-f.214r).

Whilst Place argued, with regard to Spence's intentionality that 'all his projects were for the good of others and he cared but little for himself' (Add.MS.27808-f.154r), it is important to consider here whether we can separate Spence's actions in distributing his tokens as 'principled and selfless' acts as opposed to self 'indulgent acts'. As Scott argues, distinguishing between principled and selfish acts, 'The English poacher in the eighteenth century may have been resisting the gentry's claim to property in wild game, but he was just as surely interested in rabbit stew.' (Scott 1985:291). Surely this must also be true of Spence that whilst he may have been challenging the dominant social order through juxtaposing land/tokens and landlord/vendor, he was likely just as interested in earning himself a few extra pence. Scott further argues that to discount the self-indulgent act as being false resistance in comparison to the principled and selfless act as 'real resistance' is wrong in that it misses the 'very well springs of peasant politics.'

> To ignore the self-interested element in peasant resistance is to ignore the determinate context not only of peasant politics, but of most lower-class politics. It is precisely the fusion of self-interest and resistance that is the vital force animating the resistance of peasant and proletarians… When such acts are rare and isolated, they are of little interest; but when they become a consistent pattern we are dealing with resistance."
>
> (Scott 1985:295)

Spence's activism in distributing tokens then was part of a multi-faceted strategy in which he engaged in a consistent pattern of seemingly 'self-interested' resistance, overcharging elite collectors for his wares whilst also engaging in a deep and metaphorical critique of landownership and tenancy and always advancing the Spencean system.

6.5 Between Tokens and Pamphlets

Having demonstrated how Spence employed tokens to mediate engagement with his plan, it is now important to consider how his tokens related to his other propaganda materials, particularly the pamphlets. There is an obvious and immediate link here between Spence's tokens and pamphlets in that both are literate objects, using text, and occasional images to create meaning (see. Fig 5). Like the tokens, pamphlets are also material entities and this section will explore their materiality in greater detail.

The appreciation of pamphlets and print culture as material entities is not, a modern development. John Milton for example mused on the materiality, and multi-sensory experience of writing, procuring, reading, holding, and even smelling 'the whiffe [sic.]' of a pamphlet as being central to the way in which print culture is received by its audience (Milton 1644:23–4; Raymond 2003:272). It is interesting therefore to consider that Spence reprinted extracts of Milton's work in his periodical *Pig's Meat* and was very much aware of Milton's commentaries on the political potential of pamphleteering; arguing 'Gentlemen, what Milton only saw in his mighty imagination I see in fact… the nation is in danger of being destroyed BY A SINGLE PAMPHLET.' (Spence 1795a:272). Spence was of course modestly referring to his own *Pig's Meat* as being powerful enough to endanger the status quo but it is his acknowledgement of Milton's *Areopagitica* which is significant as it was within this very work that Milton commented on the significance of the materiality of print culture (Milton 1644:23-4).

Spence also employed the well-established metaphor of pamphlets as ammunition in the war against the Government, citing Cromwell's dismissive description of James Harrington's pamphlet *Oceana* as 'Paper Shot' (Spence 1795a:271). It is significant then to appreciate here that Spence himself was aware of the powerful material characteristics of pamphlets as tangible media articulating political sentiments which had the potential to reach a wider public than his speeches could ever hope for.

Spence's use of pamphlets had a significantly longer history than his use of tokens, starting with the publication of his lecture *Property in Land Every One's Right* (Spence 1775), and continuing throughout Spence's life as a political activist; for many years co-existing with his token production. The link between the two media is perhaps best exemplified through the dies

used by Spence which specifically advertise his trade as a pamphlet seller; 'T.SPENCE/BOOKSELLER/DEALER **IN/PRINTS/&/COINS**…'; 'PIGS MEAT PUBLISHED BY T.SPENCE LONDON' (Fig.39). Spence's tokens and pamphlets were clearly constituent parts of a whole strategy, inextricably interwoven together.

This chapter will not attempt a detailed appraisal of the content of Spence's pamphlets as this has been well covered by a range of studies (e.g. Ashraf 1983; Cazzola 2016; Cazzola 2017; Chase 2014; Dickinson 1982; Downey 2016; Duthille 2016; Hammersley 2014; Knox 1977; Parssinen 1973l); rather it is simply necessary to note that the slogans reproduced on the tokens frequently reference content in the pamphlets (though not in all instances)**.** This section instead focuses on the materiality of Spence's pamphlets, exploring how they operated as material articulations of Spence's plan.

6.5.1 Spence's Target Audience

The best references for who was actually engaging with Spence's pamphlets are contained in two reports; one from a Government informant that he had seen 'this morning journeymen, apprentices and Footmen perusing those infamous tracts with great avidity.' (Boorman 2012:211 Extract from BL Add. MS. 16921 [sic.]). And another, listing two witnesses who could present at Spence's trial and who were listed as having bought Pig's Meat in 1794 (TNA KB-33/6/1). Both of these witnesses were servants, one a messenger to the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas (Secretary of State for War) and the other a footman to 'Mrs. Campbell of Bury Street St. James's and it is possible, (perhaps likely for Dundas' messenger) that they had been dispatched to purchase Pig's Meat to return to their master/mistress.

Another informant wrote in 1792 that he had met a man in a coffeehouse who had seditious pamphlets which the informant had traced back to Spence's stall (Boorman 2012:212). A further account, relates that whilst at his premises on the corner of Chancery Lane and Holborn, Spence was 'repeatedly enjoined not to expose to sale or hire such seditious publications, but in open defiance of the various entreaties and threats of numerous well-wishers of the public he boasts that he will still vend and let them out to hire…' (Ashraf 1983:44 citing BL Add.MS. 16922 f.133 (Association Papers)).

There is however a potential problem in using Government informants and legal prosecution documents as sources and that is that in the interest of prosecuting Spence; they may be wont to exaggerate either for personal gain or in the 'national' interest of repressing Jacobinism.

Certainly, several letters of information directed to John Reeves[18] were accompanied with a postscript that seeing as they had provided Reeves with intelligence, perhaps he could help them out by sending trade their way (BL add.MS 16922). These sources, whilst they may exaggerate some occurrences do however suggest that Spence had a diverse social clientele and that his pamphlets transcended social boundaries, being found in vibrant and socially mixed coffee-houses as well as circulating amongst 'footmen' and 'apprentices'. Spence was once again clearly operating a multi-audience dissemination strategy.

Spence was furthermore making his publications available at a range of price points suited to the means of every individual in society from the rich to the poor (see Table Five demonstrating the costs of Spence's printed outputs for purchase) and it is worth noting further that Spence's 'Pig's Meat' pamphlet had a print run of around 1500 copies per week, (c.6000 per month) exceeding the print runs of more established periodicals such as the Gentleman's Magazine which were selling in the region of 3-5000 copies per month (Downey 2016:9).

The availability of Spence's pamphlets for hire (Ashraf 1983:44 Citing BL Add.MS. 16922 f.133 (Association Papers)) provides an interesting parallel with the ways in which Paine's *Common Sense* circulated in 1770s revolutionary America; interpersonal lending giving each pamphlet a potential reach greater than just one individual (Loughran 2007:52). A print run of 1500 copies of Pig's Meat could therefore have had a potentially vast audience within the metropolis. This fusion of bookseller and lending library by Spence was by no means uncommon, with many other booksellers operating a similar system (see for example trade cards in the British Museum which commonly list both bookseller and circulating library under professions (BM 1882,0311.3788; BM Heal,17.31; BM 1882,0311.3631)). Indeed libraries-cum-booksellers were particularly prevalent in Newcastle where Joseph and Martin Barber, Humble and Roddam, and Robert Sands each operated as circulating libraries-cum-booksellers. It was perhaps here that Spence devised the idea of uniting the two to maximize print circulation (Whitehead 1778; 1782; 1795).

From Table 5 it is apparent that much of Spence's print output was aimed at the lower end of the market with low price points between 1d and 6d placing them well within the purchasing power of labourers upwards. The cheapness of the publications made by Spence and other radical printers, such as Daniel Eaton, is well exemplified in Reeves's report on sedition in which he states that 'they print the most licentious libels against every branch of the established

[18] Reeves was a government informer, spying on radical activists and organising 'Loyalist' counter-movements.

Table 5. *The Price Points of Spence's Printed Outputs. Using R.D. Hume's (2014:380) Conversion for 18th century –modern buying power (x100-x150) – and an average daily wage of 12d for a labourer in 1790s London (ibid. 385).*

Title	**Date**	**Price**	**Modern Price.**	**As % of 12d**
Supplement to Cruzonia	1782	6d	£6 - £9	50 %
Pronouncing and Foreigner's Bible	1782	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grand Repository of the English Language...	1783	2s	£24 - £36	200%
The Case of Thomas Spence	1792	3d	£3 - £4.50	25 %
Pigs Meat – as Penny weeklys [*sic.*]	1793-5	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
The Rights of Man as exhibited in a lecture…	1793	4d	£4 -£6	33.33%
Rights of Man in Song	c.1793	n/a	n/a	n/a
Burke's Address to the Swinish Multitude	1793	n/a	n/a	n/a
The End of Oppression	1795	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Coin Collector's Companion	1795	6d	£6 - £9	50%
Coin Collector's Companion w/ interleafed writing paper for note taking	1795	1s	£12-£18	100%
An extensive supplement to Spence's list of modern coins.	1795	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Pigs Meat – Bound Volumes (each)	Vols. 1-3	2s 6d	£30 - £45	250%
Pigs Meat - Complete Bound Volume	1795	7s 6d	£90 - £135	750%

Meridian Sun of Liberty	1796	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Fragment of an Ancient Prophecy	1796	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Reign of Felicity - Being a plan for Civilizing the Indians of North America	1796	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Rights of Infants	1797	2d	£2 - £3	16.66%
The Constitution of a Perfect Commonwealth Being the French Constitution of 1793…	1798	3d	£3 - £4.50	25 %
Constitution of Spensonia	c.1803	n/a	n/a	n/a
Something to the Purpose: A receipt to make a millennium or happy world. Being extracts from the Constitution of Spensonia.	1803-5	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%
Spence's Recantation of the End of Oppression	???	1d	£1 - £1.50	8.33%

government, in small pamphlets, that sell for 2d and 1d and for a half penny – and they are sold cheaper in the gross to persons who give them away.' (TNA HO42/27/297 f.873). The utility of pamphlets in disseminating messages to a broad audience is well explored by Murphy and O'Driscoll (2013:4) who argue that 'Cheapness helped ephemeral material penetrate deeply into the broad populace – to be ubiquitous in fact – and thus to embody in many ways the qualities of oral culture that much of the material derived from: continuity, familiarity, tradition.'.

Rosa Salzberg further argues that print culture, in early-modern Venice, was intended to be performed public just as much as it was intended to be consumed individually in private (2014:24). This is an important point in understanding Spence's pamphlets as Spence himself was known to perform his works in public, reading his 1775 lecture in taverns and later running Free and Easies in many London taverns, these being discussion groups for his political tracts (Ashraf 1983:13, 86). By performing his works in this way, Spence was able to engage an audience who 'did not possess full functional literacy or who did not wish to part with the few

coins necessary to buy a pamphlet' (Salzberg 2014:64). Through offering public readings of his works, Spence thus enabled the lowest subalterns in both London, and earlier in North-East, society to participate in a shared public culture and to engage with Spence's transcript of protest against the dominant discourse of power as embodied in landownership. This subaltern, landless precariat constituted a core demographic for Spence's plan, being a body perpetually subject to the domination of tenancy and landownership and thus likely to harbour grievances and to have a pre-existing dissenting transcript which Spence could engage with and develop.

***Fig. 47** Frontispiece Illustration to Thomas Spence's Pig's Meat –Vol.2 (Spence 1795b)*

Perhaps the most obvious relationship between Spence's tokens and print culture however is their inter-exchangeability; that is, using the tokens to purchase pamphlets, ballads etc. This potential for transubstantiation of Spence's propaganda through the medium of exchange meant that once an individual had access to a token, which as discussed above had a potential to circulate amongst diverse milieus they had the means by which to acquire a pamphlet. A copy of Pig's Meat for example, costing 1d was the equivalent value of two halfpenny tokens, and indeed it is likely that renting a copy would have been even cheaper. The token, as an abstract of Spence's plan was therefore, on presentation at Spence's premises, exchangeable for the full details of the plan, satisfying any curiosity which the token may have piqued as to the meanings of the imagery.

The concern over Spence's intended clientele being poor and impressionable is clear in Reeves's report and neatly compliments Spence's self-styling as the Poor Man's advocate. Spence's intention to target his print at poorer communities is perhaps best articulated through

the small illustration he included in the front of his Compilation volumes of Pig's Meat[19] (Fig.47) which read 'This is that matchless Pigs meat, so famous far and near. Oppressors hearts it fills with Dread, But poor Men's' hearts does cheer.' (Spence 1795a).

It is however further important to acknowledge that Spence's print culture was not solely consumed by the 'lower classes' but also had a readership among the more affluent members of society. This point is argued by Olive Rudkin drawing on a quote from Thomas Evans' that Spence's pamphlets were preserved by many elite persons as curios (Rudkin 1927:138). Furthermore the fact that one of Sir Henry Dundas' 'messengers' bought a copy of Pigs Meat and then agreed to act as a witness AGAINST Spence, suggests that it had been bought to be read as evidence against Spence; possibly to be read as intelligence by Dundas himself (TNA KB-33/6/1). Likewise, Reeves report (cited above) relates that Spence's pamphlets were in public circulation in coffee-houses, where they could be accessed by diverse readerships, particularly of a middling sort.

6.5.2 Pamphlets as Political Messengers

Contemporary textual commentary (in newspapers, magazines or by his peers) had far less to say about Spence's pamphlets than about his tokens and/or seditious meetings and there are several possible reasons for this absence of commentary. Reeves particularly notes in his report on sedition (TNA HO42/27/297 f.873) that 'The printing press is not so much discussed, and opened in the letters sent to Government, as the other topics before mentioned [sic.]. Probably because what is in print may be bought by anybody and speaks for itself.' This quote indicates clearly how pamphlets were perceived as material agents of radicalism in the 1790s.

An alternative explanation may be that the elite were not even reading Spence's pamphlets; though the detail that Sir Henry Dundas' messenger had bought a copy likely for transmission to Dundas himself (TNA KB-33/6/1) makes this improbable. Place however held the opinion that the newspapers were purposefully shunning Spence for the distasteful contents of his writings (BL Add. MS.27808 f.214r.). Such a 'media blackout' may thus relate to a strategy of domination 'that under nearly any form of domination, those in power make a remarkably assiduous effort to keep disputes that touch on their claim to power out of the public eye' (Scott 1990:56). The relative absence of elite commentary on Spence's pamphlets in elite newspapers

[19] The title 'Pig's Meat' is a pun made by Spence on Edmund Burke's derisory description of the unenfranchised masses as the 'Swinish Multitude'. Spence's 'Pig's Meat' was styled in response to offer 'lessons for the swinish multitude', serving the masses with all of the philosophical, economic and political nourishment they might need to thrive as a political force (Bonnett & Armstrong 2014:4).

and magazines therefore suggests that elites were fighting to censor Spence's material from public consumption.

Elite fears over the power of Spence's pamphlets can be well paralleled in Salzberg's study of print culture in sixteenth-century Venice, in which she argues that 'fears of print culture's licentious power and uncontrollability tended to crystalize around cheap print, its producers and consumers' as the ultimate expressions of the capacity of the medium for mass circulation and engagement (2014:29). The strategies employed by the Venetian elite to control this media were much the same as those attempted by London's loyalist elites, to tighten the printing laws, and to shut down discursive space through restricting selling and presentation of the works.

This counter-strategy of restricting engagement with Spence's works is perhaps further exemplified in the bodily assaults carried out on individuals seen to be reading Spence's works, with Spence recounting one such incident in which 'a gentleman… came to Mr. Spence's stall, and seeing a young man with the first part of Paine's Rights of Man in his hand…, seized the book and in a curious (alia Grub-Street) dialect, abused Mr. Spence [not vis-à-vis], hustled him about, tore his shirt, and dragged him to adjoining shop where, joined by more of his *brutal fraternity*, he robbed the poor man of two other books.' (Spence 1803:11).

As objects whose principal function was to disseminate the text which they bore, pamphlets contained within their pages all the information required to understand them (Murphy and O'Driscoll 2013:4). As Murphy and O'Driscoll argue 'the ease of printing ephemeral texts also meant that dissenting voices could get their own writings out into the street to be heard and debated.' (2013:4). In this way the pamphlet could act remotely to the pamphleteer without losing significant clarity in the message it was conveying. Conversely with Spence's tokens, the more remote they were, the more ambiguous and open to interpretation their meanings became.

Neither pamphlets nor tokens were new or innovative objects by the later eighteenth century, indeed even by the late seventeenth century, Raymond argues, pamphlets were 'too immediate, too mundane to receive critical interrogation' as to their format and purpose (Raymond 2003:7). Through their mundanity, worldliness, and ubiquity, 'pamphlets became a foundation of the influential moral and political communities that constitute a 'public-sphere' of popular political opinion.' (*ibid.* 26). A pamphlet would have been instantly recognizable as an object intended to reproduce a printed message, at low cost and for a wide audience (*ibid.* 7).

The ubiquity of pamphlets as mediators of ideas and beliefs in the eighteenth-century public-sphere is of particular interest given that Spence's propaganda also permeated another ubiquitous aspect of eighteenth-century mundanity: coinage. Through employing pamphlets and tokens as the substrates for his propaganda, Spence was deliberately using mundane and unremarkable objects which could circulate widely amongst a broad audience who would have been already familiar with the objects, their function, and format. In this way Spence's pamphlets and tokens operated in similar ways.

As Trish Loughran argues with specific reference to the materiality of Paine's *Common Sense*; Paine's pamphlets made him simultaneously 'a member of the abstracted literary world… and the painfully material world of the lower sorts.' (Loughran 2007:36). Through his pamphlets, Spence, like Paine, was able to 'disembody' himself to circulate amongst a much wider audience, both numerically and socially, than that with which he would have been able to associate with face to face. The respectability and immutability which a printed format lends to thoughts and ideas opened Spence's audience to an intellectual literati whilst the cheap materiality and aesthetic qualities of Spence's pamphlets secured him within the world of the poor.

6.6 Spence and Spatiality

The primary spaces in which access could be gained to Spence's propaganda were his stalls and shops**.** It is important therefore to consider the relationship between the portable objects of Spence's propaganda (tokens and print culture) and the places in which he traded and disseminated his propaganda in London. Spence moved to London around 1787, in which year a letter from John Bewick to his older brother Thomas reported that Spence called in for a meal and that after a few drinks he was 'as hearty as a cracket and as full of his coaly Tyne poetry as ever' (Uglow 2011:188). In 1791 Spence married Ann Lambole at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, the records of which list that by this time Spence was a 'widower of this parish'[20] (Seaman 2018). Jenny Uglow suggests that during Spence's first few years in London, John Bewick acted as his reference and found him employment with Charles Cooke, a successful printer and bookseller on Paternoster Row (Uglow 20011:188).

[20] Spence had been married previously in Newcastle upon Tyne but this marriage had broken down by the time he moved to London. The circumstances of this first marriage and its termination are however unclear. (See Seaman 2018)

Fig. 48 *Spence's Premises in London c.1786-1814 – Base Map is Horwood's 1795 map of London*

Fig. 49 *Henry Walton 1746–1813 – "A Girl Buying a Ballad" 1778 (Tate Gallery – T07594)*

6.6.1 Chancery Lane

Spence's first formal premises, where he dealt in books and also in saloup (a drink made of milk, sugar and sassafras), was on the corner of Chancery Lane and Holborn (Add.MS.27808-f.304r). This stall occupied a long narrow strip of pavement as Francis Place described it 'His stall was formed by a shallow bulk along the wall. It was projected one foot upon the pavement which was only four feet wide.' (Rudkin 1927:59 citing BL Place MS. 27808 pp.152-4) (See Fig.53 for location). His pamphlets were attached to a board at one end of the stall and his saloup was sold at the other end (Add.MS.27808 – f.304r). This stall was therefore immediately within the public-sphere and it is possible to imagine his pamphlets being clearly displayed and accessible upon the 'shallow bulk' and attached to boards behind, perhaps like a slightly more substantial version of the stall depicted in Henry Walton's 'A Girl Buying a Ballad' (Fig.49).

Walton's painting is perhaps the best indication of how Spence's first stall at Chancery Lane may have displayed its wares with pamphlets pinned to boards. The exchange between the buyer and the seller in such a setting is a direct interaction – in this moment Spence the man was presenting the purchaser with a part of himself, his ideas given substance on paper. As Murphy and O'Driscoll (2011:21) argue; 'When someone hears a ballad on the street or sees the ballad sheet with its illustrations, and then pulls out a penny to buy it, that person is not experiencing print as an individual private reading moment; he or she is participating in a shared cultural moment. In this exchange the ballad sheet functions as a commodity that enables a shared experience to take place; this is an unusual use of a commodity in that it is not purchased for private ownership and enjoyment but rather for collective engagement.' The face to face interaction between Spence and his purchaser was, similarly a highly significant moment.

The mode of display of Spence's pamphlets, as suggested by Francis Place (Add.MS.27808 ff.303-4) and illustrated in Fig.49, further marks them as objects intended for collective engagement. They present a visual spectacle to the streetscape, the bold print of title pages avowing the contents of the pamphlets and making it immediately apparent to passers-by and window-shoppers that this was a place where political tracts and treatises could be purchased. Pamphlets were highly visible and visual objects, publicly articulating that Spence's stall was a venue for free discourse.

Whilst Spence's pamphlets may not have been as visually exciting as mezzotint prints, their open display still had a visual quality invoking curiosity as Joseph Monteyne argues 'With a few exceptions, most prints were available for casual consumption by any and all who passed by in the streets in front of the growing number of print shop windows in the city.' (Monteyne

2013:12) (figs.13 and 14). Perhaps the best way in which the visual characteristics of purely textual print culture is illustrated is in the fact that they were easily recognizable by passers-by, for example in the context of Spence's Rights of Man being recognized (mistakenly) for Paine's Rights of Man, apparently based on little more than the format and text (Spence 1803:11). It should therefore be understood that through their open display, Spence's pamphlets visibly coded his stalls as being premises where radical political discourse took place. This is true not just of Spence's stalls and shops but of anywhere where the pamphlets and/or ballads were visibly exhibited.

A further element of interest then is the way in which the stall was arranged. By selling saloup at one end and print culture at the other, Spence was essentially creating a street coffee-house, a venue where customers could take refreshment and discuss his plan, not in the semi-private sphere of the formal coffeehouse, but in the fully public-sphere of the streets. By constructing his premises in this way, Spence was recoding his corner of Chancery Lane to be a place of public political discourse. This would have been quite at odds with the nearby Lincoln's Inn which contrasted as an exceedingly closed space, a determinedly private sphere where only the privileged, socially elite members of the Inn were granted access to discuss legal and constitutional matters. Spence's premises thereby openly challenged the concept that legal and constitutional discourse was the privileged preserve of lawyers and that it should be open to all who had a mind to engage in it, regardless of their social status.

The openness of Spence's premises at Chancery Lane had a further importance when considered in the context of the geography of 1790s London. Chancery Lane was the major thoroughfare between the Strand and Holborn, and the main point of access to Lincoln's Inn. It was therefore entirely within the view of all the legal practitioners who worked from the Inn. As Francis Boorman argues with regards to the day to day operations of Chancery Lane life in the eighteenth century 'Chancery Lane's position as a thoroughfare in the very middle of London and the presence of legal professionals holding public office made it a highly visible and visited place'. He goes on to add that 'Political associations were a major avenue for participation and self-advancement for all of the middling sorts of Chancery Lane, from artisan householders whose political interest began in service to the vestry, to lawyers who might start their public life in professional organisations' (Boorman 2012:242-3).

By positioning himself in such a particular place, Spence was able to engage with legal practitioners of various seniority; whether newly qualified and receptive or established and more closed minded, Spence's stall was constantly 'in their face' presenting new ideas and

challenging long held beliefs. Arguably Spence was thus operating a dissemination strategy which did not just spread his message among his core demographic of subalterns who suffered at the hands of a dominating elite, but also among those who were responsible for defending and upholding the elite controlled discourse of power; legal professionals. This broad dissemination strategy is deeply reminiscent of his tokens, which were likewise not just focused on subalterns but were rather intended to infiltrate diverse social strata, from the most subaltern to the most elite, spreading his message everywhere they touched.

It is further arguable that by associating himself with Lincoln's Inn, Spence was attempting to follow in the footsteps of Thomas Hollis, a radical, republican propagandist from earlier in the eighteenth century (most active c.1740-1760s). Hollis had also disseminated subversive literature from his address in Lincoln's Inn and through his activities there had ensured that his name was forever after associated with that place (Robbins 1950:419). Spence however never cited Hollis as an influence so the association may be simply coincidental.

The location of Spence's trading premises did not however remain static, and following persecution for his radicalism in 1792-3, Spence was obliged to relocate (having been evicted by his landlord and repeatedly molested by 'loyalists') to perhaps his most iconic of premises 'The Hive of Liberty' at 8 Little Turnstile (TNA HO42/26/163 ff.434-7) – (see Figs. 10 & 12).

6.6.2 Little Turnstile

Exactly how Spence's 'Hive of Liberty' looked is unclear but several contemporary illustrations of booksellers' shops in London suggest that its windows would have been filled with examples of the printed materials which could be purchased inside (see Fig.51 for example). Whilst it may be thought that by relocating to Little Turnstile, Spence was 'trading up' his lot, Fig.50 makes it clear that he was not yet ready for such a change in premises. The relocation from Chancery Lane to Little Turnstile also took him slightly further away from a major thoroughfare, though still on a byway into Lincoln's Inn, which may have irked Spence because it took him out of the 'public eye'. Whatever the case, the choice of Little Turnstile suggests commitment to remain within the vicinity of Lincoln's Inn, despite the fact that, as Fig.50 indicates, he struggled to afford the higher rent.

In the more formal premises at Little Turnstile, Spence's pamphlets would still have been easily visible to passers-by in the same way that they had been on his Chancery Lane stall, but were now likely behind glass requiring the would be purchaser to take a further step in physically crossing a threshold to acquire or handle a print. This displacement of Spence's trade away from the public streetscape, isolated behind walls and doors is significant as a conceptual

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T. SPENCE, *Bookseller,*
N° 8, Little Turn-Stile, High-Holborn,

(late of Chancery-Lane,)

BEGS leave to observe to the Friends in general of Free Investigation and the Liberty of the Press that,—having, with uncommon violence and persecution *, been driven from his stall at the corner of Chancery-Lane, (which was more suitable to his small collection of books,) and having been precipitated into a shop before he was prepared for it,—he is rendered more solicitous about custom, in proportion as his situation is more critical. Therefore, though his well-wishers may find him unprovided with many articles which they may want, yet he is determined to supply the deficiency of his stock by the diligence and punctuality with which he will execute all orders that may be given him; particularly, with respect to periodical publications of every kind, whether weekly or monthly.

He, therefore, humbly hopes that Gentlemen will take his case into consideration, and enable him to pay his increased rents, &c. by granting him a small portion of their favours;—which will ever be remembered with gratitude.

* See his printed *Case*.

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Fig. 50 *Notice given by Thomas Spence of his relocation from Chancery Lane to Little Turnstile – 29th August 1793. (TNA HO42/26/163 f.437)*

Fig. 51 *"Sandwich-carrots! -dainty Sandwich-carrots" – Print by J.Gillray 1796. Showing a bookseller in the Background. (BM 1851,0901.835)*

Fig. 52 *The Lottery Contrast' – Cartington Bowles after Robt. Dighton. 1794. Particularly note the backlit window dressing on the right. (BM 1935,0522.1.133)*

boundary insulating Spence the man from reaching out to the public in the same way as he had been when trading on the street itself. Conversely, prominently displaying pamphlets in his shop windows may have increased their reach amongst passing window-shoppers.

It is perhaps significant in this context that it was whilst resident at Little Turnstile that Spence initiated the production of his token coinage, with the earliest examples being dated 1793 (Thompson 1969:130). Perhaps Spence's forced move from Chancery Lane had a negative impact on his ability to engage a broad audience and he therefore sought out new and innovative ways to spread his plan beyond the confines of his shop. In terms of practicalities, the security of a shop is significantly better for the storing of token coins than that of a street stall, so this may also have contributed to prompting Spence's move into token dealing, likewise the increased rents alluded to in Fig.50 may further have prompted Spence to diversify his business to try and extract greater profits, capitalising on the burgeoning trade in tokens ('token mania' reached its peak in 1795 (Dykes 2002:173)).

The security afforded by physical premises at 'The Hive of Liberty' may also have changed the nature of engagement with Spence's pamphlets. With its windows likely filled with samples, the interior of the shop would have been a significantly more secluded domain than the Chancery Lane stall, offering persons within a degree of privacy in their dealings. Once again, it is Reeves' report on sedition which provides the essential evidence of the appearance of Spence's premises in Little Turnstile:

'Another shop is Spence's in Little Turnstile – where a periodical work, intitled [sic.] Pig's Meat, is published. This man lives in the dirtiest poverty but his shop is decorated with lines in prose and verse, expressing a determination to carry on this traffic in spite of the laws of magistracy.' (TNA HO42/27/297 f.874)

Reeves' description gives us the peculiar detail that Spence decorated the interior of his shop with lines in prose and verse; immediately reminiscent of Spence's chalked message above the fireplace at Marsden Grotto (see chapter five). What however Reeves' description leaves unclear is whether the decoration was internal or external; whether it was a mediation aimed at the passing public or at persons already within the shop. Without further information this is impossible to determine. 'The Hive of Liberty' may therefore be considered further as a threshold between public and private, with the display of pamphlets in the window acting both as a screen to proceedings within and as a tantalising invitation to enter and find out more.

At night the spectacle of the shop window filled with prints would have been even more impressive (Monteyne 2003:16, Fig.52). Backlit by candlelight from within like stained glass, the window at night arguably paralleled the grand illuminations which were popular ways of expressing celebrations throughout the eighteenth century. Whether this parallel would have been intentionally pursued by Spence as a way of creating a permanent celebration of his radical ideals cannot be proven, however the use of illuminations in the radical cause had a pedigree founded in the Wilkes and Liberty movement of the 1760s and 1770s. Indeed citywide illuminations were made on the night of the burgesses' victory in the Newcastle Town Moor case, a significant influence on Spence (Sykes 1833; Spence 1803). It seems plausible therefore that Spence, who had also decorated his shop with radical verses and prose, was aware of the visual advantage to be had by dressing his windows in such a way as to make a spectacle of his plan.

Spence ultimately left his 'Hive of Liberty' in 1796, a date coincidental with his alleged bankruptcy and indeed this may have been the catalyst for his move. The next location at which he listed his address was 9 Oxford Street (Listed in Spence 1798 See Fig.53 for Location)

6.6.3 Oxford Street

Spence's shops in Oxford Street (of which he held two, one after the other at numbers 9 and then 20) are significantly more elusive in the source material, with only one description seeming to survive, having already been cited above in the account of a gentleman who visited his shop (likely 9 Oxford Street) to buy a token (*Gentleman's Magazine* April 1797:269). This description gives limited information as to the appearance of the premises apart from asserting that they formed a regular shop and that there were great heaps of coins lying around. It is likely that, if his relocation was the result of bankruptcy, the shop in Oxford Street was less salubrious than 'The Hive of Liberty' and certainly it seems apparent that that name did not travel with Spence but was abandoned in Little Turnstile.

As an address however, Oxford Street brought Spence back onto one of London's major thoroughfares with 9 and 20 Oxford Street being within 150m of the confluence of Oxford Street, Broad Street/High Holborn and Tottenham Court Road. Spence was once again situated in an extremely public location where passing traffic would have been able to see his shop clearly. Although Spence's reasons for abandoning Lincoln's Inn are unclear, it is possible that he sought to target a new audience in the relatively newly built, regularly planned, and fashionable West End. Amongst the residents of this area was one of Spence's known token buying patrons, Sarah Sophia Banks at 32 Soho Square (just 250m walk from 9 Oxford Street,

200m to number 20). By moving to a new part of London, Spence was able to engage with a different social milieu. Oxford Street, an up and coming district which since the end of public executions at Tyburn in the 1780s had gained a fashionable reputation for retail, presented Spence with an opportunity to present himself directly to the social elites (Sheppard 1980:172). One visitor to Oxford Street in 1786 described it as:

> Just imagine … a street taking half an hour to cover from end to end, with double rows of brightly shining lamps, in the middle of which stands an equally long row of beautifully lacquered coaches, and on either side of these there is room for two coaches to pass one another; and the pavement, inlaid with flag-stones, can stand six people deep and allows one to gaze at the splendidly lit shop fronts in comfort … Up to eleven o'clock at night there are as many people along this street as at Frankfurt during the fair, not to mention the eternal stream of coaches. The arrangement of the shops in good perspective, with their adjoining living-rooms, makes a very pleasant sight. For right through the excellently illuminated shop one can see many a charming family scene enacted: some are still at work, others drinking tea, a third party is entertaining a friendly visitor; in a fourth parents are joking and playing with their children.
>
> (Sophie von LaRoche, cited in Sheppard 1980:172).

It was within this overwhelming elite milieu that Spence plied his trade between the years 1796 and c.1806 (with a brief interruption for a year during 1801 when he was incarcerated in Shrewsbury Gaol for sedition). In this location he was able to challenge meanings of the elite spaces of London, working cheek by jowl with tailors, milliners and sellers of other fine wares, trading with the elites of the West End. Spence was thus inserting his radical, subversive political plan into a place, newly made as a statement of the elite discourse of power over the land, physically reorganising the landscape as an embodiment of regularity, order and control.

6.7 Non-Trading Premises

What it was that precipitated Spence to again relocate in 1806 is unclear, but his address was listed in a pamphlet as 15 Prince's Street, Soho. (Ashraf 1983:83). This address however was also registered in 1804 as being insured by Royal and Sun Alliance in the name of Elizabeth Arrow listed as a dealer in spirituous liquors (LMA CLC/B/192/F/001/MS11936/431/762043). Even less is known about Spence's time at this address, though Ashraf (1983:83) suggests that it may have been more of a workshop with trade counter than a full shop, indeed it may have been little more than an upstairs room, the address of which could be used to contact Spence.

Spence then again relocated his premises in c.1805-7 to Great Castle Street (see Fig.53), occupying a series of addresses here between 1807 and his death at 29 Castle Street in 1814. None of these seem to have been kept as regular shops and indeed Ashraf (1983:84) argues that by the time he arrived in the Castle Street area, he was very poor and unable to establish another shop.

6.7.1 Itinerant Selling

It is significant then that after 1806, though the date is unclear, Spence relinquished keeping a regular shop in the style of 'The Hive of Liberty' and began to itinerantly hawk his wares about the streets of London, trading from a barrow described by William Hone in a letter to Francis Place as like a baker's handcart (Rudkin 1927:125 citing BL MS. 27808 p.314, see also. Fig.53). Hone then further recollected to Place that he had purchased a pamphlet from Spence's 'vehicle' in Parliament Street near to the Duke of Richmond's house (*ibid.*). As a mode of selling, the barrow was most closely akin to his first stall on Chancery Lane. It was a highly visible, small, transient, mobile print shop, displaying example pamphlets and prints on the exterior of the barrow and keeping the issue copies clean and dry inside. The visual impact made by a barrow festooned with radical political tracts must certainly have been noticeable, indeed William Hone, himself a member of the LCS had been able to identify Spence's barrow (despite at that time being unacquainted with Spence himself) as an emporium of radical literature.

The barrow also enabled Spence to ply his trade in parts of the capital which would have been beyond his scope from fixed premises, penetrating into the political heart of the city and selling his wares on Parliament Street, directly outside the palace of Westminster. By trundling his barrow through the streets of London, free to vend where, when and to whosoever he pleased, Spence was able to challenge meanings inherent in the city streetscape. The streetscape was once again Spence's shop and discussion hall, being converted into a forum of free discussion

in much the same way as was simultaneously taking place through his followers' chalking graffiti on walls. Salzberg similarly argues with regards to ambulatory selling in sixteenth-century Venice that 'vendors working public spaces were a crucial extension of established bookselling structures, bringing new printed products which were very cheap, within the grasp of many more people than might have crossed the threshold of a bookshop'(Salzberg 2014:58). By moving his premises into the public streets of London Spence was thus able to engage a much broader audience than he might have been able to from a shop in Oxford Circus. Operating a legitimate barrow business, Spence was once again operating entirely within the

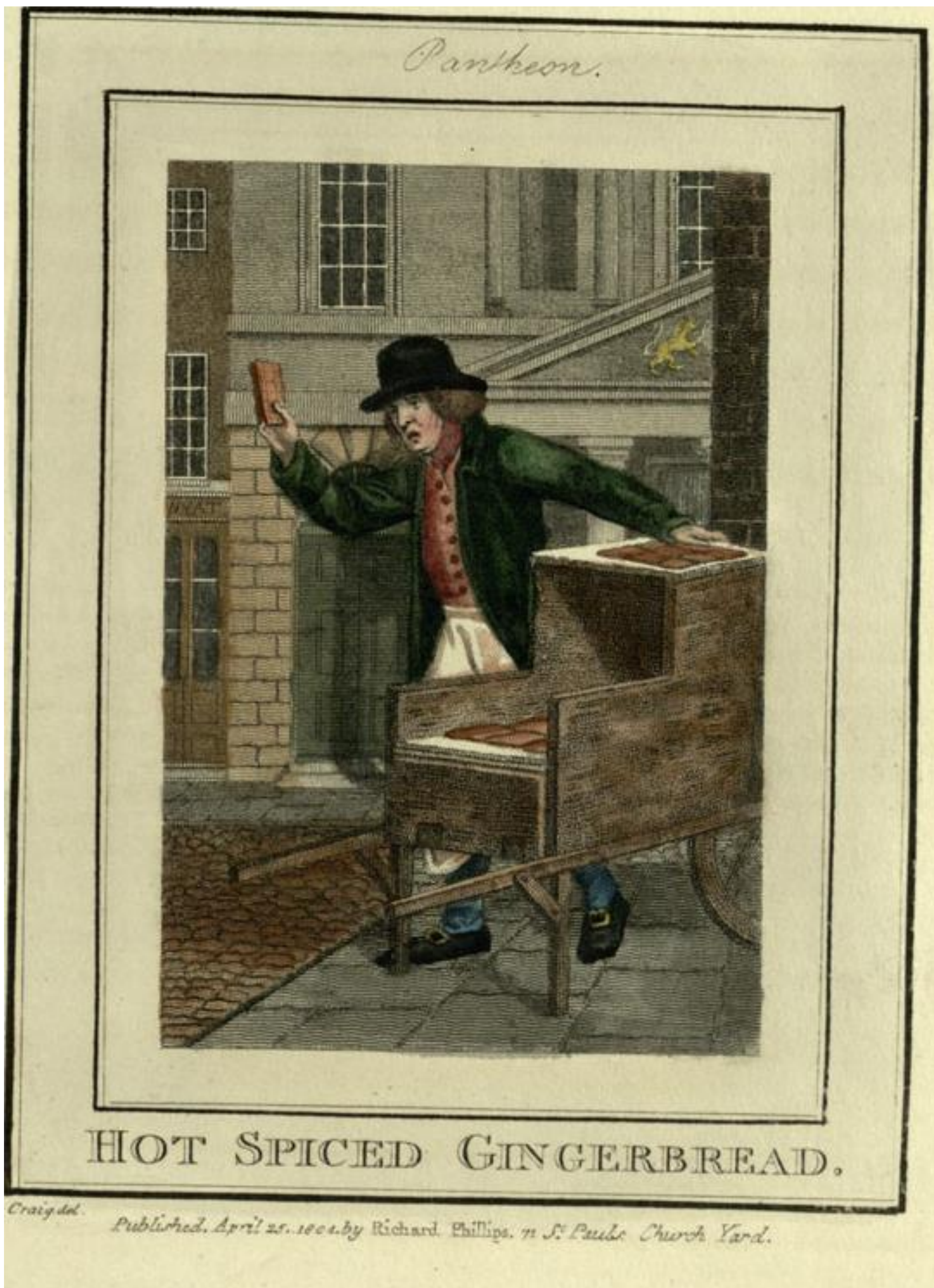

Fig. 53 *An itinerant Hot Spiced Gingerbread seller, peddling his wares outside the Pantheon, Oxford Street c.1804 – Spence was described by Hone as selling his pamphlets from a 'baker's hand cart' probably like the one pictured in this image (pers.comm. A. Walker 16/05/2018- apprentice wheelwright at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation). (Image from Craig and Phillips 1804)*

law and could not be prosecuted for his trade, so long as he did not vend any prints banned as seditious and there is no indication that he was selling any banned literature this late in his career (Ashraf 1983:84). Furthermore, Ashraf argues that after his publication of *The Important Trial of Thomas Spence* (1803) Spence curtailed his larger publications in favour of focusing on cheap song books and small singe sheets.' (*ibid.*).

Selling such song books and broadsheets is certainly more in keeping with the mode of hawking from a barrow. By the later eighteenth century, ballad sellers had a strong tradition of selling their wares in this way, hawking them about the streets[21]. By moving through and occupying the streets in a visible fashion, Spence was using his barrow as a mobile material medium through which to articulate his plan and to issue a challenge over his right to engage in such discourse in a public space. Hone's account of encountering Spence's barrow provides a good indication of the way in which through its presence in a particular place it contributed to the memory of that place (Letter from Wm Hone to Francis Place, BL Add.MS.27808). That Hone particularly remembered encountering it on Parliament Street, outside the Duke of Richmond's house suggests that Spence's presence in that place had created a lasting memory of that place with Hone associating it with Spence for many years after.

6.7.2 Beyond Spence's Premises

Engagement with Spence's pamphlets was not however restricted to the places in which they were sold. Much as in the discussion above, his tokens likely circulated very generally beyond his premises. Spence's material culture was also present in locations remote from his shops; in coffee-shops, taverns, and libraries and therefore, as Murphy and O'Driscoll argue, it participated in the 'constitution of public space and became part of the public-sphere.' (Murphy and O'Driscoll 2013:8). Spence's pamphlets, by their being present in places where they could be viewed and consumed by any member of the public, thus contributed to determining how those places were understood as statements of the discourses of political activism and power. 'Once they were distributed and posted they transformed houses, taverns, town squares and other sites into venues for the construction of a public. These materials animate public space: they change the way a particular space functions.' (*ibid.*).

For the particular Spence pamphlet which was circulating in a coffee shop (Boorman 2012:212), it was simultaneously exploiting and reinforcing the openness of coffee-shops as public, discursive spaces (Habermas 1992). Indeed both Habermas and Foucault (1977:44)

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[21] Several itinerant ballad sellers and vendors of other print culture are pictured in the various editions of *Cries of London* prints published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

recognized the role of print culture in producing a concept of a 'public'. That is, they both identified the particular ability of print culture to circulate broadly and visibly as cheap media, allowing information that had previously being restricted to be consumed and digested by much larger bodies of persons, or 'a public'.

It is essential here, in discussing the spaces in which radicalism was lived and performed in 1790s London, to foreground James Epstein's excellent discussion of the 1794 trial of John Frost for uttering seditious words (2003). In this work, Epstein explores how radicalism was differently embodied, understood, and engaged with according to the places in which it was being acted out and the people who were performing it. In particular, using the example of Frost's trial, Epstein explores the changing perceptions and regulation of what was considered acceptable behaviours in public sphere places. At the core of this argument is an exploration of how coffeehouses, taverns, streets and court rooms each presented different contexts with their own regulating codes of conduct which orchestrated the behaviours considered acceptable within their bounds. What is most significant however is that Epstein argues that these codes of conduct and the accepted understandings of the public sphere was, throughout the 1790s, subject to contestation, challenge and renegotiation by both the Government and subaltern radicals.

By the 1790s coffeehouses were no longer the same privileged domains of open debate and discourse that they had been earlier in the century (Epstein 2003:45). Rather they were increasingly permeated by government spies bent on bringing the venues under closer Governmental control, eliminating the ambiguities of behavioural self-regulation which had facilitated freedom of expression within(*ibid.*). In Epstein's own words "the spaces and language of polite sociability had to be more clearly demarcated from the raucous, dangerous places and tones of plebeian culture. Social and political ambiguities became less ambiguous" (*ibid.*57). This Governmental crack-down was particularly aimed at coffeehouses as places where heterodoxic discourse was traditionally tolerated provided it kept within accepted (but not necessarily legal) bounds. The Government's successes in demarcating acceptable behaviour within coffeehouses meant that by the mid-1790s, they were no longer an acceptable place in which to hold radical political conversation. Vocalised radical discourse instead was relocated almost entirely to taverns as Epstein argues; "it was in the 1790s that alehouses displaced coffee-houses as centres of 'insurgent public discourse'" (2003:58).

This Government's crackdown on the discursive ambiguities of coffee-houses may be the reason why Spence himself is not recorded as ever visiting a London coffeehouse, preferring

instead his tavern free and easies as the new home of heterodoxic debate and discourse. Rather than visiting coffeehouses in person, Spence instead embodied himself in pamphlets which could still freely circulate among coffee-house clienteles without risking Spence's own arrest for seditious words. As noted above (section 6.5.2), pamphlets could offer an ambiguous deniability in their messages which enabled Spence's plan to continue circulating among literate, polite society in coffeehouses whilst carefully preserving himself from arrest. It may therefore be that Spence reacted to the Government clampdown on the ambiguities of acceptable behaviours in coffeehouses by tailoring a dissemination strategy which enabled him to exploit the remaining ambiguities of print culture as a way of continuing access to the public sphere. The circulation of pamphlets in public places and their ability to publicly mediate their contents were of key importance in sparking discussions and reactions, which invited a local audience to participate in a much broader discourse (Murphy and O'Driscoll 2013:9).

It is perhaps further significant then that it was after Spence stopped keeping a regular shop that he started to advocate his alehouse Free and Easies in earnest (Ashraf 1983:86). It is unlikely that Spence chose to hold his Free and Easies in alehouses as any direct result of the clamping down on coffeehouse radicalism, although the clampdown certainly precluded coffeehouses an option. Spence already had an extensive past record of engaging in tavern based radical discourse by the time he started his Free and Easies and indeed he was expelled from the Newcastle Philosophical Society in part for allegedly hawking his 1775 *Property in Land* pamphlet about the taverns and alehouses of Newcastle like a ha'penny ballad (Ashraf 1983:13). It may therefore instead be that Spence preferred alehouses to host his face to face Free and Easies because he was aiming to engage a different audience to the middle-class radicals that had frequented the coffeehouses (Epstein 2003:57). As 'the Poor Man's Advocate' (Spence 1795), Spence was certainly intending to engage poorer and less literate persons, and he may have considered taverns a more appropriate place in which he could discuss and spread his plan in person. Taverns as spaces facilitating subaltern dissent and resistance is a thread which runs throughout this thesis; the Wilkes and Liberty movement took place in taverns (see chapter three), taverns became central places for resistance to Newcastle-upon-Tyne's city corporation (see chapter four) and Marsden Grotto operated as a pseudo-tavern, later becoming a fully licensed inn (see chapter five). For Spence, holding the Free and Easies in taverns may have offered him some of the same sequestered privacy that was needed to engage in subversive and seditious political discussion (particularly as the meetings were ticketed (Ashraf 1983:86)) as that which he had previously enjoyed in his own premises.

6.7.3 Chalked Messages

Spence's lack of formal shop premises may on the one hand have prevented meetings taking place in the relative safety of his own home, but it also prompted Spence to take his message back into the streetscapes of London. One of the ways in which he did this, as mentioned briefly above, was through the use of chalked messages written on walls around the metropolis. This strategy of Spence's has drawn a great deal of attention from historians of urban protest including E.P.Thompson (1963), and more recently, Katrina Navickas (2016). Navickas offers detailed study of Spence's graffiti exploring it through the lens of Edward Soja's thirdspace to argue that graffiti subverts the intended meanings of spaces built by elites. As an idiosyncratic, individual act, graffiti disrupts hegemonic understandings of space and is considered as the offensive triumph of unsanctioned individual expression violating the property which it defaces (*ibid.* 71). Spence's use of graffiti as a propaganda strategy thus disrupted elite ideas of what a wall meant and signified; private property, control of the landscape and elite power, core facets of Georgian Order and improvement. As noted above this correlates clearly with Spence's counter striking of regal coinage challenging the intended meanings of the material object through the superimposition of radical words.

The meanings of Spence's chalked slogans were not however always understood by their audience as William Cobbett recollected that 'We have all seen for years past written on walls in and near London the words 'Spence's Plan' and I never knew what it meant until… I received a pamphlet from Mr. Evans… detailing the plan very fully.' (*Cobbett's Weekly Political Register,* 14th December, 1816, col.749). This ambiguity of meaning in the chalked messages therefore seems to parallel the ambiguities present within the imagery of Spence's tokens. That the message did not make sense to Cobbett without reference to the pamphlet is therefore perhaps further suggestive of the reliance Spence placed on the interconnectedness of his propagandist media. The chalked slogans, much like the tokens therefore seem to have operated as abstractions of Spence's plan, intended to pique interest and stimulate curiosity into their meanings. Furthermore, there is a malleability to the meanings of chalked graffiti, the ambiguity of which at once targets or communicates to multiple audiences, prompting them to reflect on how the message may relate to them (Navickas 2016:73).

The chalked slogans however, whilst they may have been unintelligible to many who saw them, certainly had a powerful impact on those elites who did understand them, including the Home Secretary Lord Sidmouth who felt great unease in 1812 following the coincidence of a spate of Spencean chalking with the outbreak of Luddism in the rest of the country (Rudkin 1927:143). It is apparent therefore that the chalked slogans were understood by the authorities as signifying

the existence of radical, Spencean sentiments within London society. The presence of chalked Spencean slogans on walls was thus interpreted by elites as posing a threat and it may follow therefore that certain places marked by chalked messages may have felt unsafe to an elite who may assume that Spenceans were nearby. Navickas similarly argues that chalked messages were designed to be seen by all, including the authorities, so that all might know of the discontent amongst the people and know that elite hegemony had been lost in that quarter. It was a threat as much as an expression. (2016:73).

Whilst no definite locations are ever stated for where Spence's graffiti was posted, a parallel can be drawn with seditious handbills pasted up which do occasionally survive with provenances in archives (HO42/27/74 ff.182, 187, 190). Those surviving with locational provenance seem mostly to have been taken from known haunts of radical bill stickers with layers of handbills having been posted and reposted in the same location even after having been removed by the authorities (Fig.54 shows the stratigraphy of several bills posted one on top of the next). It is therefore possible that Spencean chalking was redrawn on the same sites again and again, repeatedly subverting the hegemonic authority and renegotiating the meanings of that place.

6.8 Connecting Objects, Places and Words

6.8.1 Funeral

It is perhaps fitting to conclude this chapter with a brief examination of the uses made of materiality and spatiality during Spence's funeral on 8th September, 1814. During this event, Spence's coffin, bedecked in white ribbons, was carried by some 40 of his followers from his home in Great Castle Street to his final resting place at St. James' Gardens on the Hampstead Road (a distance of 1.5km as the crow flies, 2.55km along the most likely route taken by this procession – See Fig.55.). The cortege was preceded by one Spencean who carried a pair of scales, and tokens were distributed to mourners and onlookers in the street. A small oration was then made at the graveside by a man named Snow before the coffin was lowered into the ground along with two of Spence's favourite tokens (Add.MS.27808 –f.229). To unpick all of the symbolism packed within this spectacle could constitute a chapter within its own right however this conclusion simply demonstrates that Spence's funeral epitomized his multi-media and multi-audience propaganda strategy. The funeral combined spatial (through the procession through the streets), material and visual (in the tokens, decoration of the coffin, and symbolism in the balance), and verbal/aural (in the orations) media creating a multi-media extravaganza

A

Fig. ***54*** *Radical handbill from Norwich posted c.1794. The verso shows a stratigraphy of past handbills one on top of the other. (TNA HO42/27/74 f.190v.)*

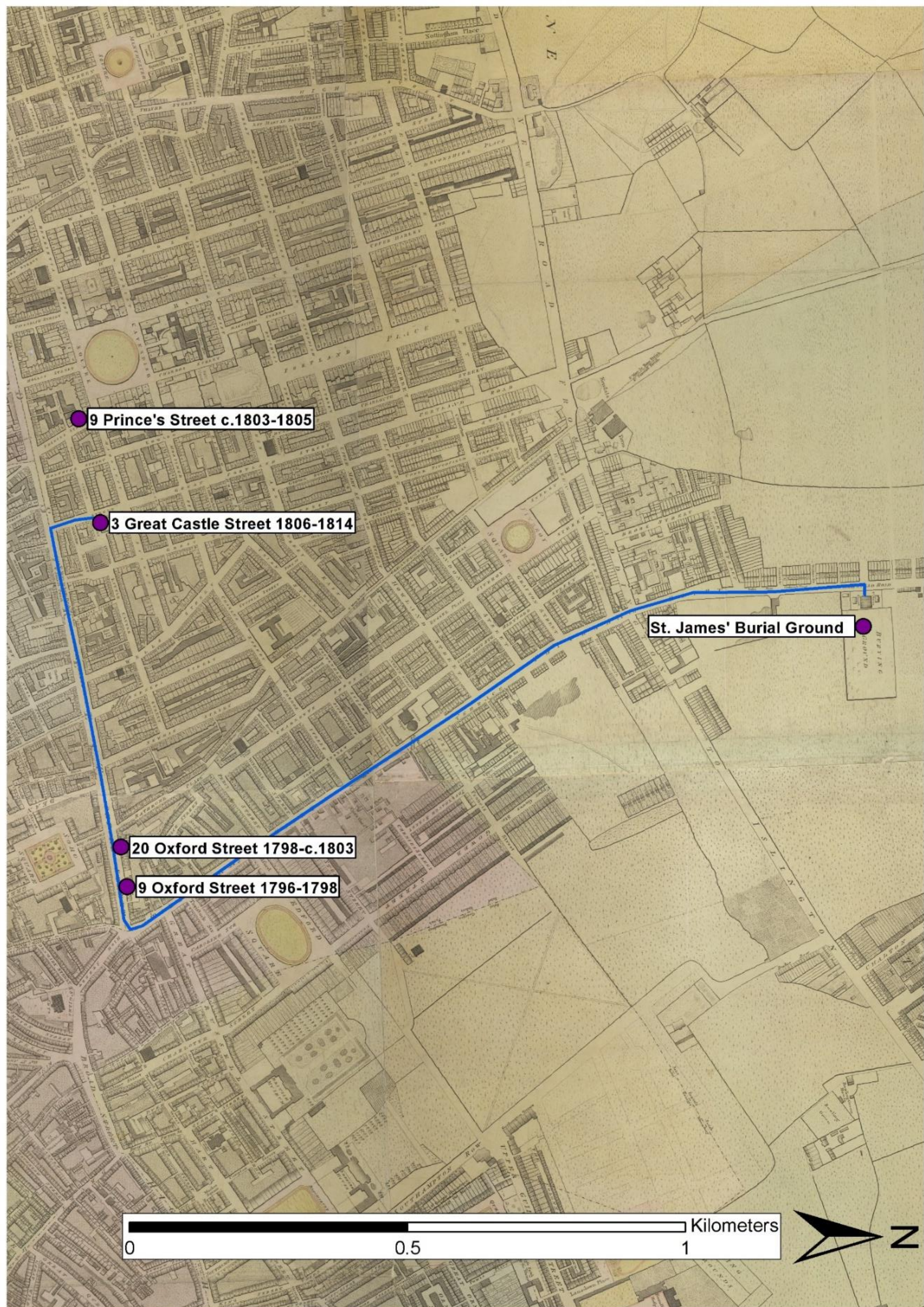

***Fig. 55** Route Navigated by Spence's Funeral Procession - 8th September 1814 – showing correlation with some of Spence's former premises. The total distance is 2.55km.*

which Spence would have been proud of. As Ashraf argued 'he literally went to the grave spreading his immortal message' (1983:92).

The processional route way followed during Spence's funeral likely navigated its way along Oxford Street, passing some of Spence's former premises, and then up Tottenham Court Road (*London Statesman* – 13th September, 1814, p.4 includes some detail of the processional route) see. Fig.55). The processional character of the event has echoes of the 1773 Newcastle

processions by which the Freemen welcomed Serjeant Glynn to their city, navigating several key loci within the city streetscape and temporarily occupying streets which, as explored above (4.4), were spaces associated with elite sociability (see chapter four). This funeral procession, materialising Spence's life and activism through its myriad symbolisms, and accompanied by (at least 40 mourners must have presented a highly noticeable spectacle in the streets of the metropolis. By moving through Oxford Street and (to a lesser extent) Tottenham Court Road in this way, Spence's funeral procession was challenging the dominant narrative attached to those spaces as venues of elite control.

Given the distance this procession had to go (c.2.5km) it is reasonable to suggest that the pall bearers either swapped amongst themselves or rested at certain points along the route, thus each mourner, or at least the pall bearers, came into direct contact with Spence's coffin which had been dressed in white ribbons symbolizing the purity of his cause, giving each of the attendees a final tangible link to Spence the man. Eneas Mackenzie (1827:402) further recounts that tokens were distributed amongst the mourners as souvenirs, to remind attendees of Spence's political activism and to operate in the future as aides memoires for both his funeral and political plan, much in the same way that individuals today often retain orders of service, or flowers. With regards to these tokens, it must be noted that by 1814 they were no longer in common circulation as coinage (Dykes 2002:173) and so it seems likely that these last of Spence's Tokens to be distributed in his (albeit post-mortem) presence were almost certainly intended as souvenirs of Spence the man and the Spencean Plan.

6.8.2 Words, Places and Things

The above discussion has clearly demonstrated the ways in which materiality and spatiality permeated Thomas Spence's propagandist outputs, particularly during his time in London. To conclude this chapter, it is perhaps Francis Place's comments on Spence's intentionality that best summarise what Spence's propaganda was about; 'He was above concealment, he scorned to beat round the bush, he went to his purpose in the most straightforward way, never concealed anything he did and always put his name to his publications.' (BL Add.MS.27808 – f.205r.)

In all of the above examples considered, it is apparent that at no point did Spence ever conceal his intentions from an audience, his messages may have been ambiguously written onto and into his propaganda but they were never entirely hidden. By exploiting the ambiguities within the mundane objects and places of his world, Spence was able to shun concealment in favour of publicity; even if the intended message was ambiguous. Spence's survival as a political activist thus relied essentially on his understanding and appreciating the ambiguities which could be exploited in his material and spatial surroundings. This understanding seems in several instances to have been developed during Spence's early life in Newcastle, witnessing and participating in the several acts of protest and resistance explored by this thesis in chapters three, four and five which themselves mobilised words, places and things as part of their strategies.

It was however in London that Spence's propaganda came into its own with widespread, multi-faceted uses of material and spatial substrates. London proved a fertile ground for Spence to hone his skills as a multimedia and multi-audience political activist and propagandist, seizing opportunities to exploit the rapidly changing political, economic, and social climate of the metropolis and to employ its material and spatial characteristics to better mediate and articulate his own political plan.

Spence's plan did not emerge out of an abyss but rather was built on a hidden transcript foundation of subaltern anger and frustration over land ownership and tenancy. Whilst the elite could quietly tolerate this protesting transcript when it was kept hidden and circumspect, Spence's actions, making the hidden transcript public necessitated an elite counterattack, decrying Spence's plan and the infamy of his tokens and ideology. In this example, the threat to which the elite was responding was the moment when the hidden transcript becomes public. As Scott argues 'It is only when this hidden transcript is openly declared that subordinates can fully recognize the extent to which their claims, their dreams, their anger is shared by other subordinates with whom they have not been in direct touch.' (Scott 1990:223).

Chapter 7 Conclusion

'One of the most prevalent shortcomings of historical archaeology as a discipline has been the failure to marry words and things."

(Hall 2000:17)

The above quote by Martin Hall clearly articulates one the most common problems encountered in both historical archaeology and in material culture history; a failure to fully integrate and synthesise material and textual sources. This thesis has sought to tackle this common shortcoming, building on and extending Hall's methodology to offer a new approach to studying the past through integrating material, spatial and textual sources; marrying words, things and spaces.

Through the lens of a selection of case studies from later-eighteenth-century England, this thesis has explored the extent to which protest and resistance was articulated and expressed through objects and spaces, particularly tackling three key aims as set out in chapter one:

1. To develop a contextual understanding of subaltern engagement with later eighteenth-century popular protest movements
2. To explore how protest was embodied in material culture in later-eighteenth-century England.
3. To explore how protest was embodied in place in later-eighteenth-century England.

By working to these three aims, this thesis addresses a notable weakness in research focused on the roles of and engagement with objects and spaces in eighteenth-century protest. Furthermore, this thesis advances the study of eighteenth- century protest and resistance beyond a focus on major 'flash' incidences such as riots and insurrections towards a deeper appreciation of the infrapolitics of everyday resistance through which discontent and disaffection was articulated (Scott 1990).

7.1 Methodology

I have argued throughout this study that sources, even those which at first glance appear to offer first-hand insights into subaltern transcripts of resistance and protest are in fact often just the fragmentary debris of dominant public transcript representations of subalterns, carefully constructed by a dominant elite to offer a particular impression (Hall 2000:19). This understanding is reflected in my methodology which deconstructs the dominant public

transcripts mediated by most sources, particularly analyzing their intended audience and effects in the discourses of land ownership and domination. My methodology then further excavates the public transcript to explore it as replying to a subaltern, and often hidden, transcript. As Hall argues 'the "subaltern voice"[transcript] affects the form of public transcripts without necessarily being directly evident in itself… the potency of the danger [posed by subaltern resistance] to those in power is reflected in the impression that their [elite] reactions have made on the record of the past.' (Hall 2000:19). My approach has therefore endeavored to read between the lines of dominant narratives, objects and places to explore the tensions and anxieties which underlie them, and which betray the presence of an antagonistic, subaltern transcript.

The scope and efficacy of my methodology has thus been trialed in four case studies comprising chapters three to six. Each case study explored how objects and spaces were engaged alongside more transient and ephemeral modes of expression such as speech-acts and gestures which have not survived the passage of time, to constitute transcripts of resistance and protest. Chapter Three thus focused on exploring how the alliance of material culture, words and actions in the Wilkes and Liberty movement offered invaluable avenues for the building of a transcript of protest at a time when charges of seditious libel posed a serious threat to printed media. Likewise chapter four demonstrated that during the Town Moor crisis, the public spaces of Newcastle-upon-Tyne were drawn into combination with acts of movement, speech, drinking and song to constitute a transcript of protest against the prevalent discourse of power. These two chapters offered working examples of how protest and resistance were expressed not just through the more commonly recognised forms of speech and action but also through material culture and landscape.

Chapter five built on the examples set out in chapters three and four by exploring how space and material culture were enmeshed together as constituent components of a transcript of resistance at Marsden Grotto. Close analysis of the material and spatial characteristics of Marsden Grotto revealed it as a public expression of a transcript of protest and resistance which was broadly shared by subalterns in South Tyneside. This transcript was hidden from view in most textual sources and it was only through analysing the materiality and spatiality of Marsden Grotto, as it was constructed to articulate protest against land ownership, that the existence of an underlying, shared transcript of protest was revealed.

The multiple connections between material, spatial and textual media in articulations of protest were further considered in chapter six which explored Thomas Spence's complex multimedia

transcript of protest. This chapter expanded the arguments presented in the previous chapters regarding the uses of objects and space as core modes of expressing protest and resistance, revealing that Spence operated an intentionally multi-media propaganda programme to spread his radical ‘Plan’. Where previous scholarship on Spence has focused attention on individual facets of his propaganda (e.g. pamphlets, songs or, tokens), chapter six sought to explore the threads which connected these media. By considering them in combination, the chapter revealed that Spence’s propaganda strategy, far from being a ‘scattergun’ of media, was in fact a carefully woven tapestry of interconnected words, things, places and actions. It was only through these connections and relations that Spence’s propaganda articulated his radical plan; a transcript of protest which was shared by many who did not leave any trace in textual sources. Spence’s propaganda must therefore be considered as a public façade for a hidden transcript of protest pervasive amongst subalterns both in London and in North-East England.

7.2 Overarching Themes

The four case study chapters of this thesis together offer a broad overview of some of the material and spatial methods and strategies used by individuals and communities to articulate transcripts of protest and resistance. Between them there exist common strands of using objects and spaces, alongside speech acts and gestures, as essential avenues of expression through which subalterns could articulate their dissent. These case studies, through their focus on material culture and space, have revealed a story of subaltern agency and political engagement, the complexities and nuances of which are often obscured and/or hidden in textual accounts. They reveal that between 1763, and 1814, subalterns in England engaged in sustained campaigns of protest and resistance to domination, issuing and constructing complex, transcripts of dissent, negotiating the discourse of power and domination as manifested particularly in land-ownership and the control of discursive space.

The differences in the case studies presented indicate that there was no single way in which protest was articulated and that the modes and strategies for enacting resistance were highly context specific. Jack 'the Blaster's' action at Marsden Grotto spoke directly to the discourse of land-ownership as experienced in South Tyneside but also fed into the meta-discourse on the same at an international scale. The Wilkes and Liberty movement, conversely, offered an internationally understood and semi-standardised repertoire of protest strategies which, in the North-East, were adapted to address and exploit local circumstances. Wilkite taverns for example were a nationwide phenomenon as places expressing sentiments of support for Wilkes, however in Newcastle in the context of the Town Moor crisis (chapter four) they were drawn into the local discourse of power as venues of protest against an increasingly autocratic City

Corporation. These iconic venues for the Wilkes and Liberty movement were thus adapted to relate to the local discourse of power and were later developed and extended to fuse local circumstances with a macro-scale international movement, with new taverns opening in the name of the more locally relevant Wilkite hero, Serjeant Glynn. The nationwide strategy of creating taverns as Wilkite places was thus adopted, modified and developed in Newcastle as part of a transcript of protest, mediating the discourse of power.

It is essential to reassert here that there is no indication that the findings of this thesis in regards of either the overarching themes elucidated here, or of the ways in which objects and spaces were engaged in protest and resistance, were peculiar to the case studies I have focused on. Rather each case study is carefully contextualised at a range of scales demonstrating close connections with the rest of England and indeed the Atlantic Anglosphere, and suggesting that the discourses encountered and the associated strategies of protest and resistance were likely shared more broadly.

Although transcripts of protest were each carefully crafted to express context specific grievances, each was also constructed to negotiate the overarching discourse of power and domination as experienced. Marsden Grotto, for example, was constructed as an expression of a highly context-specific grievance against tenancy in South Shields but also participated in negotiating the broader discourse of land ownership, and was recognised for this role by Thomas Spence. Likewise the Town Moor affair was part of a highly context specific transcript of protest against the Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Corporation but was also engaged in a larger protest against autocratic power as embodied in the reporting on the crisis which took place as far away as London and Virginia.

This thesis, by studying how discourse was resisted and negotiated, has also revealed the particular ways in which power and domination were experienced by subalterns. Just as Scott argues that the subaltern does not experience the discourse of capitalism but rather experiences manifestations of it, this thesis has demonstrated that the strategies of resistance employed by subalterns were mobilised in reference to particular expressions of a discourse as opposed to the overarching discourse itself (1985:43). Evidence of resistance and an understanding of how it was constructed can thus offer important insights into how domination was experienced by subalterns in later-eighteenth-century England. This is a point which has perhaps been most clearly made in chapter five, exploring Marsden Grotto, as a highly context specific statement of protest intended to negotiate the expression of a particular discourse of power and which was

therefore constructed in a very particular way to mimic and subvert elite statements of the discourse of land ownership and power.

7.2.1 Polyvalency and Ambiguity

Through the presented case studies, I have revealed several key and repeated strategies of resistance, in particular the vital importance of polyvalency in the meanings of objects and places. The polysemy of objects and spaces were exploited by subaltern activists in similar ways in each of the case studies. During the Town Moor crisis for example, the Freemen exploited the ambiguities in the rights of access and control of Newcastle's streetscapes to stage counter-establishment parades and processions in spaces normally reserved for Corporation sanctioned use. Spence similarly during his later career exploited the ambiguous control of London's streets by occupying them as an ambulatory seller of pamphlets to peddle his subversive plan at the very heart of Government. At Marsden Grotto Jack 'the Blaster' exploited the ambiguous ownership of the interstitial, liminal, space between land and foreshore to carve himself a home materialising a transcript of protest against land ownership. The symbolism borne by and immanent in the materiality of Spences tokens likewise bears similarities to the ambivalence of meaning in the Wilkite material culture thirty years earlier.

This thesis has demonstrated that the inherently ambiguous quality of objects and spaces was well-recognised by subalterns as offering avenues for the expression of protest and dissent, safer from elite repercussions than openly vocalised, or enacted expressions. Whilst ambiguity was valuable in itself as a quality, the ambivalence of an object or space mobilised as part of a transcript was carefully constructed to balance the opacity and clarity of the message articulated (Hall 2000:39). Thus Spence's tokens were polyvalent enough to hold and avow a host of possible meanings, yet when considered in combination with his pamphlets or in the context of his shop they become clear as objects materialising a transcript of protest. Likewise Marsden Grotto was interpreted by elites as a welcoming sublime café by the sea yet when considered in combination with the necessary support network behind its construction, and the action of Thomas Spence's writing above the fireplace, a different and subversive understanding of place becomes apparent.

An object or place as a polysemous entity thus offered a noisy range of possible meanings to cloud any single interpretation which could provoke elite retaliation. This avoidance of open confrontation and conflict is a key strand in Scott's 'weapons of the weak' thesis (1985:33) and is supported by the results of this thesis. In chapter three, for example, the punch bowls of the Wilkes and Liberty movement could be used in many different contexts as they were ambiguous

in meaning, yet they were never opaque. The exact meanings of the bowls was understood in relation to a particular discourse dependent on and contingent to the contexts in which they were used. Further research on objects and spaces and their roles in protest and resistance would certainly be invaluable in adding nuance to the understandings of when and how hidden transcripts become publicly visible and how this is reflected in the material and spatial constituents of the said transcripts.

Ambiguity and polyvalency is further represented in the concept that neither objects nor places had fixed meanings and rather that they are thirdspaces of negotiation through and in which discourse was negotiated. This is particularly evident in chapter four which explores how the meanings of politically significant places in 1770s Newcastle-upon-Tyne were contested and negotiated by both dominant and subaltern parties. By considering spaces and objects as thirdspace, zones of contestation and ambivalence (Bhabha 1994), this thesis offers a counter-hegemonic narrative of eighteenth-century power relations, arguing that just because instances of open insurrection were relatively rare does not mean that subalterns were ideological dupes, idly consuming elite discourse. Rather it argues, as per Scott (1985:33), that subalterns participated in a hidden transcript of resistance and protest intended to negotiate the expression of elite discourse whilst avoiding open confrontation and insurrection as far as possible. At no point did the dominant elite fully wield control over sites of discourse, rather these sites were the front line, a 'no man's land', in the constant running battle between subalterns and elites for the control of the meanings invested in objects and places as articulations of a particular transcript.

By identifying objects and spaces as constituting thirdspaces in the context of later-eighteenth-century protest and resistance, this thesis offers an example of how the concept of thirdspace can be productively used as an analytical lens in contexts beyond those initially intended by Homi Bhabha (1994) or Edward Soja (1996). This thesis thus supports and corroborates the utility of thirdspace in historical contexts as exemplified by such scholars as Martin Hall (1999; 2000; 2008), Jane Webster (1999), and Katrina Navickas (2016). Objects and spaces cannot be considered as mere conduits for expression and rather must be understood as themselves being sites of contestation within which discourse was structured. It is hoped therefore that further studies of similar contexts will help to support this thesis' argument that the intrinsic ambiguities of objects and spaces offered important avenues by which subalterns were able to express protest and resistance.

7.2.2 Preserving and Establishing Discursive Space

Although the character of an act of protest was highly context specific, in all of the case studies considered within this thesis protest centred on negotiating and preserving the power to control or access the conceptual discursive space within which discourse was negotiated between public and hidden transcripts. Thus the parades through the streets of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in support of Serjeant Glynn were about asserting control over the streetscape as a discursive space. Spence's counter-stamped coins can likewise be understood as miniature discursive spaces in which Spence contested the elite transcript materialised by regal coinage.

This thesis has demonstrated throughout that it was in circumstances where the existence of, or at least subaltern access to, discursive space was threatened that the acts of protest and resistance began to adopt more public strategies of resistance, leaving traces in elite textual sources. That the closure of discursive space stimulates protest is well explored by Scott who argues that under normal circumstances, discourse is negotiated through a subtle conflict between the subaltern hidden transcripts manifested in what he terms 'weapons of the weak' and elite public transcripts giving regularity to dominant discourse (Scott 1985:29-32). It is particularly in circumstances when this discursive model breaks down; when subalterns begin to feel that their 'weapons of the weak' are no longer effective, that protest and resistance become public and bolder statements of dissent emerge, directly threatening the fabric of elite discourse. As Scott argues, public expressions of protest and resistance were a last-resort for subalterns as they brought them into direct confrontation with elites who were powerful in face to face interactions, able to retaliate rapidly and ferociously (Scott 1985:33).

A good example of public resistance being a 'last-resort' is presented in chapter five, where it is argued that under normal circumstances the terms of tenancy could be negotiated through a range of weapons of the weak and it was the breakdown of this discursive framework that caused Jack 'the Blaster' to move to Marsden Grotto establishing it as a new and powerful discursive space. Likewise, the material culture of the Wilkes and Liberty movement (chapter three) offered subalterns a discursive space in which to articulate transcripts of protest at a time when other discursive spaces such as pamphlets were heavily controlled and restricted by elites. Spence's open dissemination of his plan in pamphlets and tokens perhaps presents the clearest example of how the elite were able to close down a discursive space that was openly threatening discourse. Spence's very public expression of protest against the prevailing power structure provoked a rapid and violent counterattack from elites who, realising that the power now lay with them, were able to have him assaulted, arrested and gaoled. The circumspection and

caution afterwards exercised by Spence in his propaganda is a strong testament to the realisation amongst subalterns of the dangers of unambiguous public expressions of dissent and protest.

The fight to control and/or access discursive space however was a two-sided contest in which both elites and subalterns struggled for access. Dominant efforts to control discursive space are well exemplified in chapter six where it is argued that elite parties actively worked to close down Spence's discursive spaces, denying him avenues of expression for his political plan. These discursive spaces were both physical and conceptual; embodied materially in his tokens and pamphlets and spatially in his shops, taverns and the places which he and his followers occupied. The physicality and tangibility of these discursive spaces make them particularly accessible to archaeologists and identifiable in elite produced sources. Conceptual discursive space is however much harder to isolate, being more nebulous. Where discursive space **was** embodied physically, as at Marsden Grotto, a coexisting conceptual discursive space can also be inferred, embodied ephemerally in words and gestures as the infrapolitics structuring a hidden transcript.

The ability to access and exploit a discursive space in which to express transcripts of protest was thus at the centre of all of the case studies considered in this thesis. Indeed it was this constant contest for control of and access to discursive space which generated the innovative material and spatial strategies on which this thesis has focused. As Oliver et.al. (2016:369) argue, with regards to informal communities in Scotland negotiating the discourse of land ownership, 'the archaeology of resistance is an archaeology of aspiration and innovation'. In the context of this thesis, the aspiration is to be heard, recognised and heeded, the innovation is in the multi-media strategies used to articulate the message of protest.

7.2.3 Property and Land-ownership

Three of the case studies considered here deal explicitly with instances of protest and resistance which are deeply rooted in negotiating the discourse of land ownership. Whilst the Wilkes and Liberty case study is not predominantly concerned with this discourse many of the instances of subaltern Wilkite agitations challenged elite control over space, for example with chimney-sweeps hosting public dinners in the streets mimicking elite dinners (Harris 2001:248). This strategy is paralleled in the Town Moor affair, with the parading of Serjeant Glynn through the streets; an act closely linked to the Wilkes and Liberty movement in strategy and personality. The three subsequent case study chapters are however primarily instances of protest concerned with negotiating the discourse of land ownership and property and offer examples of how this discourse was negotiated. Chapter four analyses how control of the Town Moor and Newcastle-

upon-Tyne's civic spaces was negotiated; chapter five examines Marsden Grotto as a protest over tenancy and land ownership and chapter six explores the multi-media propaganda of Thomas Spence, and his 'Plan' to reform land ownership and abolish private property. All of the instances of protest considered in this thesis are thus, at some level, dialogues with a dominant discourse concerning land-ownership itself.

The common strand of property and land ownership should not however be taken to suggest that the dominant discourse in later-eighteenth-century England was the discourse of land ownership but rather that this was a commonly experienced manifestation of the metanarrative of capitalism. It is expected that the discourse of domination through property and land ownership was commonly experienced throughout eighteenth-century England and may well have been negotiated in similar ways to those outlined in this thesis. Further comparative research on other geographical regions would therefore be valuable in exploring how land-ownership as a form of domination was resisted and the extent to which there were shared similarities and differences with the present study.

Land ownership thus offered a tangible target on which to focus protest and resistance, articulating grievances against broader socio-cultural changes, such as the emergence of capitalism. The common thread of the case studies relating to control of the land makes this thesis a valuable contribution to scholarship on the legal and political histories of land ownership and property law and also situates it within the context of scholarship on historical contests over enclosure and land access. Not only is this thesis relevant to historical debates but it also speaks to current issues, when debates surrounding access to and ownership of public space are increasingly in the media spotlight (see for example protests road enlargement on Newcastle Town Moor (Anon 2016) or Pratt’s 2017 article in Nature magazine on the loss of public space (Pratt 2017)).

7.2.4 Multiscalar Protest and Resistance

The case studies presented within this thesis are inherently multi-scalar, examining transcripts of protest at a range of scales from the international Wilkes and Liberty movement to the South-Tyneside specific Marsden Grotto. The scalar differences between the case studies have facilitated exploration of the infra-politics which structured and governed the character of transcripts of resistance. In chapter four for example, the form of the transcript of protest against the Newcastle-upon-Tyne corporation was governed by the infra-politics within the body of the Freemen of Newcastle and likewise in chapter five, the shape and character of the transcript of protest at Marsden Grotto was governed by subaltern infra-politics amongst those in South-

Tyneside living under the domination of unfair tenancies. Chapter five on Marsden Grotto and tenancy in South Shields thus has a strong resonance with current public media debates surrounding the housing crisis particularly in instances where communal action is taken to articulate protest over housing conditions and tenancies (e.g. Powell 2019; Cook 2019).

The largest scale case study in this thesis, the Wilkes and Liberty movement which was global in reach, however suggests that infra-politics within a protesting community could themselves be the cause of tensions and anxieties as embodied in the differentiation between porcelain and delftware punch bowls. Further investigation of this suggestion however lies outside the remit and scope of this thesis although it would make for an excellent future study. The emergence and character of these tensions within and amongst communities of protestors would therefore be a beneficial avenue for future research, exploring the internal dynamics of larger protest movements and exploring their development.

The findings of this thesis also offer important contributions to scholarship on protest and resistance in the later-eighteenth century. It has been argued throughout that protest and resistance were not confined to 'flash' episodes of violence and insurrection but rather that such instances were abnormalities marking moments where the normative modes of negotiating the discourse of power had failed. These 'flash episodes' of resistance however remain the focus for mainstream historiography, with little attention being given to the more prosaic and less sensational modes of articulating dissent and resistance. Instances of protest recorded in textual sources are thus in reality just the tip of the iceberg; the visible part of a far larger hidden body beneath. This thesis has highlighted the need to access this hidden body, and to recognise its hidden transcripts, in order to understand the foundations on which public transcripts of protest and resistance rely.

7.3 Future Work

The research which I have presented has highlighted the value of Hall's approach to studying the past, combining sources together to build a new evidence greater than the sum its parts. This 'new evidence' is explored and interrogated throughout this thesis offering a rich vein of potential for analysing the roles of material culture and space in the context of later-eighteenth-century subaltern protest and resistance. Whilst this thesis has provided some preliminary results indicating the utility of the methodology, these findings would certainly benefit from further testing in both similar and distinct contexts.

There is obvious scope to extend and develop the research presented in this thesis and, which merely presents one series of interpretations of the sources explored which remain open to re-

interpretation and re-examination. Perhaps one of the most fruitful avenues for future research would therefore be to apply the methodology developed in chapter two to other contexts, such as the numerous miners and keelmen's strikes in later eighteenth-century North-East England or other examples of resistance to exploitative tenancy (e.g. rent strikes in early 20th Century Glasgow or Leeds) further testing its applicability and value as a means of studying subaltern protest and resistance. The methodology advocated herein could be particularly effectively employed in these contexts as circumstances where subalterns took open and direct action to redress the discourse of power thus likely offering productive avenues for accessing and exploring the hidden transcripts of protest and resistance which underlie them.

Chapter three is perhaps the easiest of this thesis' case studies to expand as it is itself a highly selective exploration of part of the vast corpus of material culture from the Wilkes and Liberty movement. A more inclusive study of this range of artefacts would be of great value to historical archaeology and political history. There is furthermore the potential to extend this study of the material culture and spaces of the Wilkes and Liberty movement internationally to explore other geographical contexts, particularly within the Atlantic Anglosphere. Wilkes and Liberty was an international phenomena and the material culture of the movement was particularly well consumed in North America (Maier 1963). A future study exploring this Global dimension would be highly valuable to understanding the developing political relationship between Britain and its North American colonies during the 1760s and 1770s.

The building of a greater corpus of identifiable objects and spaces of protest and resistance would also enable deeper and broader conclusions to be drawn giving a clearer and more nuanced impression of how material culture and space were engaged in protest and resistance. In particular instances of overt protest such as the Gordon Riots, or indeed sociable criminal activities such as by the Cragg Vale Coiners (A gang of coiners in 1750s West Yorkshire who became local heroes) could offer interesting avenues for the exploration of the roles of objects and space in transcripts of protest. These examples would benefit from further study, particularly drawing on the methodology pioneered by this thesis as they are both largely represented in the historical record through elite public transcript sources, yet they were protest acts predominately comprised of subalterns. These two examples furthermore have surviving material and spatial remains which can be connected to recover both the public transcripts which they originally constituted and the hidden transcripts which they masked. As already suggested above, additional study of objects and spaces which do not have obvious association with protest and resistance movements would also be a valuable avenue for further research.

As this thesis offers the first detailed overview of protest and resistance in later-eighteenth-century England, more focused and detailed regional studies, particularly of the North-East, would also help to add clarity to the findings offered here. A more detailed exploration of the radical networks of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the North-East, focusing on their uses of place and objects, is certainly needed. Longer durée studies of certain case studies presented in this thesis would also be of value to developing the story presented. Certainly chapter four, examining Newcastle Town Moor, lends itself well to a longer time-scale study (both preceding and succeeding the remit of chapter four) focusing on the political developments of the Town Moor as a place intrinsic to the character of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is hoped that the AHRC 'Wastes and Strays' project (UKRI 2019), which will be considering the Town Moor as one of its case studies will offer such an overview of its development as a political landscape.

Broadening the geographic contexts whilst maintaining the temporal scope may also offer valuable avenues for future research. As demonstrated in chapter three, exploring the relationship between the particular and the general is an important research objective which can reveal tensions and connections in how protest was experienced at micro and macro-scales. In particular, chapter five of this thesis would benefit from contrasting case studies exploring how subaltern protest over tenancy and land ownership engaged with the ambiguities of space and place in other parts of England during the eighteenth century. Squatting and informal communities, would provide excellent comparatives and indeed there are several potential options identifiable, Daniel Defoe for example discusses cave dwellings in the Peak District (Ward 2002:20) whilst Shropshire boasts a strong tradition of squatter cottages of which several eighteenth-century examples survive.

7.4 Final Statement

This thesis has employed a trans-disciplinary methodology problematising traditional disciplinary approaches within history and archaeology and arguing that it is more helpful to think beyond disciplinary boundaries to combine sources in a way which produces a new form of evidence greater than the sum of its parts. The methodology employed throughout this thesis has uncovered the threads which connect words, things and spaces and hold them together in transcripts. It is these connections which are at the heart of this thesis and which have enabled it to access and see the subalterns whose hidden transcripts of dissent and protest exist in the spaces between the seemingly mundane and prosaic words, things and spaces of the later-eighteenth-century.

What this thesis has further demonstrated is that subalternity was not just a fixed state reserved for the most indigent in society but should rather be considered as a perspective (Das 1989) in which a subaltern was anybody who suffered domination at the hands of another regardless of social status or class.

Perhaps more than anything else, this thesis has explored a series of stories which have previously received only passing attention. It has brought to light the lives of subalterns living and working in later-eighteenth-century England who experienced domination and who struggled to moderate that domination in almost every aspect of their daily lives. This thesis has foregrounded the agency of these subalterns and revealed the lengths to which they went to resist domination and to protest against the imbalances of power. From behind the heavy curtain of elite-produced narratives which purposefully masked the existence of subaltern protest and resistance, this thesis has revealed a complex and nuanced discourse of power, a multi-faceted struggle in which the wealthiest member of the landed elite was as much engaged as the most impoverished landless subaltern.

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1882, 0311.3035 - A boy, watched by a man, holding up a stick preparing to hit a cock, tied by its foot to a peg in the ground at right; illustration to a publication by Thomas Spence; by Thomas Bewick (c.1782)

1882, 0311.3036 - A boy standing in a fenced yard, watching a donkey, walking towards right; a man behind the gate blowing a horn; illustration to a publication by Thomas Spence; by Thomas Bewick (c.1782)

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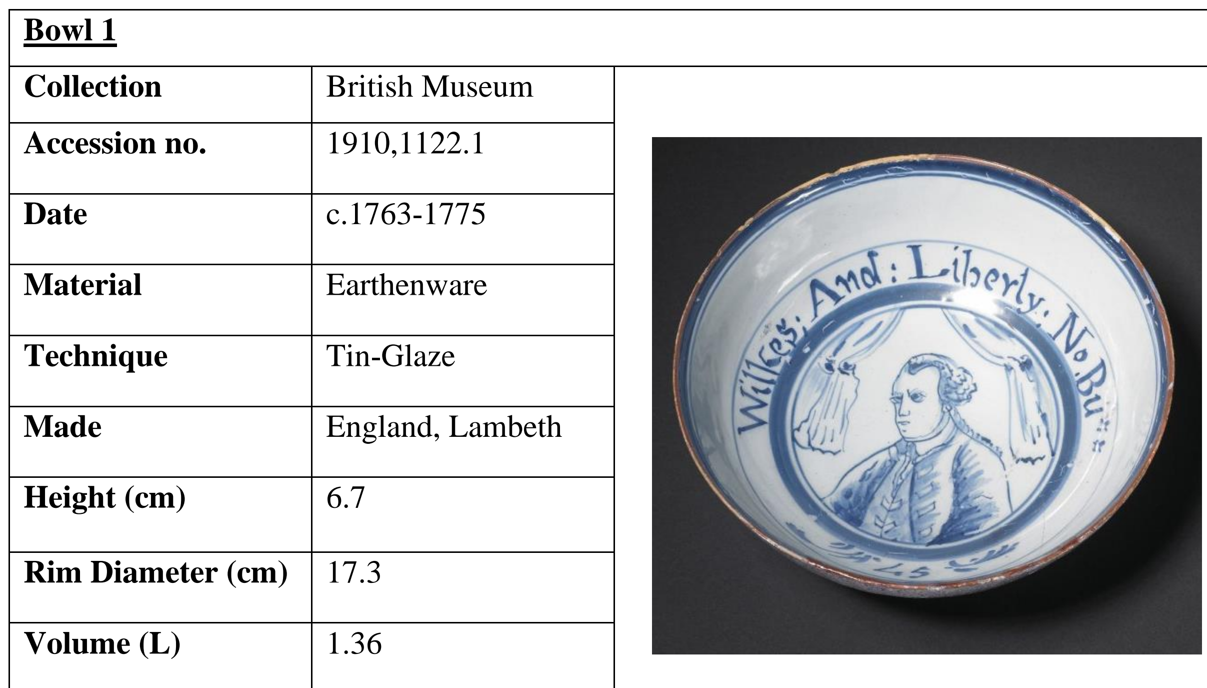
Appendix A – Gazeteer of Known Ceramic Wilkes and Liberty Punch bowls

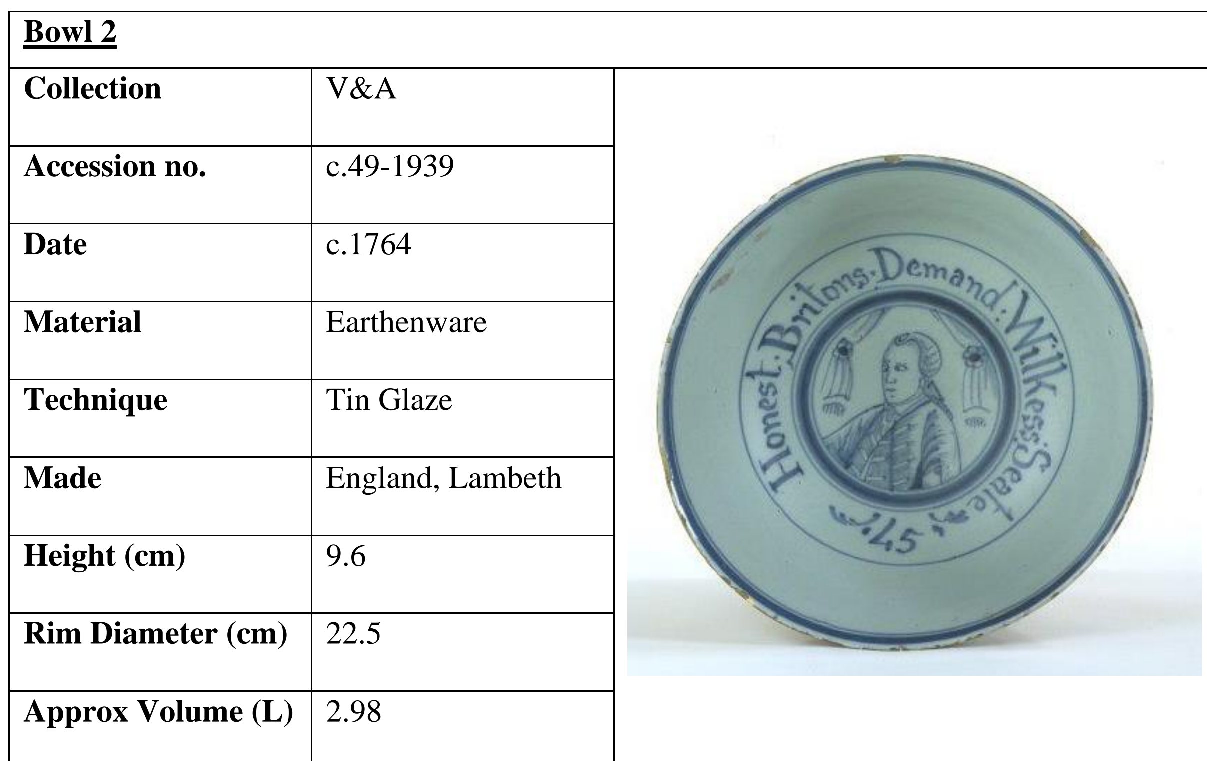
Volumes given are calculated according to Miervaldis's Formula (Breen 2012).

Measurements, place of manufacture, and dates extracted from museum catalogue entries.

Bowl 1	
Collection	British Museum
Accession no.	1910,1122.1
Date	c.1763-1775
Material	Earthenware
Technique	Tin-Glaze
Made	England, Lambeth
Height (cm)	6.7
Rim Diameter (cm)	17.3
Volume (L)	1.36



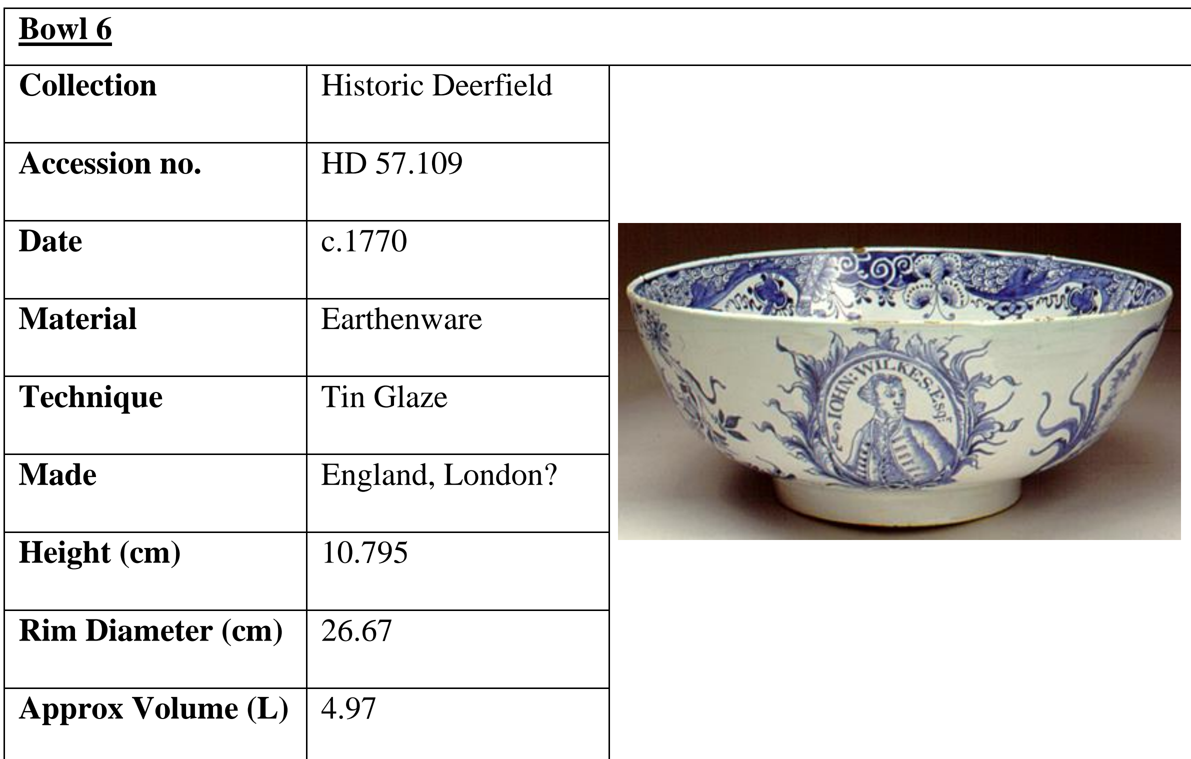
Bowl 2	
Collection	V&A
Accession no.	c.49-1939
Date	c.1764
Material	Earthenware
Technique	Tin Glaze
Made	England, Lambeth
Height (cm)	9.6
Rim Diameter (cm)	22.5
Approx Volume (L)	2.98

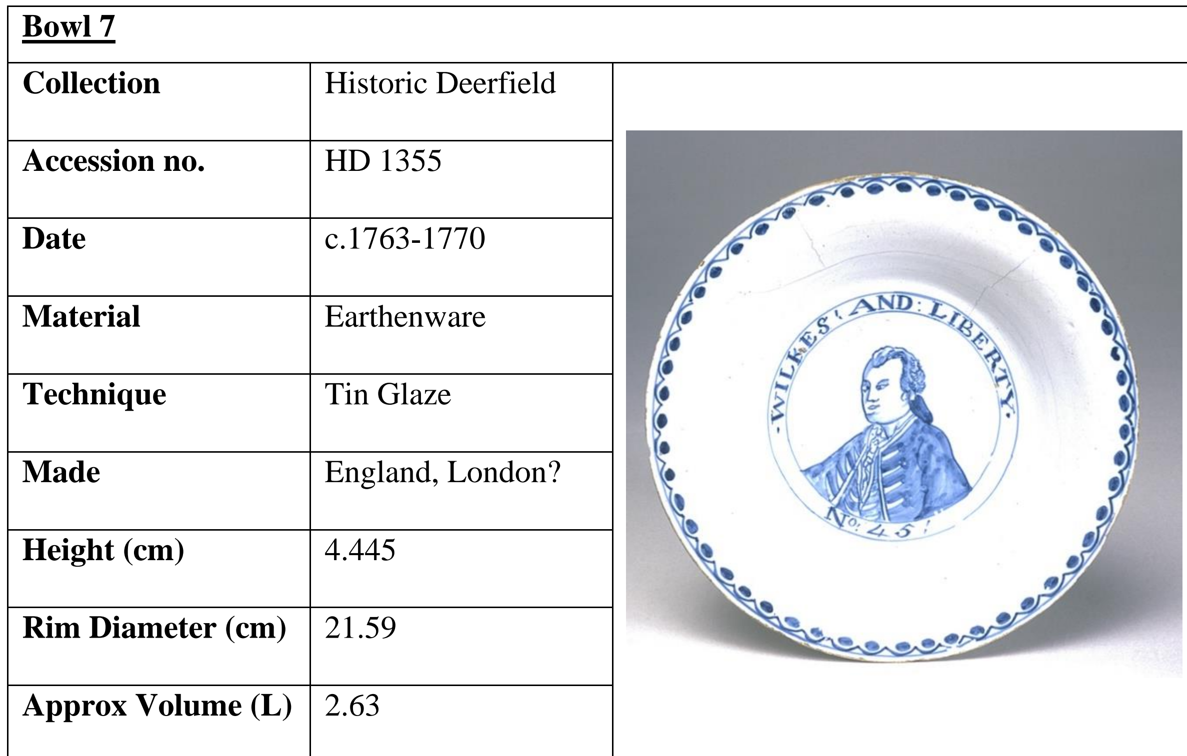


Bowl 3.		
Collection	Fitzwilliam	
Accession no.	C.1597-1928	
Date	c.1764-1768	
Material	Earthenware	
Technique	Tin Glaze	
Made	England, London	
Height (cm)	10.2	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.5	
Approx Volume (L)	4.87	

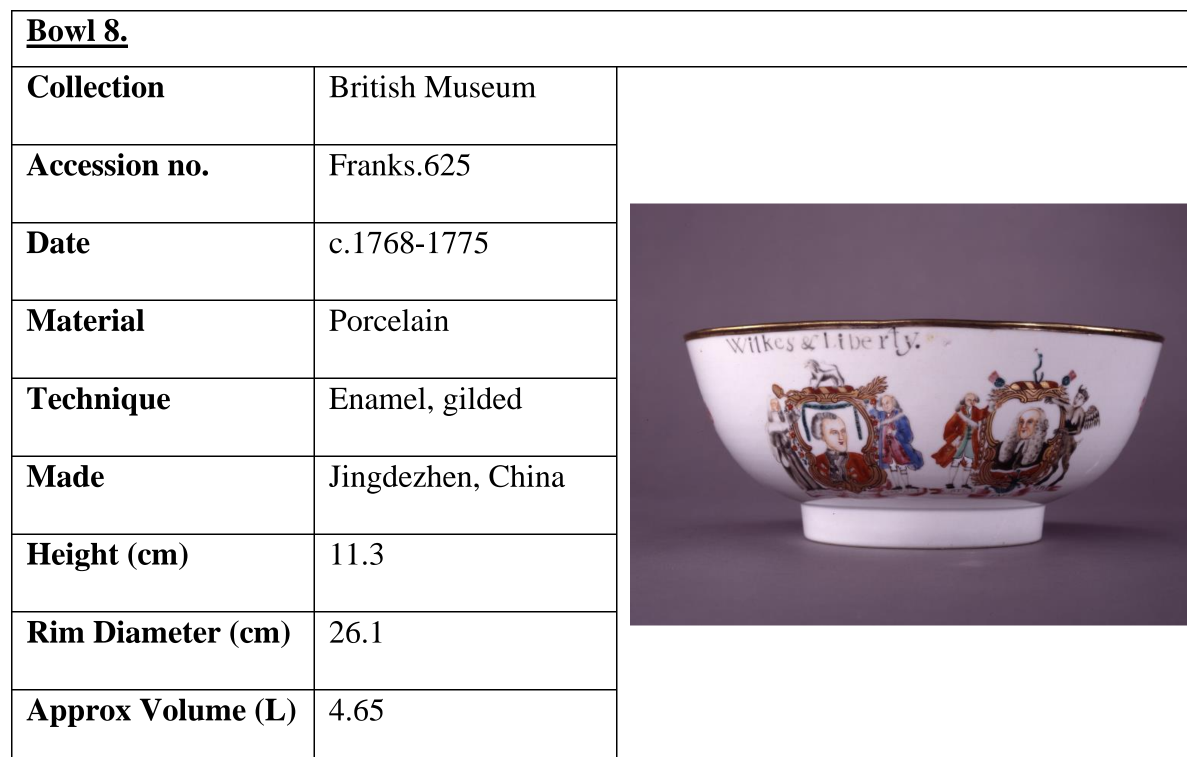
Bowl 4.		
Collection	Fitzwilliam	
Accession no.	C.1555-1928	
Date	c.1764-1768	
Material	Earthenware	
Technique	Tin Glaze	
Made	England, London?	
Height (cm)	10.7	
Rim Diameter (cm)	29	
Approx Volume (L)	6.39	

Bowl 5.		
Collection	Private – 'Special Auction Services'	**NO PICTURE**
Accession no.	Sold at Auction - Lot#505 13/6/1999	
Date	c.1768	
Material	Earthenware	
Technique	Tin Glaze	
Made	England, London?	
Height (cm)	Not given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	19.6	
Approx Volume (L)	1.97	

Bowl 6		
Collection	Historic Deerfield	
Accession no.	HD 57.109	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Earthenware	
Technique	Tin Glaze	
Made	England, London?	
Height (cm)	10.795	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.67	
Approx Volume (L)	4.97	

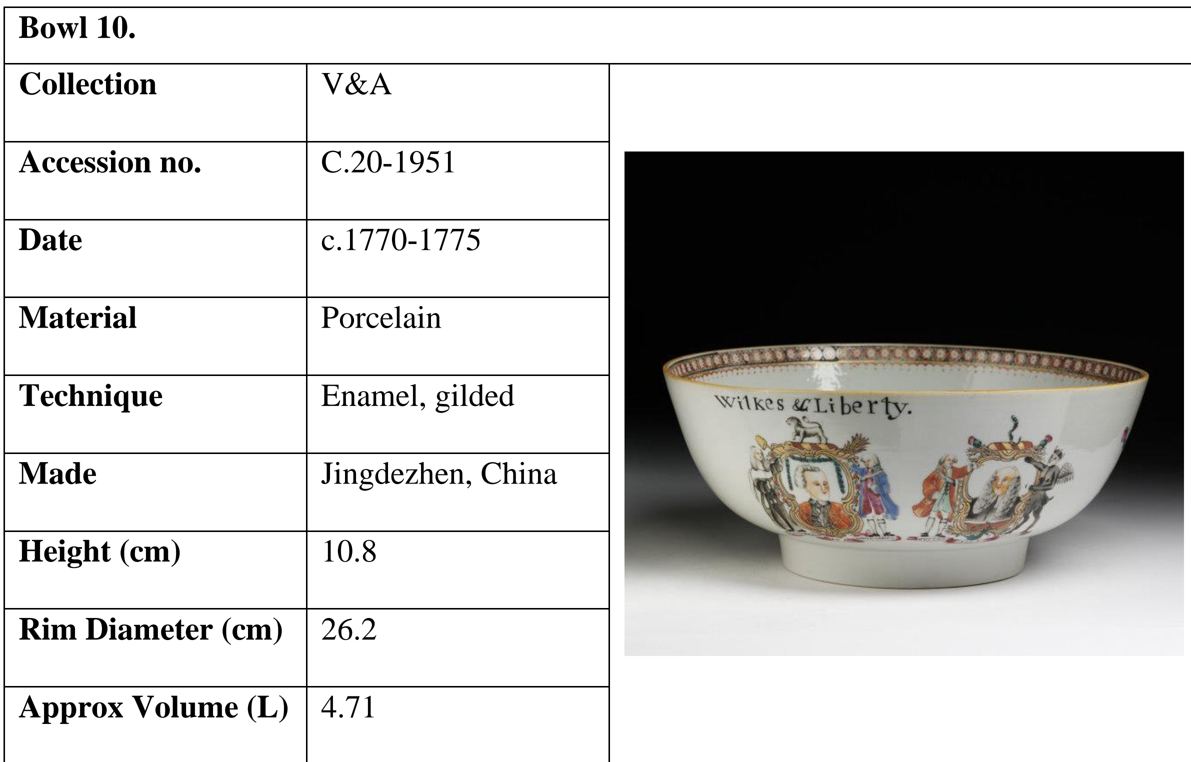


Bowl 7		
Collection	Historic Deerfield	
Accession no.	HD 1355	
Date	c.1763-1770	
Material	Earthenware	
Technique	Tin Glaze	
Made	England, London?	
Height (cm)	4.445	
Rim Diameter (cm)	21.59	
Approx Volume (L)	2.63	



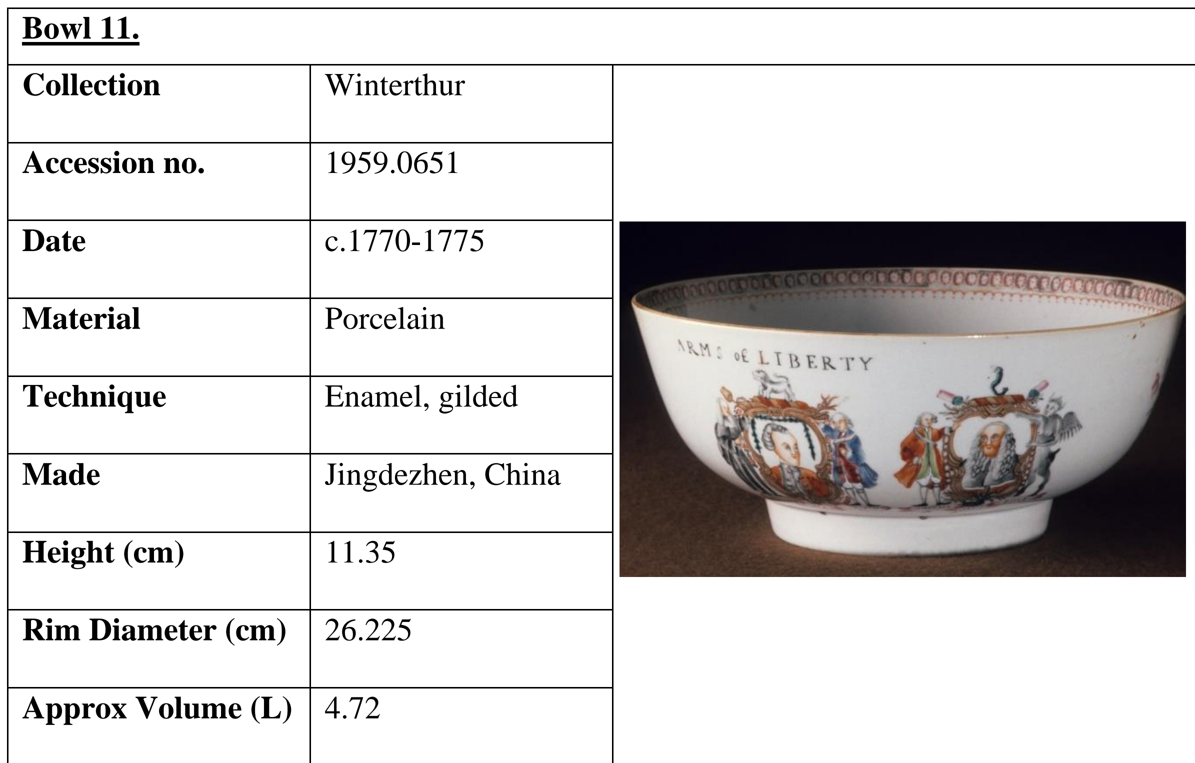
Bowl 8.		
Collection	British Museum	
Accession no.	Franks.625	
Date	c.1768-1775	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	11.3	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.1	
Approx Volume (L)	4.65	

Bowl 9.		
Collection	British Museum	
Accession no.	1963,0422.15	
Date	c.1763-1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel	
Made	China	
Height (cm)	12	
Rim Diameter (cm)	38.3	
Approx Volume (L)	14.71	



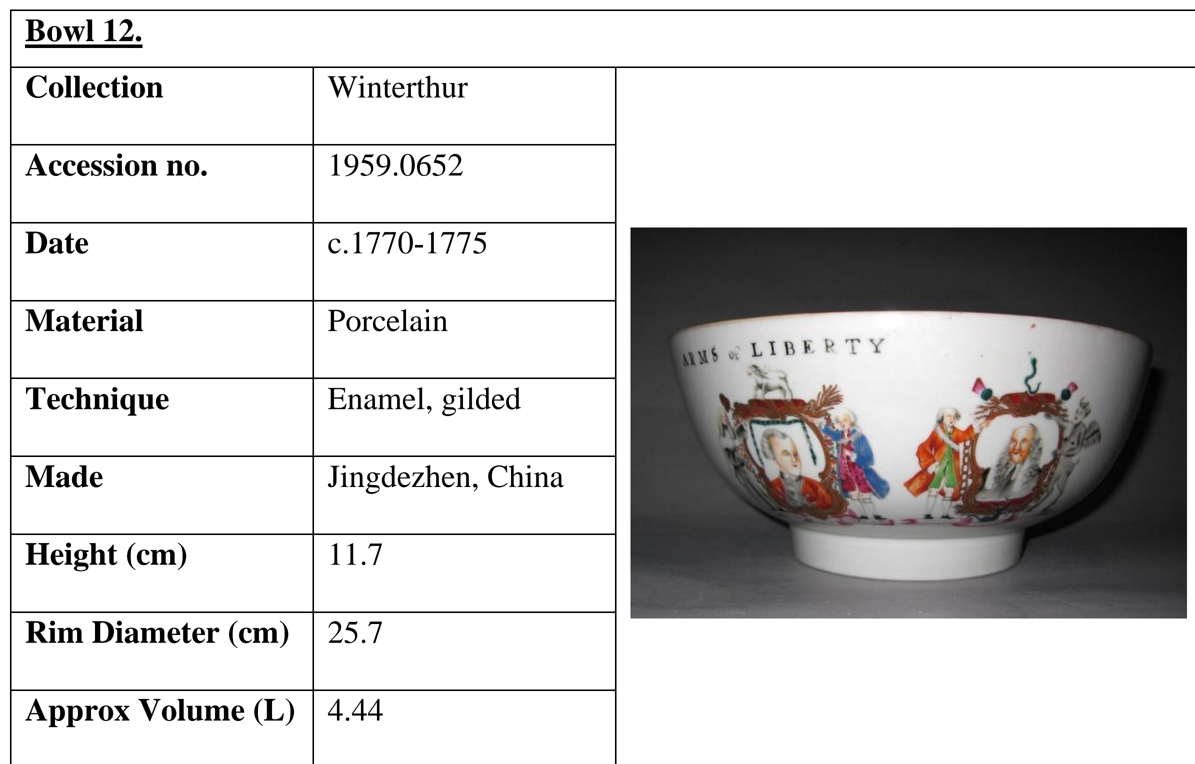
Bowl 10.		
Collection	V&A	
Accession no.	C.20-1951	
Date	c.1770-1775	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	10.8	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.2	
Approx Volume (L)	4.71	

Bowl 11.

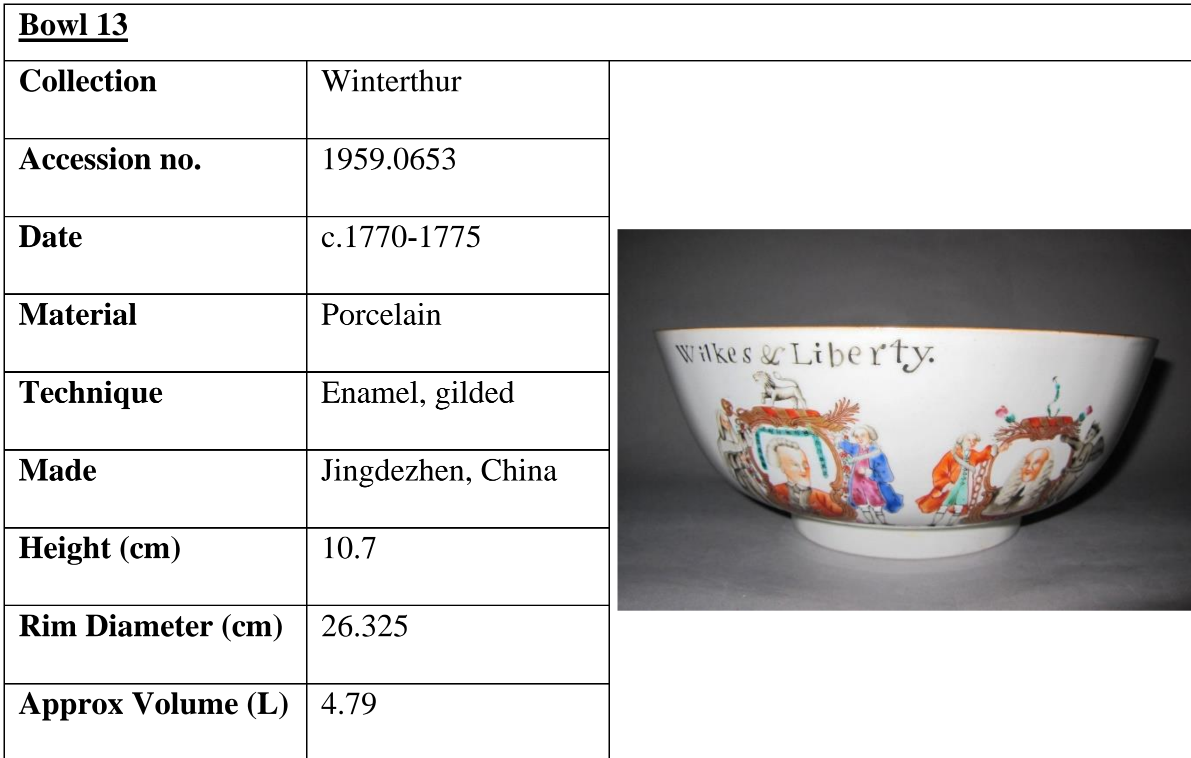


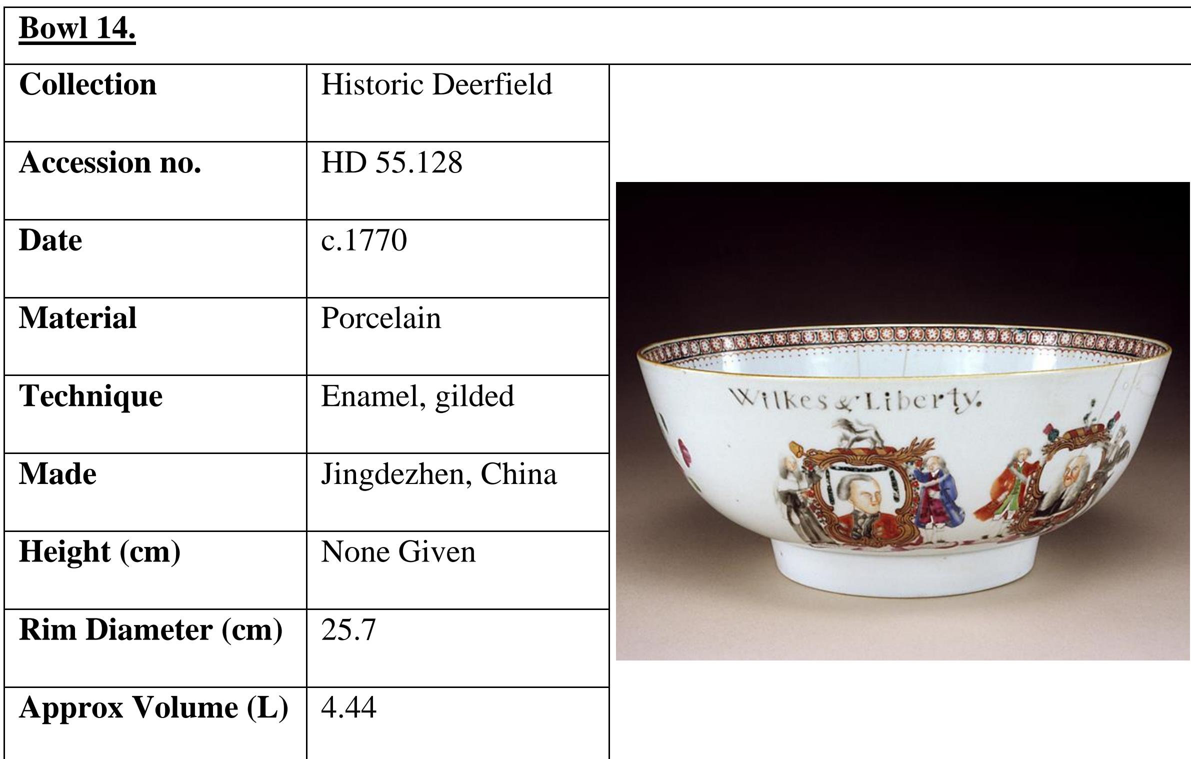
Collection	Winterthur
Accession no.	1959.0651
Date	c.1770-1775
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	11.35
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.225
Approx Volume (L)	4.72

Bowl 12.

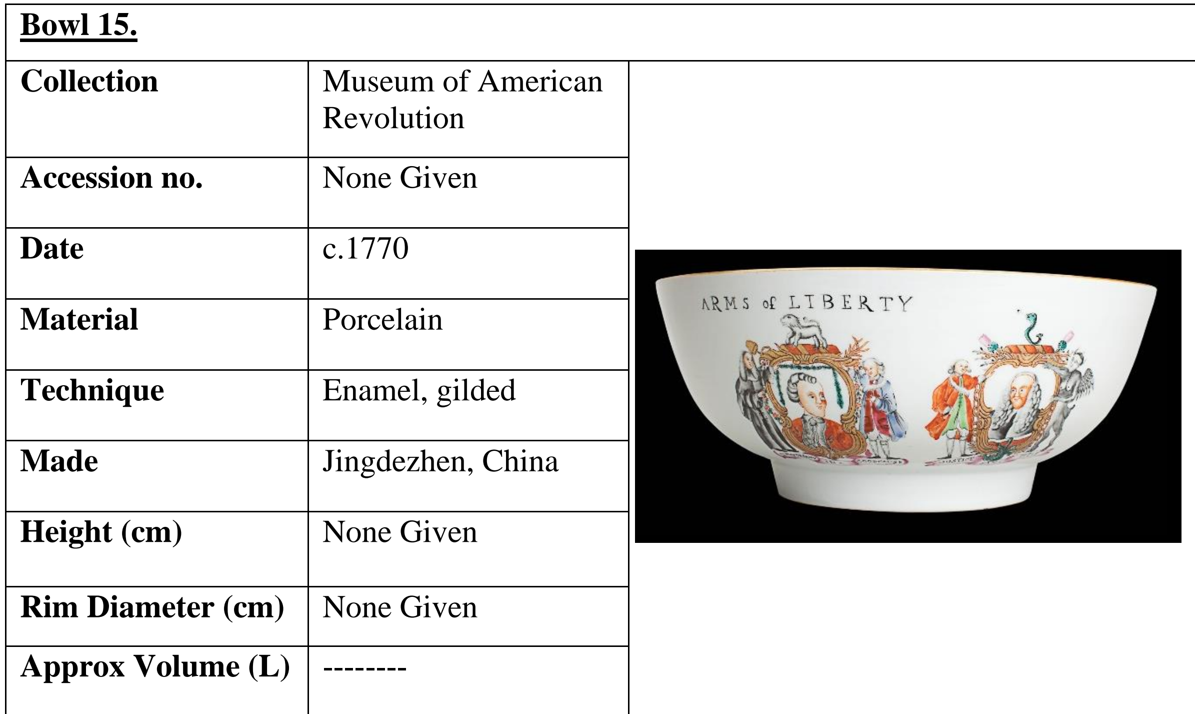


Collection	Winterthur
Accession no.	1959.0652
Date	c.1770-1775
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	11.7
Rim Diameter (cm)	25.7
Approx Volume (L)	4.44

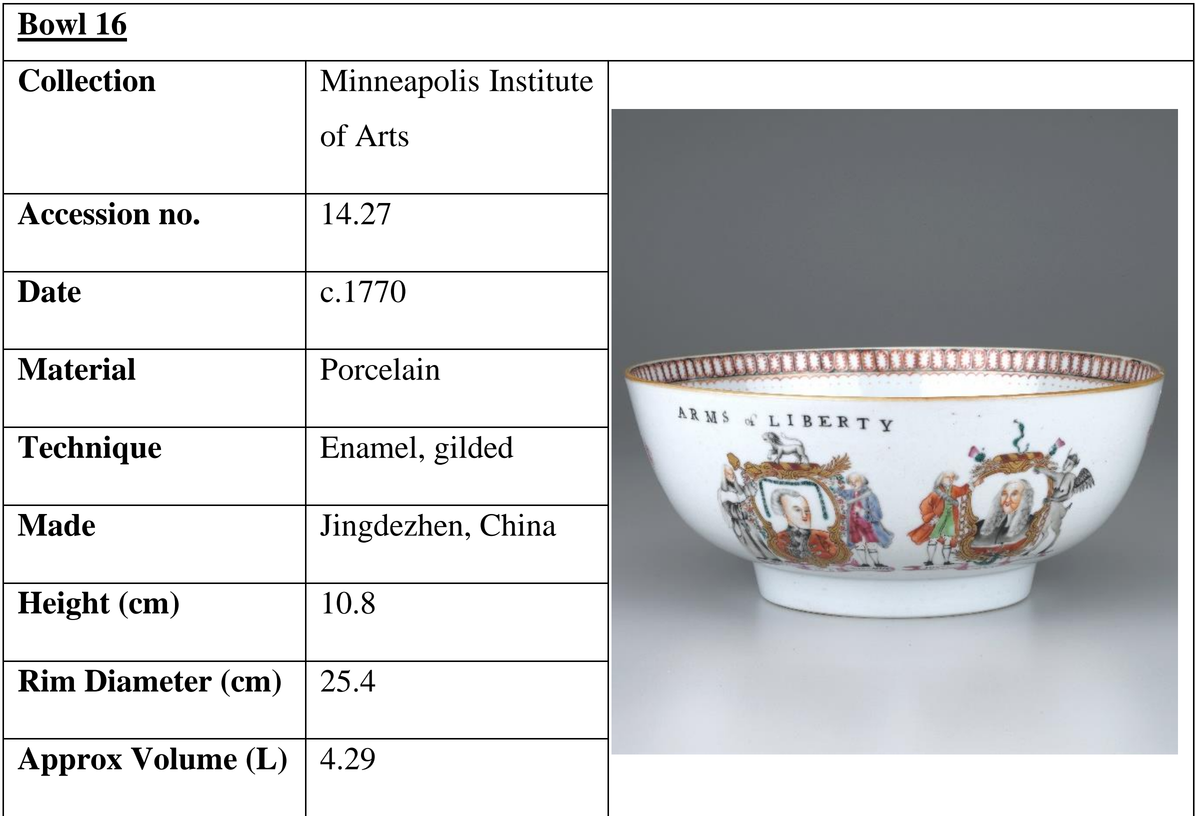
Bowl 13		
Collection	Winterthur	
Accession no.	1959.0653	
Date	c.1770-1775	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	10.7	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.325	
Approx Volume (L)	4.79	

Bowl 14.		
Collection	Historic Deerfield	
Accession no.	HD 55.128	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	25.7	
Approx Volume (L)	4.44	

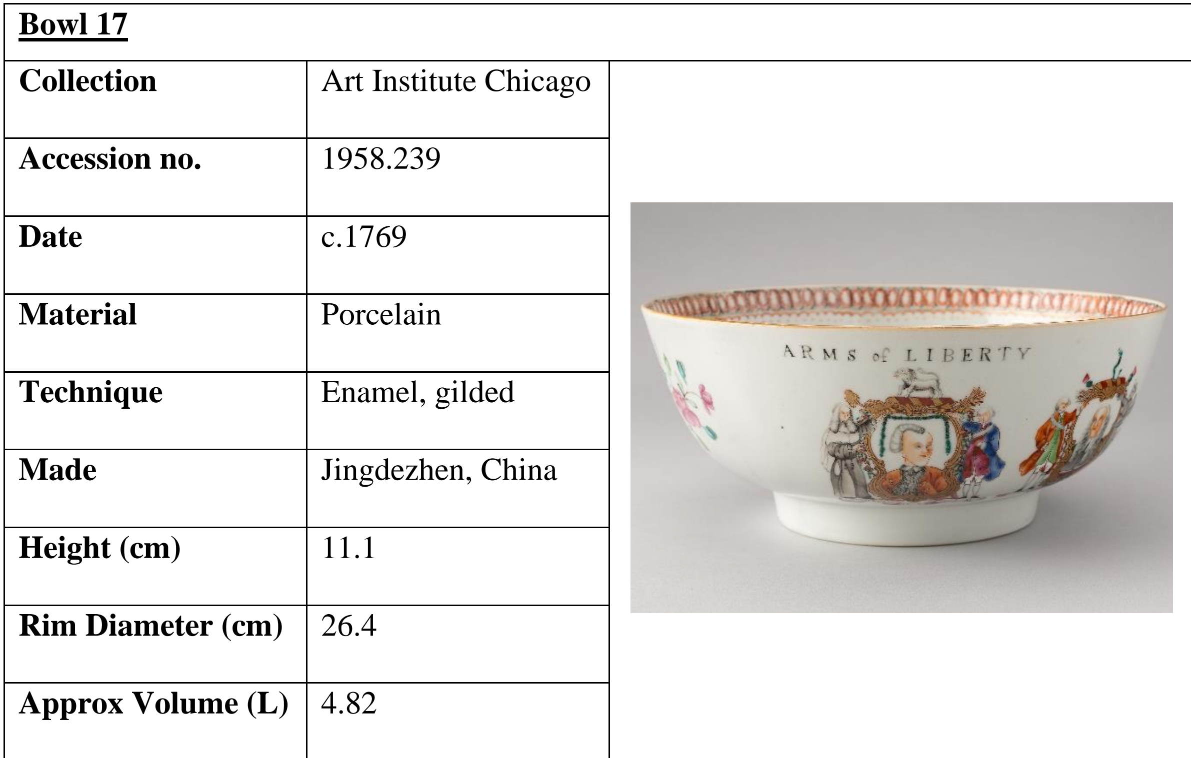
Bowl 15.		
Collection	Museum of American Revolution	
Accession no.	None Given	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	None Given	
Approx Volume (L)	--------	



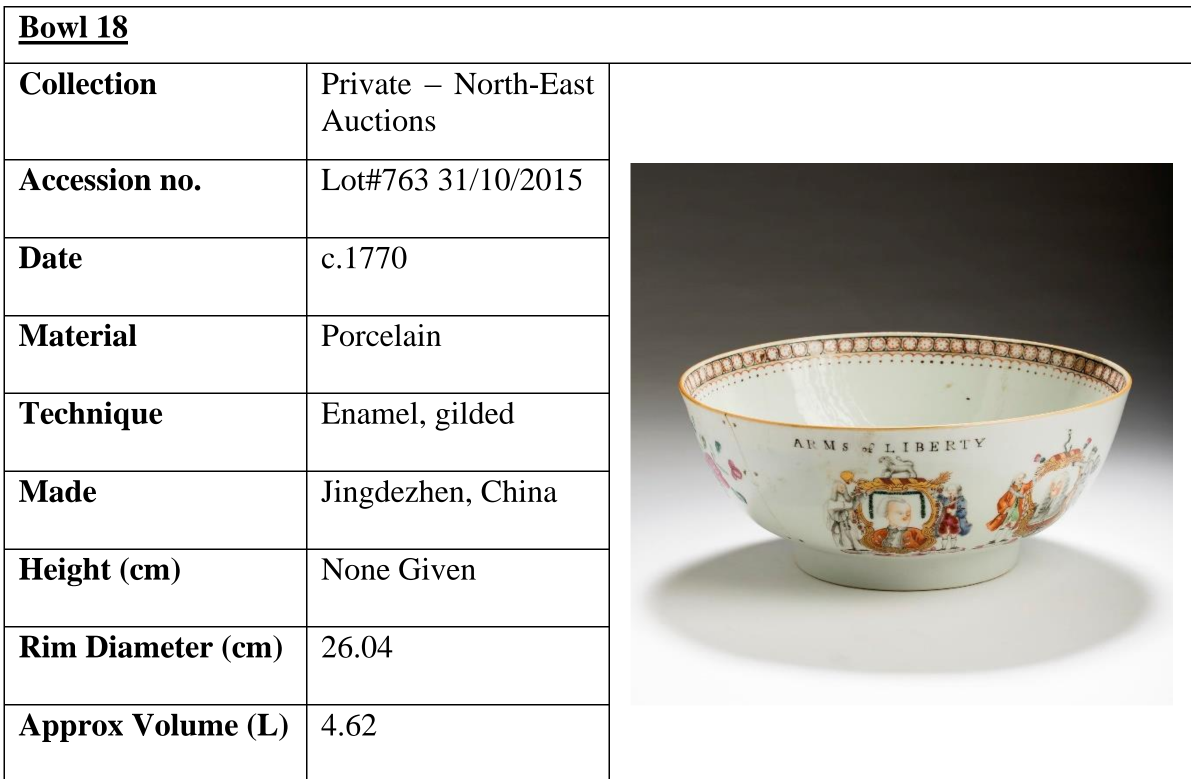
Bowl 16		
Collection	Minneapolis Institute of Arts	
Accession no.	14.27	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	10.8	
Rim Diameter (cm)	25.4	
Approx Volume (L)	4.29	

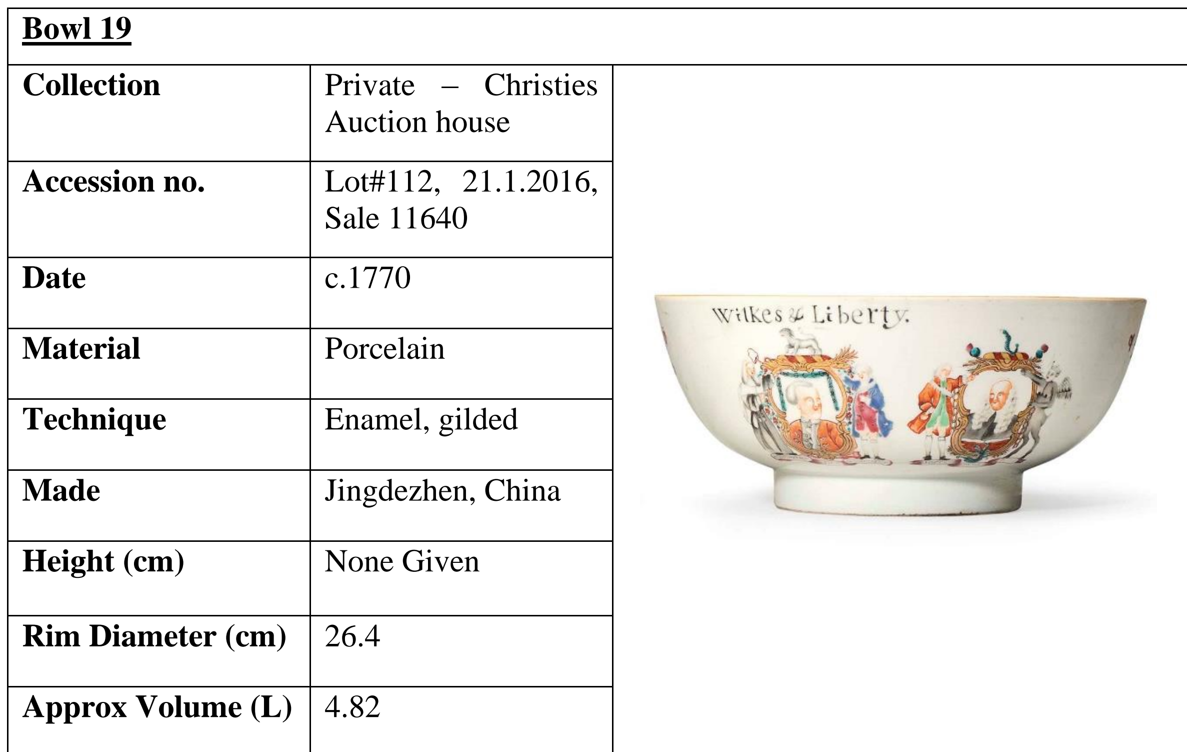


Bowl 17	
Collection	Art Institute Chicago
Accession no.	1958.239
Date	c.1769
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	11.1
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.4
Approx Volume (L)	4.82

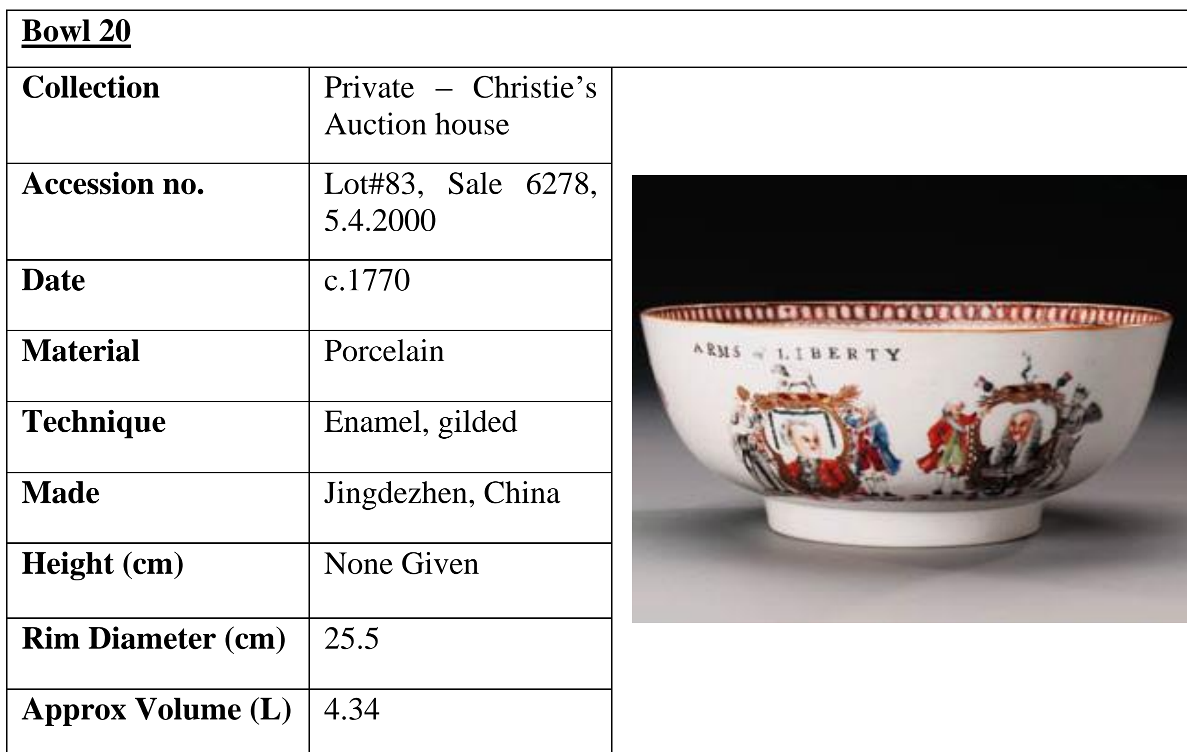


Bowl 18	
Collection	Private – North-East Auctions
Accession no.	Lot#763 31/10/2015
Date	c.1770
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.04
Approx Volume (L)	4.62

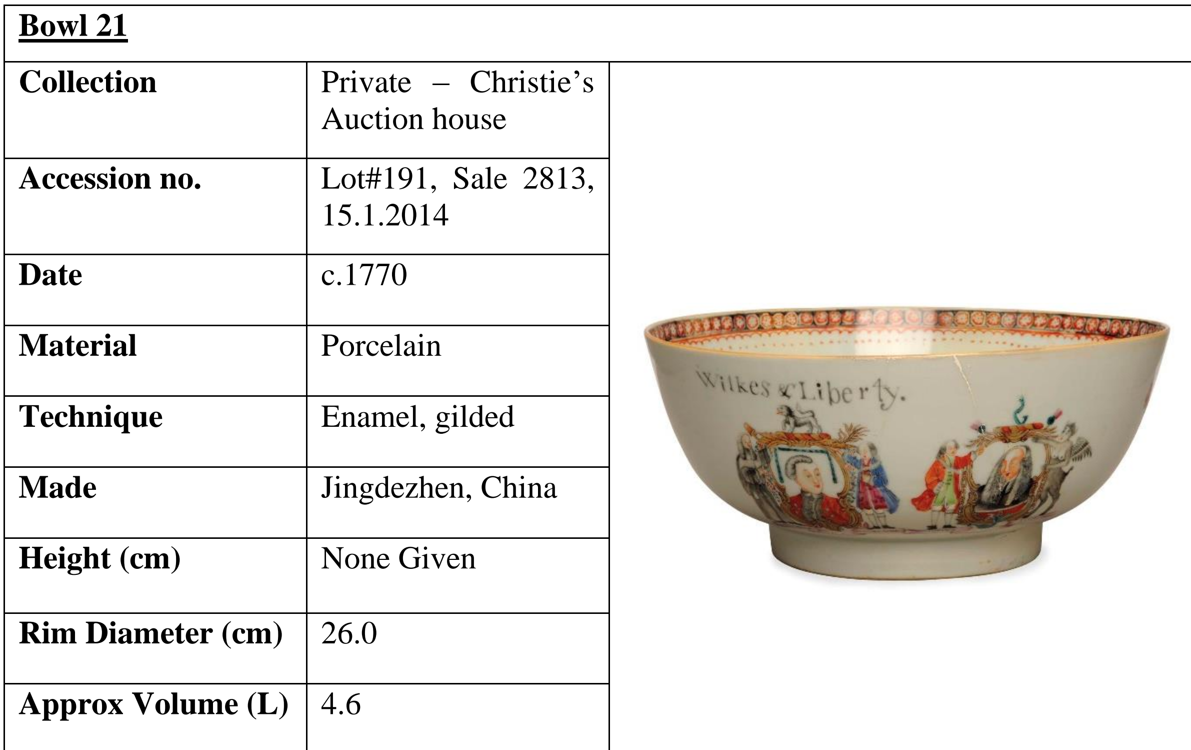




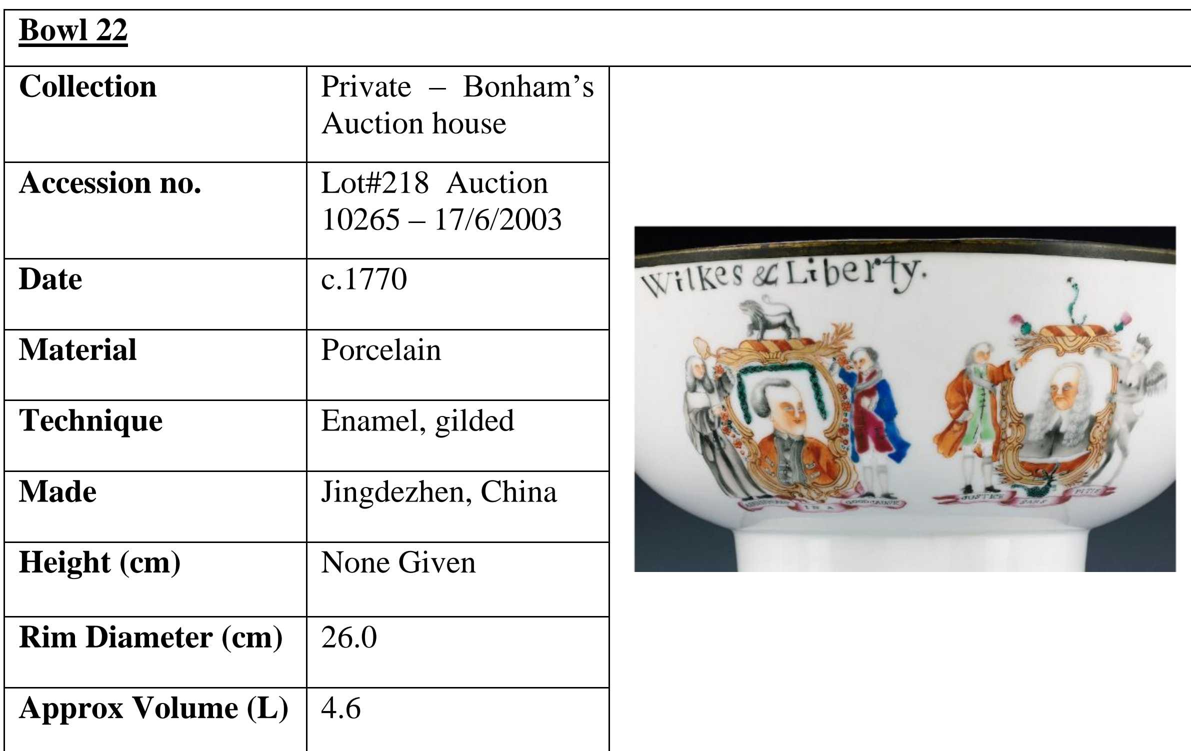
Bowl 19		
Collection	Private – Christies Auction house	
Accession no.	Lot#112, 21.1.2016, Sale 11640	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.4	
Approx Volume (L)	4.82	



Bowl 20		
Collection	Private – Christie's Auction house	
Accession no.	Lot#83, Sale 6278, 5.4.2000	
Date	c.1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	Enamel, gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	25.5	
Approx Volume (L)	4.34	

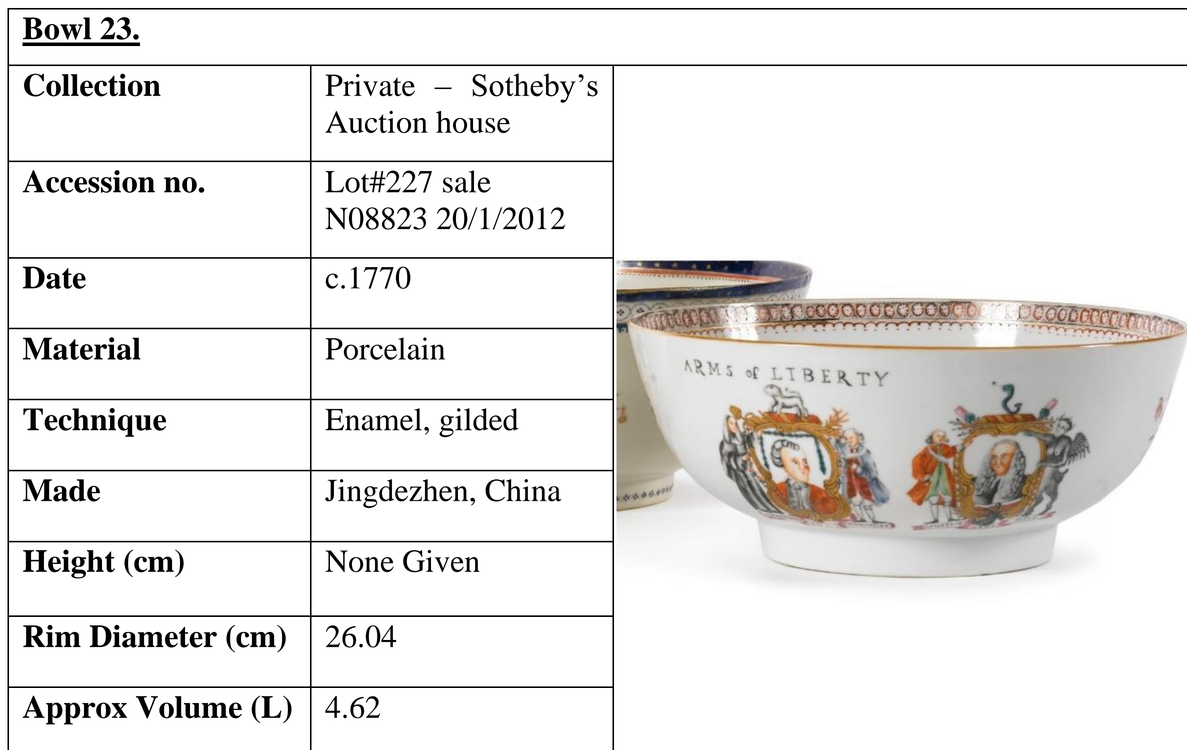


Bowl 21	
Collection	Private – Christie's Auction house
Accession no.	Lot#191, Sale 2813, 15.1.2014
Date	c.1770
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.0
Approx Volume (L)	4.6

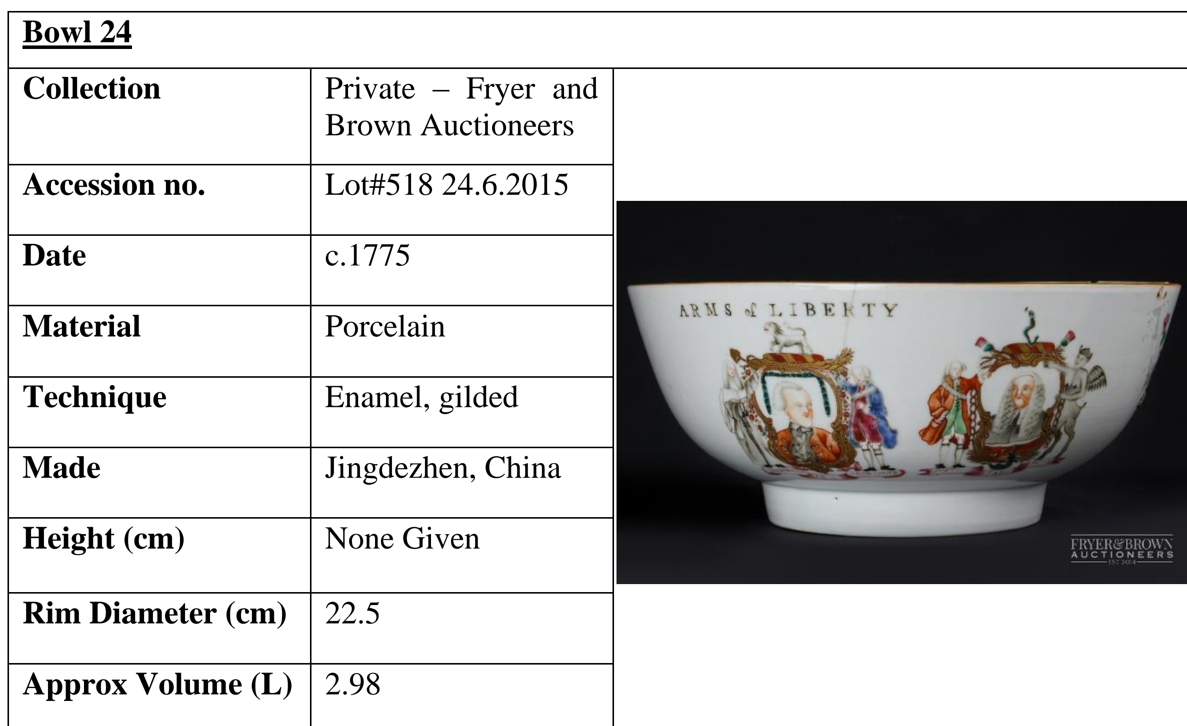


Bowl 22	
Collection	Private – Bonham's Auction house
Accession no.	Lot#218 Auction 10265 – 17/6/2003
Date	c.1770
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.0
Approx Volume (L)	4.6

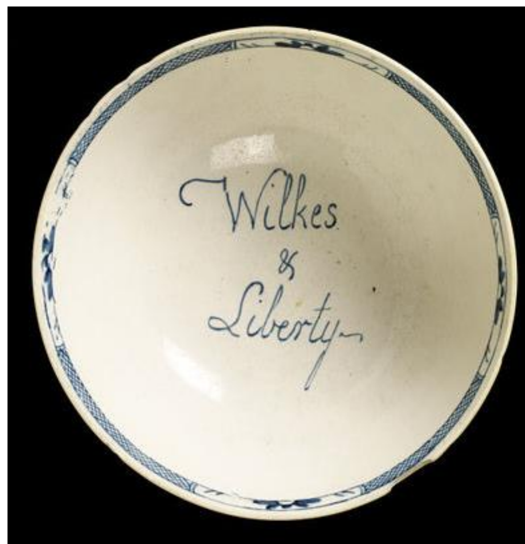
Bowl 23.	
Collection	Private – Sotheby's Auction house
Accession no.	Lot#227 sale N08823 20/1/2012
Date	c.1770
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	26.04
Approx Volume (L)	4.62



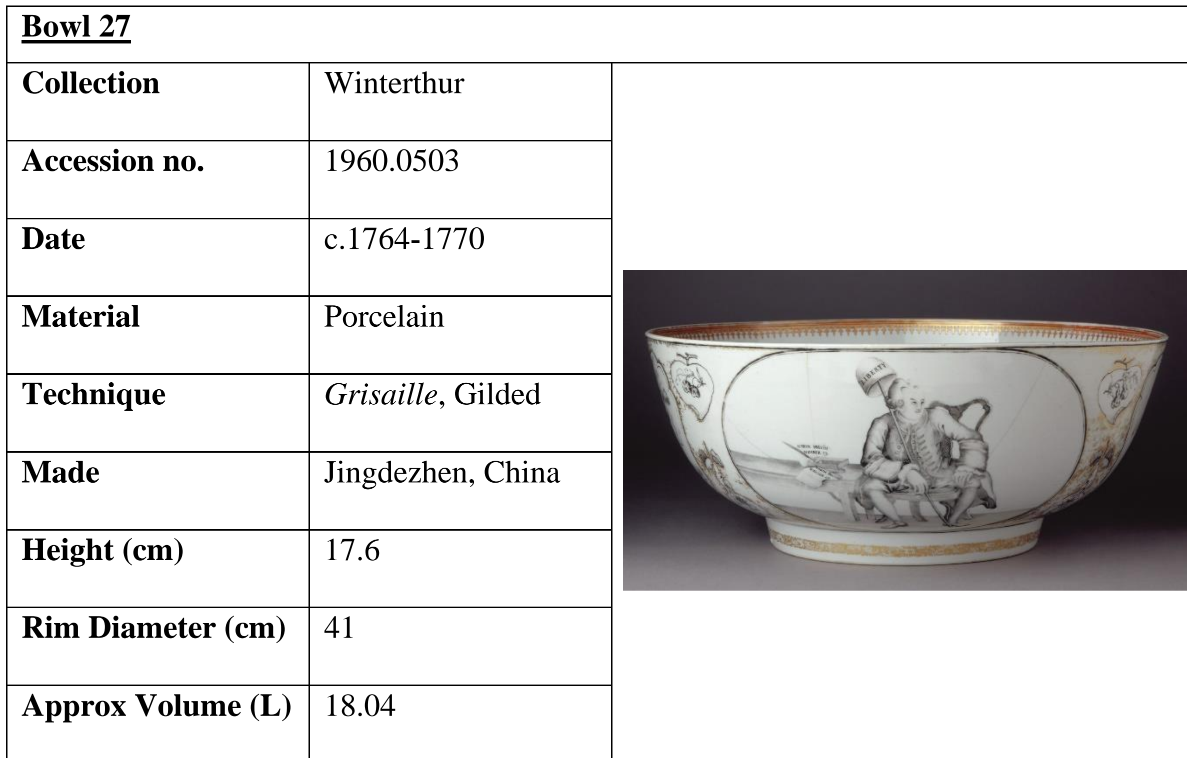
Bowl 24	
Collection	Private – Fryer and Brown Auctioneers
Accession no.	Lot#518 24.6.2015
Date	c.1775
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	22.5
Approx Volume (L)	2.98

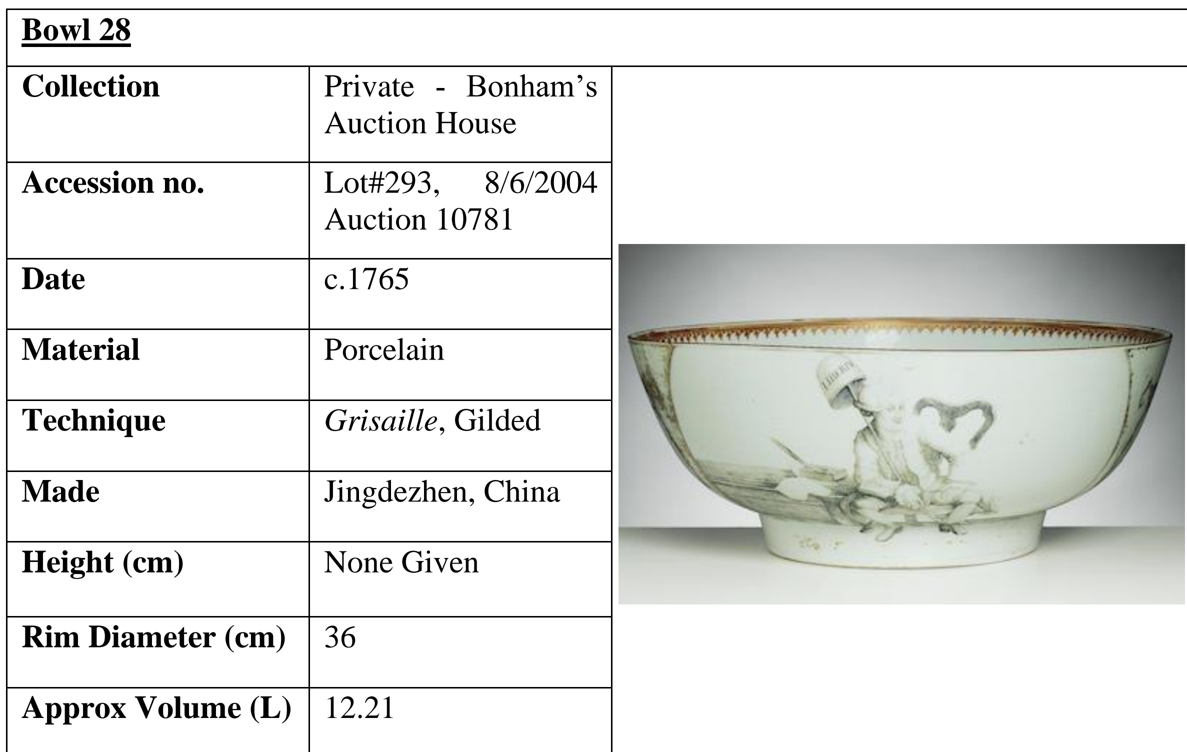


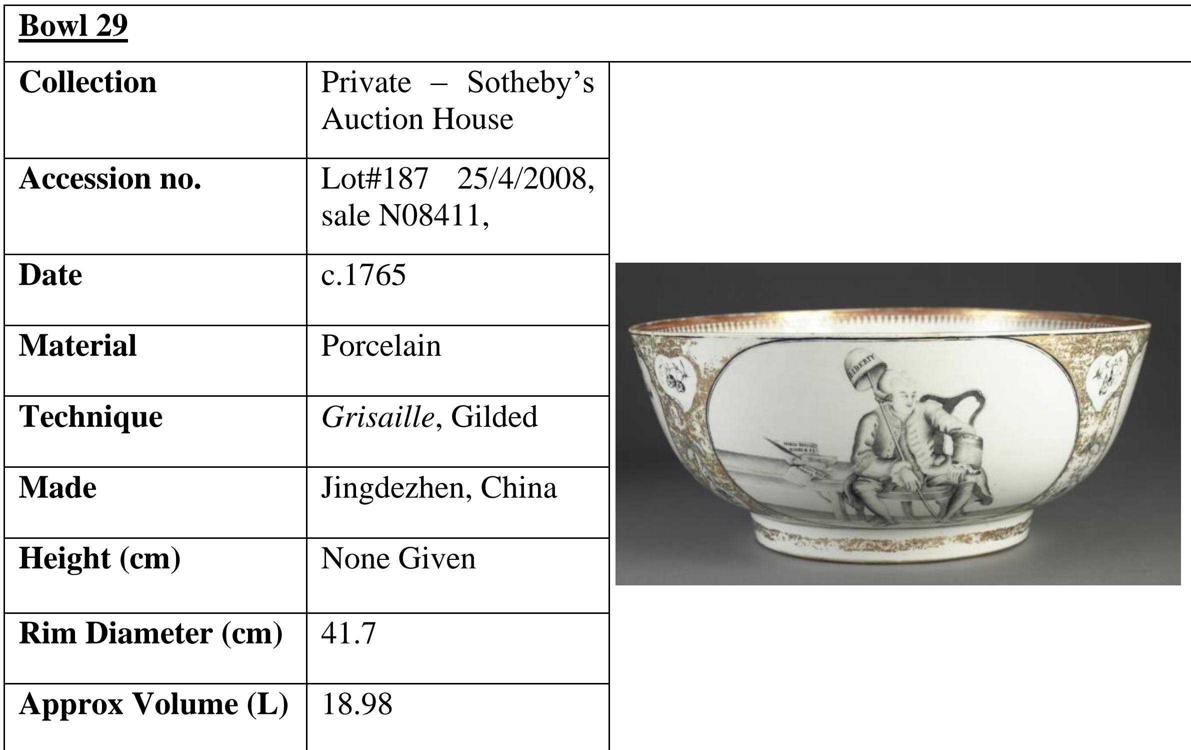
Bowl 25	
Collection	V&A
Accession no.	3618-1901
Date	c.1763-1775
Material	Stoneware
Technique	Lead glaze, with blue enamel
Made	England, Liverpool?
Height (cm)	8.3
Rim Diameter (cm)	20.00
Approx Volume (L)	2.09

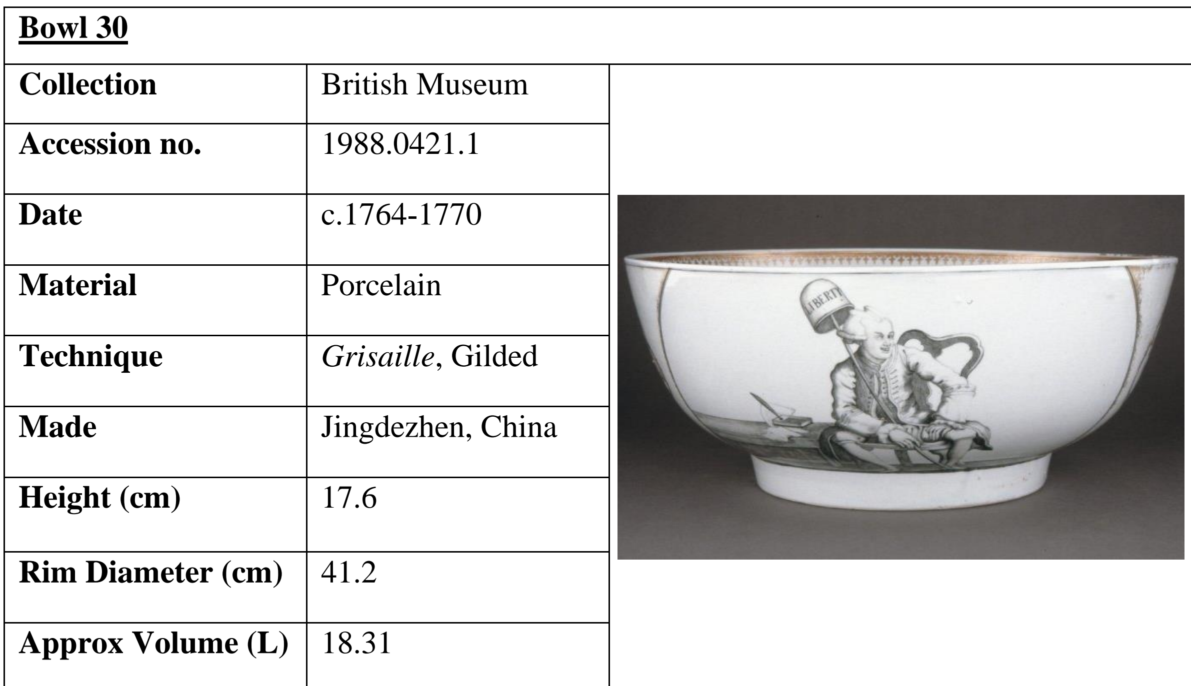


Bowl 26.	
Collection	Fitzwilliam
Accession no.	C.19-1995
Date	c.1763-1770
Material	Earthenware
Technique	Lead glaze
Made	England, Leeds?
Height (cm)	12.3
Rim Diameter (cm)	30.5
Approx Volume (L)	7.43

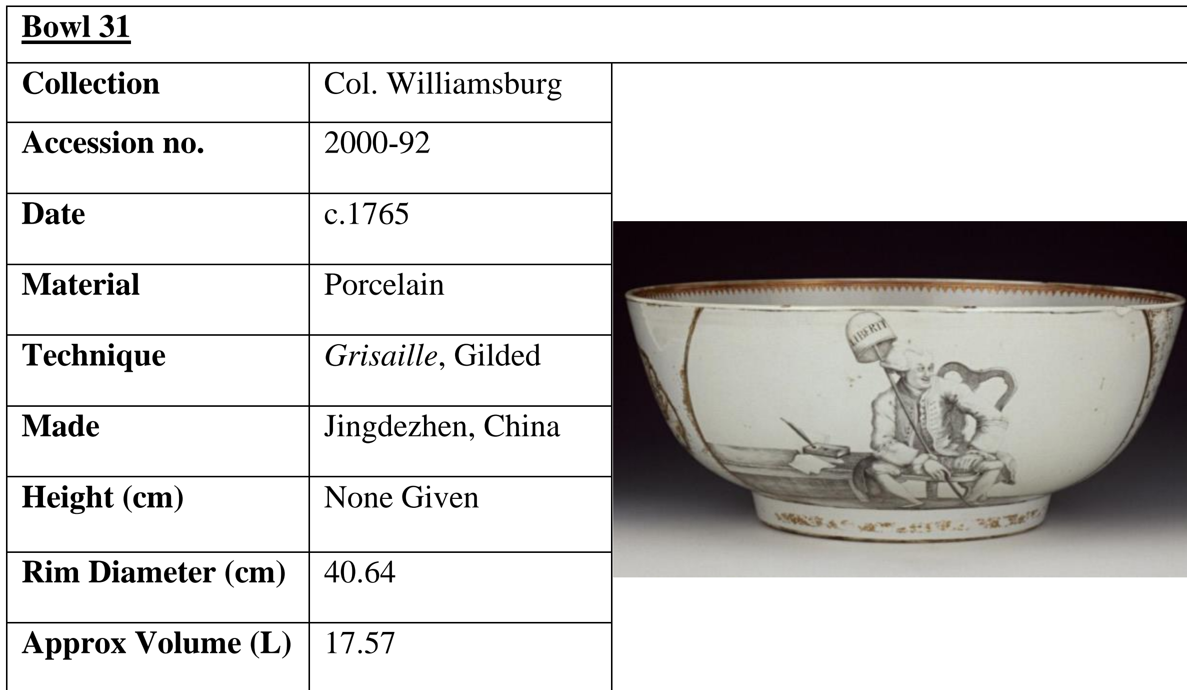
Bowl 27		
Collection	Winterthur	
Accession no.	1960.0503	
Date	c.1764-1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	*Grisaille*, Gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	17.6	
Rim Diameter (cm)	41	
Approx Volume (L)	18.04	

Bowl 28		
Collection	Private - Bonham's Auction House	
Accession no.	Lot#293, 8/6/2004 Auction 10781	
Date	c.1765	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	*Grisaille*, Gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	36	
Approx Volume (L)	12.21	

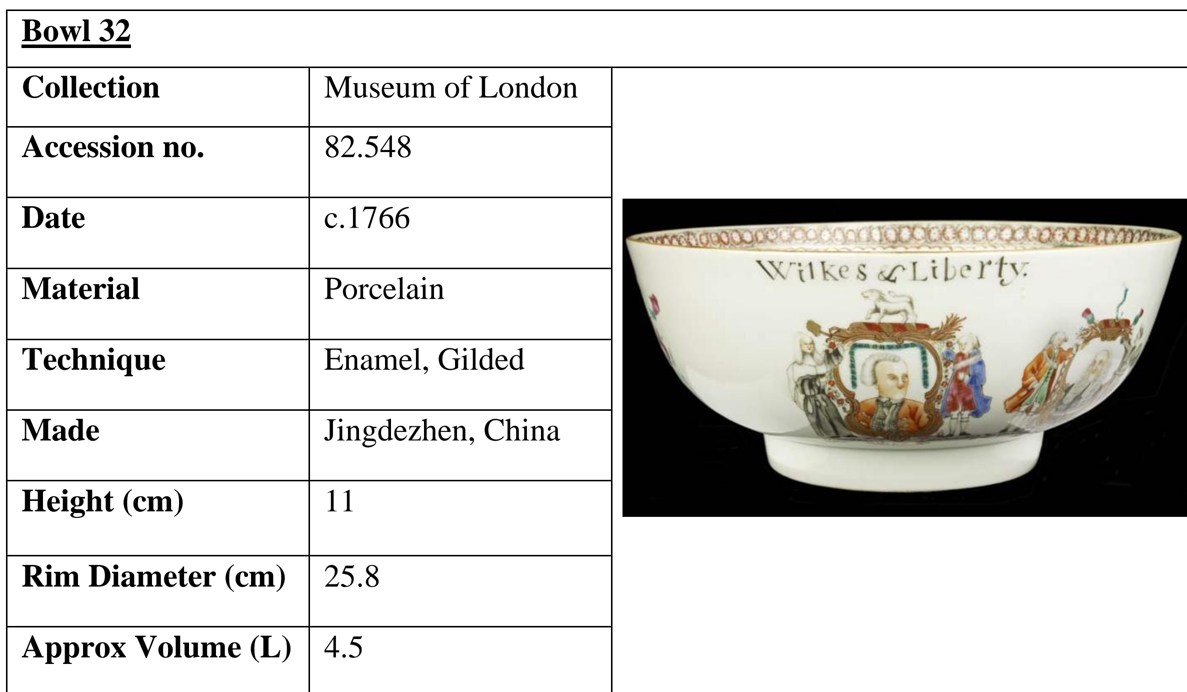
Bowl 29		
Collection	Private – Sotheby's Auction House	
Accession no.	Lot#187 25/4/2008, sale N08411,	
Date	c.1765	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	*Grisaille*, Gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	41.7	
Approx Volume (L)	18.98	

Bowl 30		
Collection	British Museum	
Accession no.	1988.0421.1	
Date	c.1764-1770	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	*Grisaille*, Gilded	
Made	Jingdezhen, China	
Height (cm)	17.6	
Rim Diameter (cm)	41.2	
Approx Volume (L)	18.31	

Bowl 31	
Collection	Col. Williamsburg
Accession no.	2000-92
Date	c.1765
Material	Porcelain
Technique	*Grisaille*, Gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	None Given
Rim Diameter (cm)	40.64
Approx Volume (L)	17.57



Bowl 32	
Collection	Museum of London
Accession no.	82.548
Date	c.1766
Material	Porcelain
Technique	Enamel, Gilded
Made	Jingdezhen, China
Height (cm)	11
Rim Diameter (cm)	25.8
Approx Volume (L)	4.5



Bowl 33		
Collection	Private – Sotheby's Auction House	**NO IMAGE AVAILABLE**
Accession no.	Lot#60 sale N07713	
Date	c.1766	
Material	Porcelain	
Technique	'Export Ware'	
Made	China	
Height (cm)	None Given	
Rim Diameter (cm)	None Given	
Approx Volume (L)	------------	