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Mythology and Popular History of the British Labour Party,  
1890-1931**

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**Citation:**

TAYLOR, Antony (2018). "The Pioneers of the Great Army of Democrats": The  
Mythology and Popular History of the British Labour Party, 1890-1931. *Historical  
Research*, 91 (254), 723-743. [Article]

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## **‘The Pioneers of the Great Army of Democrats’: The Mythology and Popular History of the British Labour Party, 1890-1931**

Recent years have seen an increased interest in the partisan uses of the political past by British political parties and by their apologists and adherents. This trend has proved especially marked in relation to the Labour party. Grounded in debates about the historical basis of labourism, its ‘true’ nature, the degree to which sacred elements of the past have been discarded, marginalised, or revived as part of revisions to the labour platform and through changes of leader, the past has become a contentious area of debate for those interested in broader currents of reform and their relationship to the progressive movements that fed through into the platform of the early twentieth-century Labour party. Contesting traditional notions of labourism as an undifferentiated and unimaginative creed, this article re-examines the political traditions that informed the Labour platform and traces the broader histories and mythologies the party drew on to establish the basis for its moral crusade. In line with recent scholarship in this area, the article is alert to the diversity and pluralism of the traditions that fed through into the Labour party platform. Moreover, it stresses the vibrant and organic nature of the past stories of defiance, protest and dissent that provided an impetus to the rise of the Labour platform at both a national and local level. Engaging with a broader analysis of the movements for political change in the nineteenth-century that preceded the Labour party, this article traces their continuing relevance for the reform groups that came after them, and dissects recent discussion around continuities between Chartism, liberalism, and other movements for political reform that have an influential role in nineteenth-century British politics, but have attracted far less attention in the twentieth.<sup>1</sup> Taking the arguments around continuity into the twentieth-century, this article suggests that the debates around continuity that relate to the broader radical tradition in the nineteenth-century remain relevant for an understanding of the formation of the early twentieth-century Labour platform, and for

the political developments and historical agendas for change that members of the Labour party made their own. It seeks, therefore, to broaden and deepen our understanding of the histories that the Labour party appropriated, reclaim their significance, and reinterpret their relevance for more recent developments within the Labour tradition, and in regard to the public platform of the party embraced by its leaders and members. This, then, is an article about the spaces where the mythology of labourism and the older radical tradition coincide. It considers the fracture lines, as well as the bonding elements, opened up within the party by this resort to the national past, and considers the merits, as well as pitfalls, of an appeal to past precedent. Moreover, it is an exercise in reclamation, considering those usable parts of the radical past that were open to appropriation by the first generation of labour leaders. This article examines and refines our understanding of the radical tradition by scrutiny of five major traditions feeding into the Labour party platform: liberalism, Toryism, socialism, Christian Socialism, and direct action politics.

The past radical traditions that the Labour party drew on were already firmly embedded within British cultures of dissent from the late eighteenth-century onwards. By the 1890s, the outlines of this tradition had become well established, both inside and outside the academy. Presenting a sanctified image of the people, restorative of lost rights and morality of which the people had been deprived, and drawing on an established cast of heroes and villains, it imagined an arc of development that would turn the wheel of history in the direction of liberty and freedom. Highpoints of British history were usually invoked as part of this trajectory that spanned a broad chronology, from the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, through periods in which royal, aristocratic and religious power and authority was reversed, (notably the granting of the Magna Carta, the Reformation, and the English Civil War) and culminating in the convulsive changes that accompanied the Industrial Revolution.<sup>2</sup> These

ideas of ancestral freedoms, fought for, lost and regained, had considerable longevity before 1890, and were refined in the totemic struggles for the People's Charter, for the 1867 and 1884 reform acts, and in campaigns for reform of land-holding and tenure. As Henry Drucker demonstrated, in its labourist incarnation, the radical tradition invoked images of collectivity and solidarity; on occasion it provided a consolatory myth for a party that sought, and failed, to achieve popular support, and was often disconsolate about the seriousness and level of political commitment displayed by its natural supporters.<sup>3</sup> Caught between opposition and protest, and sensing the looming prospect of power, the Labour party struggled to devise agendas that preserved the best of this past precedent, whilst anticipating the future course of a Labour government. Frequently, the party found solace in heroic renditions of the past when its attempts to engage voters proved fraught with difficulties.

The generation that built the Labour Party made numerous attempts to link their activities with these older struggles that marked out the political terrain of reformers from the late eighteenth-century onwards. For the architects of the Labour Party, their contact with their political forebears represented a profound and sublime compact to continue the work of reform, and to lay claim to the mantle of change and progress. Moreover, the outline of this tradition survived cleavages in the party between the mainstream and a more emphatic left.<sup>4</sup> As recent scholarship has demonstrated, the assertion of radical ancestry was an important one, integral to the Labour Party's view of itself as the inheritor of past traditions, to the longevity of the radical causes it espoused, as well as proving central in counteracting claims about the relative infancy of the groups that cohered around the party at the beginning of the twentieth-century.<sup>5</sup> The early Labour pioneers represented themselves as part of a generational struggle for reform and exalted a venerable radical past they saw as on a par with, or even older, than, the political antecedents claimed by Tories and Liberals. As Jon

Lawrence has suggested, many labour activists internalised this struggle in their own personal biographies and memoirs.<sup>6</sup> The sketch of Philip Snowden in Herbert Tracey's *The British Labour Party* emphasised of his meeting with a veteran, George Lomax, who had witnessed the Peterloo massacre: 'These stirring events in the history of the generation before him were deeply implanted in Snowden's memory and confirmed the radicalism common to kindred and companions, but it was Snowden himself and men of his generation who mapped the new socialist campaign and built the Labour party'.<sup>7</sup> Frequently this tradition was used to hold current labour members to the elevated standard of past reformers, or to urge them on to fresh exertions on behalf of the cause of reform. *The Clarion* commented in 1899 of the state of society: 'Of the swords of John's barons at Runnymede, of the bloody struggle in Charles' civil war, of the Chartist agitation, this then is the outcome – the servile, lickspittle worship of the successful'.<sup>8</sup>

The radical tradition, labour members claimed, compensated for the relative paucity of achievements by Labour governments in the 1920s and Labour's muted presence in local government. It also represented the Labour party as the inevitable expression of past, and vessel for future, 'democratisation', in the tradition of older reform groups like the Chartists portrayed as 'the pioneers of the great army of democrats'.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the assertion of historical antecedence by Labour's founding fathers and the connection with the shades of great crusades in the past, provided the rationale for a party that was essentially non-doctrinaire in nature. In contrast to European Social Democratic lefts, Labour's pragmatic, flexible and non-ideological stance meant that past precedent and concluding the work of previous generations loomed large.<sup>10</sup> In the broader context of Labour party culture, members gained their validity from the sense of uncompleted work, and tasks yet to do. By the late 1920s there existed an established teleology of past events that held the official narrative of

the Labour party together and provided a recognisable point of contact for its members. It was this that Francis Williams retrospectively described in his official fifty-year history of the party as ‘a thread that runs unbroken through British history’.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, past suffering, exile and sacrifice on the part of reformers provided the justification and rationale in juvenile literature for a mythology that would frame later political struggles in power.<sup>12</sup> These tendencies became more emphatic during periods of Labour reverses in government, and during long periods in the wilderness. They were especially marked in the inter-war years, when introspection and a turning inwards resulted in wide discussions about the ideas and the principles of the founding fathers.

By the early twentieth century, this alternative history had a developed narrative arc and established points of contact for those who immersed themselves in its key articles. Its powerful and potent nature was immediately apparent to outside agitators, who recognised its worth. Leon Trotsky famously commented on the importance of the legacy of the seventeenth-century commonwealth to subsequent generations of British radicals, and *The Blast*, the newspaper of the San Francisco anarchists, edited by Alexander Berkman commented that ‘the Britisher swells with pride over the Magna Charta and over Cromwell’s revolution’.<sup>13</sup> Direct lineages were also often important, overcoming the petty differences of variegated political outlooks and creating a distinctive radical blood-line. Raphael Samuel depicted the radical tradition as a form of ‘ancestor’ worship that bridged the distance between past and present crusades.<sup>14</sup> Descent from radical political figures was much prized by Labour party members. Tales of personal radical ancestry were nurtured and revered, presenting a more personal engagement with the relevant periods that featured in the tradition. H.W. Nevinson, the radical and crusading journalist who joined the Labour party in the middle 1920s, boasted of his descent from John Hampden, and, in a hagiographical

account of his career, like him, was described as having ‘held the torch of freedom high..(and)..thrown its beams in some dark corners of the world, and led the way for liberals’. More recent radical figures also served this function. The Christian Socialist and early labour campaigner, Paul Campbell, who died in 1918, cherished his alleged descent from the American revolutionary privateer, John Paul Jones.<sup>15</sup> A wide canvas open to interpretation, the British radical tradition was sufficiently broad and malleable to appeal to those outside the established Labour party family, recruiting them to the cause, whilst averting threats from new groups like the CPGB and the expelled ILP after 1932, that, in the case of the CPGB, ‘had picked up the red flag’ and sought to establish themselves on the same territory.<sup>16</sup> Grounded in popular perceptions of the national past, the radical tradition swept up various folk histories, regional historical traditions, and memories of popular resistance already enshrined in the notion of anti-elite people’s histories propagated by the Chartists and taken up by the Liberal party in the later nineteenth-century.<sup>17</sup>

This was a fluid, formless tradition. During the nineteenth-century it evolved and matured; new historical figures were co-opted, or laid themselves open to appropriation. The *Labour Leader* queried, in particular, the view of Joseph Clayton, author of *The Leaders of the People*, that William FitzOsbert (‘Longbeard’), leader of a revolt against Richard the Lionheart, was ‘the first English agitator,’ but concluded that ‘whilst the claim of some of these “leaders of the people” may be open to question, yet, insofar as they fought for liberty, as they understood it, their lives were not spent in vain’.<sup>18</sup> Here the tradition mimicked different phases and research agendas within the academy, where a mid-nineteenth-century enthusiasm for the Medieval past gave way to a close scholarship relating to the Tudors at the end of the nineteenth-century. Late Victorian and Edwardian school textbooks typically concluded with the Tudor period.<sup>19</sup> Researching the radical past was an integral part of the

culture of autodidacticism and self-improvement that defined the terrain of radical culture. As a counter to established histories, groups like the Plebs League and the Workers' Educational Association created the vision for working-men and women recruited to the cause, by devising their own text books that drew together radical meditations on the established narrative.<sup>20</sup> Above all, the radical tradition was held together by the notion of exceptionalism, and the sense of a narrative of the elect, in which the history of Britain was portrayed as a struggle against royal, clerical and administrative absolutism.<sup>21</sup> More than just an institutional history of the party, the reverence accorded to the radical past allowed for the co-option of local traditions of dissent to the regional campaigning activity of Labour party members and branches. In Lancashire, activists continued to be animated and inspired by theatre, stories and song about Peterloo into the 1920s.<sup>22</sup> In many areas, local campaigners were energised by these legacies, leading some historians to account for the emergence of the Labour party and its victory over liberalism in terms of its abilities to channel these past struggles.<sup>23</sup> In the West Riding in particular, memories of Chartism and post-Napoleonic War radicalism were formative for the creation of a lived and expressive popular politics with roots deep in popular memory.<sup>24</sup>

Much of this narrative in its most vibrant performative form has become associated with the politics of the Communist Party of Great Britain popular front, between 1936 and 1940, where it featured in the orchestrated and revived tableaux and festivals of labour that accompanied the open air platform of the movement between 1936 and 1940.<sup>25</sup> However, prior to the 1930s, it was already firmly established within labourism and remained grounded in the previous long history of the British past and its progressive elements that made the accommodation between all strands of reformist opinion possible. This rich history drew together insurgents, rebels, ultra-radicals, aristocratic revanchists, mutineers, bohemian



authors, pirates, nonconformists of all stripes and religious iconoclasts, all of them holding places of reverence in British historical memory. Its icons and standard bearers were already familiar from previous currents of radicalism. Keir Hardie, thinking of the precursors of socialism, mentioned: ‘Wycliffe, John Ball, Gerrard Winstanley, Sir Thomas More, Robert Owen, Ernest Jones, Charles Kingsley, Frederic Denison Maurice, Frederic Harrison, Cardinal Manning and William Morris are the names that occur to me as being of the type I have in my mind’.<sup>26</sup> An analogous list of names and images appeared on the *Daily Herald* calendar for 1924 to celebrate the election of the first Labour government, additionally incorporating William Cobbett, the Chartist leader Ernest Jones, Thomas More, and Richard Parker, who ‘led the Nore mutineers when the fleet flew the Red flag’.<sup>27</sup> Throughout such narratives, heroes of popular protest, loosely construed, were more often embraced over Whig dynasts or constitutional reformers. The classical tradition that had proved such an emphatic component of Whiggery in particular was conspicuously eschewed.<sup>28</sup> In short, this was a highly mixed tradition, sufficiently broad to span the spectrum of left opinion and to encompass a range of stories from different perspectives about the national past, but not exclusive of pre-existing established and conventional histories.

The diffuse nature of this narrative held a broad appeal for the emergent elements that cohered around the Labour party platform. The reminiscences and memoirs of the first generation of labour pioneers bore testimony to the loose nature of this alliance. J. Bruce Glasier recalled of the mismatched forces swept together by the dockers’ strike of 1889 in London that ‘it was a strangely mixed assortment of Social Democrats, Socialist Leaguers, Fabians, Anarchists, Trade Union leaders, Land Restorers, Radicals and Tory Democrats.’ Robert Blatchford noted the same phenomenon in the early ILP in Manchester, describing recruits from ‘the ranks of Tories, Liberals, Radicals, Nonconformists, and Marxians. Many

of them brought with them sectarian or party shibboleths which they had not outgrown. There were Free-Traders, Home Rulers, Local Optionists, Republicans, Roman Catholics, Salvationists, church and chapel-goers, and believers in the cosmopolitan brotherhood of the workers'.<sup>29</sup> The first Labour cabinet of 1924 included amongst its ranks Fabians, members of the Independent Labour Party, ex-Tories and Liberals.<sup>30</sup> Famously, Anthony Crosland noted the twelve different strands of radical activism that characterised the forces framing socialist doctrine within the Labour party.<sup>31</sup> The radical past appropriated by the infant Labour Party created a joint history of struggle and achievement as one way of bridging these divides and by pooling a shared history of sacrifice and dedication. Indeed, at a time when the nascent party structures of the Labour party were incoherent and its identity inchoate, the role of strong hero figures in the past summoned up memories of 'gentlemen leaders' from previous movements of reform, and drew on Carlylean notions of strong men and charismatic tribunes.<sup>32</sup> Exercising a vigorous leadership that drew on the moral lessons of the past, Keir Hardie and others believed, was one way of pushing the party and the nation in the direction of reform by force of will alone at a time when the early ILP was organisationally weak and the following of the party both febrile and fissiparous.

Moreover, despite the strong English inflections of much of this narrative, and the domination of English figures of reform in the canon, the radical tradition appropriated by the Labour pioneers was a profoundly British one. In line with the broadly British origins of the Labour Party and the Scottish identity of many of its founders and early leaders, the history that underpinned its platform drew together themes that appealed widely across the four nations of the United Kingdom. As Ramsay MacDonald commented: 'The Independent Labour party is a product of British history and British conditions....It has gathered up its inheritance and has produced from it an historical movement of its own, political in its

method, free in its spirit, economic in its purpose'.<sup>33</sup> Paul Ward has reinforced this point, demonstrating that extra-English traditions of revolt found a complementary place within the history of reform in Britain and were given equal significance in the overarching narrative of popular struggle.<sup>34</sup> Scottish history inevitably loomed large. Early labour histories that drew on a sense of Scottishness were grounded in the work of the former Chartist, John McAdam, who, in the 1860s sought a patriotic history for Scotland that might rival that of Garibaldi's Italy. McAdam orchestrated the construction of the statue dedicated to William Wallace at Stirling that continued the Chartist view of Wallace as a people's martyr, betrayed by his aristocratic followers, but one 'who thrice ... did plant fair freedom's tree'.<sup>35</sup> This tradition persisted in the early Scottish Labour party. In the *Labour Leader's* May Day special edition for 1910, both 'Wallace at Stirling Bridge' and 'Bruce at Bannockburn' were invoked as 'embodiments of the restless spirit that in all ages seeks a freer life'.<sup>36</sup> John Bruce Glasier also elevated William Wallace amongst other luminaries to a company that prefigured 'the comings of socialism in man' through 'the scorching furnaces of revolution'.<sup>37</sup> More generally, Scottish radicals liked to place themselves in the traditions of the Covenantors. The sufferings of the Covenantors and chap book accounts of the life of William Wallace awoke in the young Keir Hardie the first stirrings of hatred 'for official tyranny and injustice'.<sup>38</sup> Hardie was also steeped in the culture of militant Scottish Jacobinism, recalling the transportation of Thomas Muir and the Jacobin martyrs during his tour of Australia in 1908.<sup>39</sup> Wales fostered its own distinctive tradition of revolt. The Independent Labour Party bard, David Thomas, became well-known for his popular histories of revolt in Wales, presented through the medium of Welsh and appealing to the 'national spirit of Wales'. Reflecting the eclectic antecedence of the radical tradition, these volumes were quite indiscriminate in their use of source material. Featuring accounts of Chartism, and the Llandidloes riots, they also made reference to Wat Tyler and to the English peasant revolts, whilst claiming the Chartist

leader, Ernest Jones, for Wales on the slenderest of evidence.<sup>40</sup> The *Labour Leader* commended these volumes for the attention of ‘all Welsh democrats whether in Wales, England, or far away Canada’.<sup>41</sup>

The notion of Thomas’ work as a parable of revolt with universalist implications is reflective of the reach of this tradition of radical insubordination across the settler colonies. These ideas transplanted themselves readily to the broader empire. Historically remote from kindred organisations in Europe, the British Labour party sought inspiration and example from Labo(u)r parties in the White settler colonies where the arc of development provided examples of precocious labour successes grounded in an allied British historical narrative of exile, dispossession and renewal.<sup>42</sup> They featured particularly as part of the transmission of an Anglophone platform of revolt that distinguished the politics of the White settler colonies throughout the ‘British World’.<sup>43</sup> In the settler dominions, politics remained rooted in a common pedigree of shared historical values and traditions. Historical memories of Chartist suffering, transportation and exile shaped the experience of the Australian Labor party much as they did that of their British counterparts. Edward Lane, brother of the émigré radical journalist William Lane, lamented that ‘unlike some I have no Chartist rebel ancestors or traditional progressive background’<sup>44</sup>. At the ‘jubilee of 1848’ in Melbourne in 1898, a former Chartist, Joseph Constantine, transported for his radical views, appeared on the platform as an example ‘of those who had fought for liberty 50 years ago’.<sup>45</sup> Poems by the Chartist leader Ernest Jones also featured in the New Zealand labour press.<sup>46</sup> In both New Zealand and the Australian colony of Victoria, significant legislation like the New Zealand Industrial Arbitration Act and attempted prohibition measures were hailed as continuing the spirit of Magna Carta that enshrined Anglophone traditions of revolt and implanted the principle of managed legislative change into colonial government.<sup>47</sup> Moreover the historian,

Lewis Behrens, who compiled the first single volume study of Winstanley and the Digger movement in 1898, had been active in land nationalisation and single tax campaigns in South Australia.<sup>48</sup> For Keir Hardie, Australia provided inspiration, example and a model for future success. In 1908 he predicted that it would be the first country in the world to be run in the true interests of the working-class.<sup>49</sup> Massacres and atrocities in the broader empire were also often interpreted through the prism of key events in the British radical past. Peterloo in particular remained an important point of reference for those seeking to convey the horror and injustice of colonial rule in regard to the Amritsar and Jamaica massacres, or the treatment of civilians in the Boer republics.<sup>50</sup> In such images, notions of a radical tradition moved between Britain and her colonies, reaffirmed the vitality of a lived radical past for British diaspora communities, and fed back into Labour's national narrative at home via anti-colonial and anti-imperial agendas.

The movement and ideas of nineteenth-century liberalism was one significant current that fed through into the popular history of the Labour party. Despite the party's attempts to deny its past links with liberalism, and to disassociate its own history from that of the nineteenth-century Liberal party in the 1920s, liberalism cast a long political shadow. In addition, the party's avowed aim of declaring itself as the sole viable occupant of the terrain of the left in Britain, of supplanting the Liberal party in the 1920s, and of detaching itself from its liberal lineages, meant that some aspects of the previous long history of Lib-Labbism were rewritten or re-imagined (sometimes in contention with the Liberal party) to create agendas where apostate liberals might embed themselves in the party.<sup>51</sup> Usually, the former Liberal tradition was seen as merely marking a staging-post on the road towards Labour party radicalism.<sup>52</sup> The residue of a liberal vision that celebrated the community of interests between the middle and working classes in a battle for English liberties was very marked in

later nineteenth-century radicalism, and influenced the choice of usable heroes. The *National Reformer* commented: ‘In this struggle nobles and people fought side by side. If England had her Wat Tyler, and her Jack Cade, her Hampden and her Cromwell, she had also her Lord William Russell and her Algernon Sidney.’<sup>53</sup> As Patrick Joyce has demonstrated, in the nineteenth-century local traditions of radicalism often merged with municipal improvement crusades to create civic visions of ‘democratic antiquarianism’ that became very marked in cities dominated by the Liberal party.<sup>54</sup> Especially noteworthy was the inheritance of religious Nonconformity and the descent from the struggles around the emergence of a civic Nonconformist identity and presence in Britain’s towns and cities. The mid-nineteenth-century veneration of Oliver Cromwell as an icon of Nonconformity left a lasting legacy in the statues and street furniture of northern cities, particularly in the statue of Cromwell outside Manchester Cathedral that challenged the Anglican ascendancy directly and became a site for protest and dissent.<sup>55</sup> Nonconformist divines and reformers like the Rev Paxton Hood remained great evangelists for Cromwell, preserving his reputation into the late nineteenth-century as the man who ‘made the English name loved by every lover of freedom and dreaded by every tyrant’.<sup>56</sup> Moreover there was a strong rhetorical inheritance of Cromwellianism to the infant Labour party from the radical and parliamentary reform movements of the 1850s and 1860s, where he was often invoked as a hammer of kings and privilege and as part of a tradition that ‘fostered the flowers of liberty growing up in every soil, watered by the blood of patriots and martyrs’. ‘Let them...put the spirit of Cromwell into their resolutions, and their practices and then they would find working-men would not oppose them!’ declaimed Ernest Jones in 1855.<sup>57</sup> In the nineteenth-century virtuous and committed radicals were frequently described as displaying the traits of Cromwell; the most vigorous of radical advocates were represented as incarnations of a ‘New Cromwell’.<sup>58</sup> During the debates around reform of the House of Lords in 1884 and 1909-10, such

memories of the Commonwealth and of Cromwell's abolition of the upper chamber in particular came strongly to the fore in Labour ranks, and extended to notions of cleansing the executive entirely.<sup>59</sup>

Although the Labour party was reluctant to cast itself directly as the heir to liberalism, for many observers, the links and overlaps were palpable. George Orwell commented on the lingering liberal presence amongst the rank and file of labour and early socialist politics, noting that amongst the typical campaigners was 'a prim little man with a white-collar job, usually a secret teetotaler and often with vegetarian leanings, with a history of Nonconformity behind him, and, above all, with a social position he has no intention of forfeiting. This last type is surprisingly common in socialist parties of every shade; it has perhaps been taken over *en bloc* from the old Liberal Party'.<sup>60</sup> The long-standing traditions surrounding Puritanism and Oliver Cromwell were a significant element in this transmission of ideas. Self-identification with the Puritan tradition for the left intelligentsia, both inside and outside the Labour Party, was a marked feature of the post-1919 years: 'for a moment, we might almost be re-living the convictions of the English Puritans of the 1630s' was Paul Addison's comment on the period. The Labour MP Alfred Salter, brought up in the Plymouth Brethren, was 'still essentially a Puritan' according to his biographer, Fenner Brockway and the 'sturdy backbone of Puritanism' underpinned the communal and town planning experiments at Letchworth and elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> For their opponents, these were 'Mahdis...men who proclaim themselves the only apostles of the new gospel'.<sup>62</sup>

Puritan and Commonwealth writers provided a near-canonical text for the activities of the first generation of labour pioneers. For many liberals, like Isaac Foot, with roots in West Country dissent, this was a lived tradition of tolerance and civic inclusion that he nurtured in

public through his stewardship of the Cromwell Association and passed on in his family to his son Michael, who, in turn, became a great exponent of all things Cromwellian. The sympathetic attitudes towards Puritanism prevailing within the Labour party, meant that the environment was conducive to Foot retaining his faith in Cromwell inside the party.<sup>63</sup> In addition the inheritance of Nonconformity shaped the attitudes of many labour pioneers who stressed the virtues of temperance, respectability and restraint to temper the feckless and immoral behaviour of the poor. Here the ancestral links with liberalism were strong.<sup>64</sup> For many rank and file members the Commonwealth tradition was an inheritance to be nurtured, building on past struggles for reform. One West Country Labour supporter wrote to *Teddy Ashton's Northern Weekly* in Bolton to remind its readers: 'Nonconformity has sought in the past, and is still seeking now in the present, to work hand in hand with the Labour Party in order to advance the great cause of reform, to safeguard the liberties of the nation, and to make possible in this great land of ours that great Christian democracy of highest ideals'.<sup>65</sup>

Recent research has highlighted not only the debt owed by the early Labour party to liberalism, but also the considerable inheritance acquired from popular Conservatism. Especially marked were the links with the Tory radical tradition. Emphasising the overlaps between the Conservative and Labour parties was often a mischievous point, made to stress the sometimes cautious and conservative nature of labourism. Nevertheless, middle-class and titled recruits to the cause of labour brought with them political traditions and histories that more properly belonged to Conservatism.<sup>66</sup> Martin Pugh has analysed these overlaps and distinguished a particular pedigree in the party that influenced ideas around patriotism, protectionism, imperialism, immigration and support for the monarchy within the Labour party. For figures like Robert Blatchford, such conservative notions were a counterweight to established views around temperance, respectability, thrift and self-help, deriving from the



Nonconformist liberal tradition. ILP socialists he dismissed as ‘lily-livered Methodists’.<sup>67</sup> Tory socialists like Henry Hyndman, who came from a patrician Marxisant tradition, very different to mainstream labourism, always believed that socialism would create a stronger Britain, more able to fulfil its imperial and global commitments.<sup>68</sup> These elements inevitably carried implications for the histories drawn on by labour members and supporters in the early days of the party. Alastair Bonnett has noted a marked tendency towards nostalgia across the British left, finding expression in concerns for vanishing communities, preserving the spirit of the nation, and seeking solace in a ‘Merrie England’ of consensus and a contented, prosperous peasantry bound together by good fellowship and social harmony.<sup>69</sup> As late as the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, memories of King Alfred lingered amongst radicals as a just monarch who ruled wisely and advocated a more equitable division of the day between work and leisure time.<sup>70</sup> Gentlemanly and chivalric figures, expressive of this paternalistic tradition, exercised a huge sway in the labour movement’s early years. At Halifax, John Lister of Shibden Hall, significant in early labour circles in the town, addressed Lilycroft Labour Club in a lecture on the subject of ‘Manningham in 1342’, that dwelt on the themes of feudal obligations, land transfer and manorial deeds of ownership.<sup>71</sup> In line with such themes, much of the radical tradition eschewed nameless, unsung heroes of the lower orders, and proved willing to embrace titled leaders, aristocrats, kings, knights and earls as potential standard bearers of popular revolt. Clayton’s *The Leaders of the People* included a list of two Archbishops of Canterbury, reforming bishops, two knights and Sir Thomas More alongside its cast of peasant rebels and Chartist leaders.<sup>72</sup> Tory radicals like Richard Oastler and John Fielden who fought for factory reform and against the new poor law of 1834 were held in particular reverence, retaining a faithful following within the ranks of labour in the West Riding into the twentieth-century. *The Labour Leader* paid tribute to the work of Richard Oastler in particular, applauding the existence of a statue to him in Bradford in 1913.<sup>73</sup> The

*Bradford Socialist Vanguard* put him in the company of other ‘humanity savers’... whose ‘public deeds and untiring works are engraved on the hearts of socialists’.<sup>74</sup>

Elsewhere in Lancashire and Yorkshire where a sentimental attachment to the old governing structures and county families persisted, radicals frequently embraced ‘gentlemen leader’ figures and patrician tribunes that stood in the tradition of Country Party backwoodsmen opposed to courtly corruption. Prominent reformers from Samuel Bamford through to the CPGB activist and later Labour MP, Margaret McCarthy, boasted about these privileged links and connections, frequently lamenting the pre-lapsarian splendour of their families, the loss of cherished gentry status, and the desire to right ancestral wrongs. McCarthy wrote: ‘My mother was a rebel. She married a foreigner – an Irishman and a Catholic, and she became a Socialist!...My mother’s father was a Catlow. The Catlow family reaches back to the Norman lords of Oswaldtwistle. As far back as the thirteenth century records reveal the existence of Catlows of Oswaldtwistle at the old Catlow Hall, the family home for centuries’.<sup>75</sup> McCarthy’s mother remembered conclaves of family members seeking to raise legal challenges to the ownership of these allegedly stolen and plundered family estates.<sup>76</sup> As Rohan McWilliam and Robert Poole have noted, such narratives of dispossession, internal exile and usurpation struck a responsive chord.<sup>77</sup> From the middle years of the nineteenth-century onwards, notions of titled returnee heirs, dispossessed claimants and exiled scions sustained a radical platform built, in part, around the notion of a restored golden age of feudal arcadias. Against this background a sentimental Jacobitism made a return. In Lancashire, where Jacobitism was often entangled in local memory and tradition with political dissent and irreverent disdain for the existing monarchical order, it remained a point of reference into the Chartist period.<sup>78</sup> Such sentiments were expressed particularly through the case of the Countess of Derwentwater in Northumberland, who

claimed descent from James Radcliffe, a notorious exiled Jacobite. In a movement that gained popular support from some prominent radicals, she occupied the site of the former Derwentwater stately home and squatted there with an army of supporters into the late 1860s, until evicted from the estate.<sup>79</sup>

The recourse to past histories and precedents by the founders of the Labour party was never without controversy. Nor did it create an uncontested usable view of the national past. There were significant tensions around the rival histories and outlooks injected into labourism by the conflicting traditions of liberalism and Toryism. Where preserved as part of lingering community traditions, the Conservative view of the past failed to find favour with those architects of the Labour party who set themselves against national chauvinism or who saw reference to past epochs of stability as a way of seeking solace from the ills of the present: The labour press vented some criticism of the ‘Merrie England’ pageant and tableaux frenzy of the Edwardian and interwar periods revered by some Conservative-orientated labourites, despite the sometimes radical associations they carried. *The Labour Leader* commented of the pageant at Warwick in 1906: ‘But not by parodies of olden pageants shall the festive be restored but when toil is banished from our midst, when care is remembered as a shadow of our past, then shall the people of England experience joy once more’.<sup>80</sup> Nor were all early advocates of labour, enthusiasts for the alleged Puritan ancestry of the party. Robert Blatchford was a particularly stern critic of Puritanism in all its guises, seeing many of his colleagues as retaining ‘Puritan prejudices’ and stating ‘though they are secularists in thought, they are Nonconformists in action’.<sup>81</sup> Subsequent years saw a rebellion against the hagiography surrounding Oliver Cromwell and his role in the Commonwealth, seen by some defenders as a fashion amongst historians to dismiss him as ‘a fanatic and a hypocrite’.<sup>82</sup> In line with some of the reservations expressed about him in the middle nineteenth-century, and

a critique of Nonconformity that depicted it as a venal, money-grubbing doctrine that incubated infant capitalist ideas and underpinned the worst aspects of the Liberal party, Cromwell became transformed into an embodiment of the emergent bourgeoisie.<sup>83</sup> Robert Blatchford described the Protestant tradition in Britain as a ‘synonym for mammon’ and listed Calvin, Luther and Cromwell as its main exponents. He exempted the Diggers and the Levellers from this critique, as ‘like the early Christians’, they ‘had all things in common’. E. Bedford Bax’s socialist writings for the SDF were consistent with this view; he saw the long term consequences of the Reformation as entirely retrograde in outlook, and looked for the true radicalism of the sixteenth-century in the communitarian Anabaptists of Munster.<sup>84</sup> Other critics depicted the Commonwealth as a simple state tyranny, whilst the hagiography surrounding Cromwell in the Labour party became difficult to maintain when it began to attract larger numbers of Irish Catholic voters in the 1920s.<sup>85</sup> There was a distinct sense here of an uncoupling from the Liberal Party and a narrative of fresh heroes culled from the Commonwealth period. Hampden, Pym, Elliot, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton all found their admirers over Cromwell for opposition to the executive, for commitment to the work of parliamentary representation, or for support for freedom of the press.<sup>86</sup>

The traditions articulated by the socialist strand within the labour coalition similarly expressed links with past precedent and antecedence in British historical memory. As K.O Morgan has commented, the inchoate nature of British socialism, and its lack of any definable programme (on the model of the Gotha Programme) that established the platforms of European social democratic parties, meant that British socialists were forced back into a search for past precedents, and an ill-defined language of solidarity. The sect-like behaviour of its adherents within the Labour party was often noted.<sup>87</sup> Drawing, especially, on key historical moments and individuals, reformers sought to reclaim memories, events and

individuals that might be used to justify a socialist outlook. In line with other early socialist ideas across Europe, early left thinking in Britain focussed on localist and decentralised perspectives, rather than statist agendas that might serve to underpin a narrative of social evolution.<sup>88</sup> In such notions there survived the germ of the idea that past precedent provided a premature vision for the future, unrealised in antique contexts. J. Allanson Picton wrote of the Commonwealth that: ‘it gave premature embodiment to ideas too advanced in time’.<sup>89</sup> From Henry Hyndman onwards, the socialist search for validation inspired *bien pensant* thinkers to comb through the British past in a close search for usable precedents. Hyndman was emphatic about the essential Englishness of such ideas. He wrote: ‘Tyler, Cade, Ball, Kett, read to me like sound English names, not a foreigner in the whole batch. They all held opinions which our capitalist-landlord House of Commons would denounce as direct plagiarism from foreign revolutionaries’.<sup>90</sup> Excavation of the radical inheritance underpinned the programme of Hyndman’s Social Democratic Federation (SDF), which saw itself as the continuation of Chartism. Bronterre O’Brien in particular was frequently invoked as a prophet of social democracy, whilst George Bernard Shaw wrote dismissively in the *Fabian Essays* of the SDF that it appeared ‘as if Chartism and Feargus O’Connor had risen from the dead’.<sup>91</sup> Particular emphasis was placed in early socialist thinking on communal, voluntarist and property-sharing precedents.<sup>92</sup> Inspiration was sought particularly in the history of the Levellers and in Gerrard Winstanley and the Digger movement. Relatively unknown in the mid-century period, John Gurney has emphasised the preservation of Winstanley’s memory by radicals and the extent to which his resurrected ideas caught the mood of the years before the Great War.<sup>93</sup> J. Morrison Davidson wrote ‘Winstanley was no Marxian or state socialist. He was a voluntary, rather than an involuntary co-operator...for all Commonwealth rulers are servants to, not lords and kings, over the people’.<sup>94</sup> The socialist writer Brougham Villers traced a direct line of inheritance from the peasant rebels of 1381 to the Levellers and the

Diggers, depicting them as representative of brief periods of socialism, although, ‘we never again, so far as I know, catch the true note of socialism till the days of Robert Owen’.<sup>95</sup> This new focus on the Levellers and the Diggers reflected the changing emphasis away from great leaders in the party, to the rank and file, usually seen as more militant and ‘socialistic’ than the Labour Party’s leadership and mistrustful of its elected officials.<sup>96</sup> Ben Tillet’s pamphlet, *Is the Parliamentary Party a Failure?*, captured something of this spirit in the years 1906-1914, articulating the spleen of local parties and campaigners, who believed that the Parliamentary Labour Party was overly compliant in the face of traditional Liberal agendas around temperance and the reform of the House of Lords.<sup>97</sup> Bottom up, rather than top down, this sentiment was expressive of the horizontal, rather than vertical, tensions between representatives and activists that became an increasing feature of the Labour party into the middle years of the twentieth century.

In the absence of an overtly usable socialist tradition, the main current within Labour party thinking was channelled through recourse to indigenous and pre-existing traditions of fraternity and a language of the common good that derived from British history and precedent and created an appeal that spanned the Labour coalition. Opposed to statist socialism, it was articulated strongly by Labour intellectuals, notably R.H. Tawney.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, as Peter Ackers and Alastair Reid argue, it drew on working-class associational life, paternalist radicalism, and residual nonconformity and contributed to Labour’s interwar platform of ‘useful citizens.’<sup>99</sup> Religious reformism at the end of the nineteenth-century rekindled the traditions of the British past to create a viable platform for social reform linked to labour values. In the period after 1889, Christian Socialism revived strongly in Britain. In his commentary on ‘labour traditions’, Eric Hobsbawm drew attention to the co-joined and intertwined nature of the labour past and religious observance, setting the history of British

radicalism somewhat apart from the more secular outlook of European socialism.<sup>100</sup> The Christian Socialist movement sought to recapture the pre-Reformation history of the Catholic Church. Detecting a long subterranean history of liberty encoded in Chaucer and Langland's 'Piers Plowman', and drawing on the historical writings of William Cobbett and Thomas Howitt, it looked backwards to the pre-Reformation clerisy and laity which it saw as intertwined with communities, as supportive of the poor and as opposed to usury and banking.<sup>101</sup> For many radicals, organisations like the guilds expressed this semi-mystical connection between religion, craftsmen and the people existing outside the confines of the state.<sup>102</sup> These were perceived ancestral communal freedoms, seemingly snuffed out at the Reformation and by the founding of a state church.<sup>103</sup> Morrisonian in its emphasis on the craft traditions of skilled workers, community, and the importance of spiritual values, the Christian Socialist tradition paved the way for the ethical socialism that proved formative for the early Labour party.<sup>104</sup> There was a bucolic sense of a traditional 'Merrie England' in such ideas, emerging in wider nostalgia for a time before: 'the poor monks and kindly fat friars and priors were hunted like hares by the British soldiers'.<sup>105</sup> For Christian Socialists, the papacy's spiritual power before the sixteenth-century had helped restrain the avaricious and carnal lusts of temporal rulers. Images of a Just Christ and a 'Medieval Communism' were very marked in these narratives that derived from the rise of Anglo-Catholicism and the emergence of a high Anglican righteous mission and pastoral crusade. The labour press asked whether 'Jesus was a revolutionary?' and described the early Christian sect as 'seditious rebels'.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, many early twentieth century Christian socialists saw their moral mission as akin to that of the founders and early teachers of Christianity in Britain. J. Bruce Glasier wrote of the early days of the socialist revival and the knot of evangelists who gathered around William Morris: 'I have to go back to the lives of...George Fox and William Tyndale and to the legends of the great Celtic teachers, St. Columba, St. Aidan (of Lindisfarne) and

the Venerable Bede to find a like instance of a teacher or leader enshrining himself so perfectly in the affections and imagination of his friends and disciples'.<sup>107</sup> Thomas More, a Catholic martyr who was beheaded for refusing to subscribe to Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy, typified the purity of conscience many Labourites strove for. Martyrdom was an ever-present feature of radical movements; there were accordingly strong affinities with More around the issues of conscience and asceticism defined and nurtured in such notions.

'Thomas More would give his life rather than tell a grave lie, has not his example a value beyond his immediate circumstances' wrote the labour author, James Leatham; he was an automatic 'friend of liberty' to others.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, More's *Utopia* channelled the pre-reformation monastic tradition of secluded, isolated monks standing between the people and their rulers and working in tandem with the community towards joint ends.<sup>109</sup> Brougham Villiers, saw the peasants' revolt of 1381 as typical of the socialism implicit in much Medieval thinking, and in the community aspects of popular protest embodied by peasant rebels and agitators.<sup>110</sup> The years before the Great War saw a revival of interest in peasant orators like John Ball and Wat Tyler; many of the first generation of founders of the Labour party encountered the peasant rebels initially in this religious context.<sup>111</sup> More successful and formative for the Labour platform than other competing traditions that fed into the party, Christian Socialism drew on memories of the Chartist churches that had 'anticipated' it, softened the outlines of the transformative social and economic programmes advocated by Labour, and united 'free-thinker, free-churchman, Anglican and agnostic ...in a common cause'.<sup>112</sup> More binding and inclusive than the direct socialist tradition, Christian socialism captured the sense of momentum, fraternity and the urgency about the need to moralise capitalism, that symbolised the labour platform at the beginning of the twentieth century.



Precedents from British history also remained important influences for those radicals that stood on the margins of the British reform tradition and on the sidelines of the Labour party itself. The notions of a gradualist social reform programme rooted in the cultural inheritance bequeathed by the Liberal party to the Labour platform, the image of respectability embraced by many Labour activists, and the party's command of a media agenda that countered Conservative slurs of anarchism and Bolshevism, increasingly turned the party in a more national and patriotic direction in the 1920s.<sup>113</sup> The steady evolution of this more mainstream Labour tradition, rooted in past precedent, pushed the violent and confrontational narratives of the radical platform to the margins where they were enthusiastically taken up by more peripheral groups and the exponents of pressure group politics, among them mass trespass campaigners, land rights advocates and squatting organisations. Advocating and exhorting physical force, these groups often sought to annex the confrontational aspects of radicalism that coloured the broad penumbra of anarchist and libertarian socialist thinking on the non-Labour left. Here the emphasis was on the rebellions and direct action tactics that produced the upheavals and periods of disorder characteristic of moments of profound constitutional change. This was sometimes seen as a way of breaking down images of British exceptionalism, as indigenising traditions of revolt in Britain, and as narrowing the gap between British and continental methods of opposing governments and royal rulers. The outlaw hero, Robin Hood, for example, conveyed a fantasy of revolt invoked from the reform bill crisis of the 1860s, to the irreverent verses of CPGB Oxford undergraduates in the 1920s.<sup>114</sup> In the 1890s, radical land occupations and the construction of communes existing outside the law were often validated by reference back to the Digger movement of the seventeenth-century. Gerrard Winstanley was quoted directly by the militant land reformer and squatting advocate, Stewart Grey.<sup>115</sup> In common with European anarchism, British anarchists celebrated moments of 'creative destruction', seeing many

British liberties extorted not by reasoned constitutional debate, but at the point of a sword or musket. The continental anarchist Wordsworth Donisthorpe wrote of British views on ‘direct action’: ‘It is wicked to break the laws we are told... What drivelling impertinence is this? Your very House of Commons was born in sedition. De Montford was a rebel, a traitor. Your glorious Magna Charta was illegally forced from the supreme authority. What of John Hampden who dared to refuse ship-money demanded by God’s anointed? What of the *Mayflower*?<sup>116</sup> The mutinies amongst the military and the formation of soldiers’ councils in the closing stages of the Great War also led to a renewed interest in John Lilburne and the Levellers as exemplars of direct action.<sup>117</sup> In the aftermath of the war and the Russian Revolution at a time when the ILP was becoming more divorced from the mainstream of the Labour party, ILP pamphlets were extremely strident in defence of the traditions of revolt that emerged in Russia in 1917, frequently invoking British precedents. Clement Bundock in his ILP pamphlet *Direct Action*, depicted the revolution as an outgrowth of the spirit of insurgency that produced the Magna Carta in 1215 and highlighted the affinities between the revolutionaries, Simon de Montford and the peasant rebels of 1381. He declared: ‘Our constitution has developed in days gone by at the point of the sword. Liberty in increasing instalments has been wrested from the ruling powers of the time by men at arms’.<sup>118</sup> For many radicals on the margins, fighting back as restitution for past wrongs was the central message to emerge from British historical precedent. A long-established tradition dating back to Samuel Bamford justified the acquisition of arms against oppression and ‘illegal’ drilling as one of the rights enshrined in Magna Carta.<sup>119</sup> British anarchists in particular cherished the memory of the ignominy of the Peterloo massacre.<sup>120</sup> Rooted in a notion of passive victimhood that showed the futility of non-resistance, anarchists frequently chose Peterloo as a representative moment of arbitrary tyranny that underlined the importance of plebeian opposition to state power.<sup>121</sup> In some cases the memories of participants and their

descendants validated the use of violence, demonstrating that members of the crowd were armed, and showed a willingness to physically engage with the yeomanry.<sup>122</sup> In the years before the Great War, Peterloo was often invoked by those opposed to conscription and to the extension of the state it implied. They advocated instead the formation of citizen's militias to defend the nation and the people, against the depredations of the boss class.<sup>123</sup> In the aftermath of the war, the memory of Peterloo became a terrible warning of the potential within the British state for 'many Peterloos' by a ruling class 'if anything, more bloodthirsty than their grandfathers were a hundred years ago'.<sup>124</sup> For many radicals the open spaces where moments of British history were made were often intertwined with memories of past atrocities, shame, exclusion, exile and reform politics. Places like the Lancashire moorlands and open space at Runnymede were sanctified by their contact with Puritanism, the Ironsides, or Magna Carta. They were haunted by memories of secret Chartist assemblies and conclaves 'driven to meet in quiet, out of the way places'.<sup>125</sup> These past histories of radical usage often provided an impetus to the reoccupation of radical spaces, defence of rights of access on moorlands, and campaigns around the rights of public meeting on hillsides and open ground.<sup>126</sup> For some radicals, such places were crucibles of English liberty itself. Solomon Partington, a Lancashire public rights of way campaigner, wrote of the sanctity conferred by Cromwell's presence before the battle of Preston on the disputed enclosed moorland above Bolton that it was a place 'once hallowed, and should be still, by all Lancashire Puritans'.<sup>127</sup>

Increasingly, the idea of Labour as a monolithic party structure has been superseded by a view attentive to the diverse and localised structures that featured in the labour tradition. In line with this scholarship, this article argues for the centrality of a view of the national past that provided a rationale for the party's rise. Scrutiny of radical precedent and the Labour party's links with it, modifies prevailing notions about the party's development and direction

in the early twentieth-century. Sometimes viewed as an organisation governed by an uneasy accommodation with existing political structures and forms, or as a vehicle for the unimaginative imposition of state planning and control, study of the party's relationship to the broader radical past reveals the diverse and pluralist tendencies, taken from British historical memory, that were formative for the party's early development and evolution. Not always capable of resolution, or sometimes directly cancelling each other out, these competing traditions contributed to Tawney's famous judgement on the 1929-31 government that the Labour party 'is hesitant in action because divided in mind. It does not achieve what it could, because it does not know what it wants'.<sup>128</sup> Weakening, as well as strengthening, Labour's broad appeal and effectiveness, both in government and in opposition, the radical tradition proved integral to the narrative the party designed for itself and to inspire its members in the period 1890-1931. The forward march of labour was always a consolatory myth that compensated for the failures of the Labour party in office. A story of righting historical wrongs with heroes and villains, it painted a large canvass of heroic moments, contrasting with the relative paucity of real legislative change at a practical level. This narrative reveals the ways in which the first generation of labour politicians attempted to portray themselves in their autobiographies as an elect of the gifted, selflessly pursuing a lonely moral mission – in these accounts their lives resonate with images from the past, notably those of the Levellers, Diggers or Cromwellian Roundheads. Most were proud of Chartist/radical antecedence amongst their forebears. The radical tradition in Britain that fed through into this narrative was a diffuse one and drew on Victorian liberal, Tory, Nonconformist, Christian Socialist precedents and lineages. It provided an alternative sense of the importance of the national past that contrasted strongly with more mainstream, elite, histories. Many of these notions were a standard feature of Labour party histories. Organisations like the WEA incubated and preserved this understanding of the British radical

past, passing it down to a new generation of enthusiasts. As George Orwell commented, these ideas tied in with a vigorous plebeian patriotism, expressive of his view that patriotism was also a preserve of the people, despised by middle-class radicals and intellectuals, and misunderstood by them as well.<sup>129</sup> Situated amongst the remnants of nineteenth-century liberal radicalism, this narrative served the party well at a time when it espoused a broad, non-doctrinaire platform. The story that the Labour party told itself about its history was a space where all the competing traditions of the founders came together during a period when the party was attempting to distance itself from the Liberal platform. Implanted in the very bones of the party it held sway at times of crisis or of defeat. The idea of a forward march of labour was used particularly to suggest an unstoppable momentum towards the progress of the working classes and its ultimate triumph that contrasted specifically with the fairly meagre record of the Labour Party in office in the 1920s and 1930s.

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<sup>1</sup> For the continuity debate see E. Biagini and A. Reid, 'Currents of Radicalism, 1850-1914' in *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914*. Ed. Biagini and Reid (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 1-19 and N. Kirk, *Change, Continuity and Class: Labour in British Society, 1850-1920* (Manchester, 1998), pp. 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> J. Belchem, *Popular Radicalism in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: 1996), chs, 6-8, R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, 1998), ch. 5 and J. Vernon, 'Notes Towards an Introduction', in *Re-reading the Constitution: New Narratives in the Political History of England's Long Nineteenth-Century*. Ed. J. Vernon (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 1-21.

<sup>3</sup> H. M. Drucker, *Doctrine and Ethos in the Labour Party* (London, 1979), pp. 24-43; Lawrence Black, "'What Kind of People are You?'" Labour, the People and the New Political History', in *Interpreting the Labour Party*. Eds. J. Callaghan, S. Fielding and S. Ludlam (Manchester, 2003), pp. 23-38, L. Beers, *Your Britain: Media and the Making of the Labour Party* (New York, 2010), pp. 83-88 and A. Taylor 'The old Chartist: radical veterans on the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century platform, *History*, xcv (2010), 458-476.

<sup>4</sup> Tony Benn saw himself very much as the custodian of this tradition in the Labour Party where, in his view, it stood for a kind of 'positive dissent'; see T. Benn, *Fighting Back: Speaking out for Socialism in the Eighties* (London, 1988), pp. 34-45.

<sup>5</sup> See J. Lawrence, *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914* (Cambridge, 1998), ch. 9, P. Readman, *Land and Nation in England: Patriotism, National Identity and the Politics of Land, 1880-1914* (Woodbridge, 2008), ch. 8,

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E. Robinson, *History, Heritage and Tradition in Contemporary British Politics: Past Politics and Present Histories* (Manchester, 2012), chs 2 and 4, and C.V.J. Griffiths, 'History and the Labour Party', in *Classes, Cultures and Politics: Essays on British History*. Eds, C.V.J. Griffiths, J. J. Nott and W. Whyte (Oxford, 2011), pp. 292-301.

<sup>6</sup> J. Lawrence, 'Labour- the Myths it has Lived By', in *Labour's First Century*. Ed. D. Tanner, P. Thane and N. Tiratsoo (Cambridge, 2000). pp. 341-366.

<sup>7</sup> *The British Labour Party: Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders*. Ed Herbert Tracey (3 vols, London, 1948), iii, p. 221. For George Lomax, see P.T. Winstill, *Temperance Standard Bearers of the Nineteenth-Century* (2 vols, Manchester, 1897), ii, p. 183.

<sup>8</sup> *The Clarion*, 16 Jan. 1897, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> See for arguments for the commemoration of 1848, W.T. Stead, *Review of Reviews*, xvii (1898), pp. 348-9 and on the Labour party and democratisation, A. Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (London, 2015 edn.), p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> D.E. Martin, 'Ideology and Composition', in *The First Labour Party, 1906-1914*. Ed. K.D. Brown (London, 1985), pp. 17-37.

<sup>11</sup> F. Williams, *Fifty Years' March: The Rise of the Labour Party* (London, 1950), p. 111.

<sup>12</sup> See the pamphlet designed for a young audience, *The Struggle for Democracy: Changing Britain, No. 2* (Birmingham, 1944), pp. 34-5.

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<sup>13</sup> *The Blast*, 5 Feb. 1916, p. 2 and Trotsky's comments on the 'two traditions' of the seventeenth-century revolution and Chartism that contributed to the British radical outlook: in L. Trotsky, *Where is Britain Going?* (London, 1926), pp. 117-31.

<sup>14</sup> R. Samuel, *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain* (London, 1998), pp. 272-6. For Samuel's analysis of the importance of mythic origins in politics and culture, see R. Samuel and P. Thompson, 'Introduction', in *The Myths We Live By*. Eds R. Samuel and P. Thompson (London, 1990), pp. 1-22.

<sup>15</sup> *The Labour Magazine*, 1 Dec. 1925, pp. 372-4 and for the obituary of Paul Campbell, the *Labour Leader*, 21 Nov. 1918, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> J. Clayton, *The Rise and Decline of Socialism in Great Britain, 1884-1924* (London, 1926), p. 227. For the ILP after 1931 see K. Laybourn, 'The Independent Labour Party and the Second Labour Government c. 1929-31: The Move towards Revolutionary Change', in *Britain's Second Labour Government, 1929-31: A Reappraisal*. Eds J. Shepherd, J. Davis and C. Wrigley (Manchester, 2011), pp. 100-116 and for the CPGB and its view of the past, P. Bounds, *Orwell and Marxism: The Political and Cultural Thinking of George Orwell* (London, 2016), pp. 41-50.

<sup>17</sup> See for radical 'people's histories', W.G. Wilkins, *The Penny History of the Poor People of England: the Rise and Progress of Poverty in England from the Norman Conquest to Modern Times* (London, 1911), pp. 5-6 and M. Roberts, 'Chartism, commemoration and the cult of the radical hero c.1770 - c.1840', *Labour History Review*, lxxviii (2013), 3-32.



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<sup>18</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 6 Jan. 1911, p. 3. For William FitzOsbert, see J. Clayton, *Leaders of the People: Studies in Democratic History* (London, 1910), pp. 69-77.

<sup>19</sup> See on this chronology A. Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England', in *Englishness, Politics and Culture, 1880-1920*. Ed. R. Colls and P. Dodd (London, 2014), pp. 93-4, J.W. Burrow, *A Liberal Descent* (Cambridge, 1981) and R. Samuel, 'British Marxist Historians', *New Left Review*, no. 120 (March-April, 1980), 28.

<sup>20</sup> See H. de B. Gibbins, *English Social Reformers* (London, 1892), pp. 9-19 and R.M. Postgate, *A Short History of the British Workers* (London, 1926), pp. 11-19. For a review of Postgate, see *Freedom*, 1 Oct. 1926, p. 39. On labour tutelage and the Oxford University Extension Movement, see L. Goldman, *Dons and Workers: Oxford and Adult Education since 1850* (Oxford, 1995), ch. 8.

<sup>21</sup> A. Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness* (Manchester, 2007), p. 25.

<sup>22</sup> See B. Hooper, *Mary Stocks 1891-1975: An Uncommonplace Life* (London, 1996), pp. 58-9 and *The Labour Leader*, 20 July 1906, p. 136.

<sup>23</sup> M. Worley, 'Building the party: Labour activism in five British constituencies between the wars', *Labour History Review*, lxx (2005), 73-95. Mary Hilson, in her comparative study of the development of Labour traditions in Britain and Sweden, stresses the localist dimension to the evolution of the British Labour party, as opposed to the statism of Swedish social

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democracy: see M. Hilson, *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective: Britain and Sweden, 1890-1920* (Lund, 2006), p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> The importance of pre-existing traditions of radicalism for the emergence of the Independent Labour Party are emphasised in D. Howell, *British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, 1888-1906* (Manchester, 1983), especially ch. 8 and in F.W. Jowett, *What Made Me a Socialist*, (London, n.d.), pp. 8-9. In The West Riding, Ben Turner's familial links with Chartism and Luddism demonstrated the depth and community-nature of this tradition: see B. Turner, *About Myself* (London, 1930), pp. 20, 28-9 and 66.

<sup>25</sup> See M Wallis, 'Heirs to the Pageant: Mass Spectacle and the Popular Front', in *A Weapon in the Struggle: The Cultural History of the British Communist Party*. Ed. A. Croft (London, 1998), pp. 48-68.

<sup>26</sup> J. Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Slavery* (London, 1907), p. 28.

<sup>27</sup> *Daily Herald*, 1 Jan. 1924, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> See for the classical historical tradition within liberalism, E.F. Biagini, 'Liberalism and Direct Democracy: John Stuart Mill and the Model of Ancient Athens', in *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865-1931*. Ed. E.F. Biagini (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 21-44.

<sup>29</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 21 Nov. 1918, p. 2, R. Blatchford, *My Eighty Years* (London, 1931), p. 199 and L. Thompson, *Robert Blatchford: Portrait of an Englishman* (London, 1951), p. 89.

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<sup>30</sup> J. Shepherd and K. Laybourn, *Britain's First Labour Government* (London, 2006), p. 65 and Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party*, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> A. Crosland, *The Future of Socialism* (London, 2006 [1956]), pp. 51-59.

<sup>32</sup> See K. O. Morgan, *Labour People, Leaders and Lieutenants: Hardie to Kinnock* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 1-19, for Carlyle see, B. Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil War and the Passions of Posterity* (London, 2001), ch. 10 and *Keir Hardie: His Writings and Speeches from 1888-1915*. Ed. E. Hughes (Glasgow: Forward Publishing, 1915), p. 138.

<sup>33</sup> J. Ramsay MacDonald, *Parliament and Revolution* (Manchester, 1919), pp. 102-3.

<sup>34</sup> P. Ward, *Red Flag and Union Jack: Englishness, Patriotism and the British Left, 1880-1924* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 44-48.

<sup>35</sup> *The Chartist Circular*, 22 Aug. 1840, p. 196, G.J. Harney in a speech reported in the *Northern Star*, 26 Feb. 1848, p. 5 and the *Autobiography of John McAdam (1806-1883)*. Ed. J. Fyfe (Edinburgh, 1980), pp. 79-81.

<sup>36</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 29 Apr. 1910, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 19 Oct. 1906, p. 337 and for Wallace as an inspiration in Glasier's conversion to socialism, *ibid*, 10 May 1912, p. 299.

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<sup>38</sup> *Keir Hardie*. Ed. Hughes, pp. 137-142 and a description of Keir Hardie's favourite reading in W.T. Stead, 'The Labour party and the books that helped to make it', *Review of Reviews*, xxxiii (1906), 570-71.

<sup>39</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 20 March 1908, p. 180.

<sup>40</sup> D. Thomas, *Y Werin Theyrnas (The Common People and their Kingdom)* (Caernarfon, 1910), pp. 74-5 and *The Labour Leader*, 12 Sept. 1912, p. 594

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 6 May 1910, p. 275.

<sup>42</sup> See J. Bennett, *Rats and Revolutionaries: The Labour Movement in Australia and New Zealand* (Otago, 2004), pp. 80-82 and N. Kirk, *Labour and the Politics of Empire: Britain and Australia, 1900 to the Present* (Manchester, 2011), ch. 1.

<sup>43</sup> R. Waterhouse, "'A Bastard Offspring of Tyranny under the Guise of Liberty": Liberty and Representative Government in Australia, 1788-1901', in *Exclusionary Empire: English Liberty Overseas, 1600-1900*. Ed. J.P. Greene (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 220-39 and M. Sawyer, 'Pacemakers for the World?', in *Elections Full, Free and Fair*. Ed. M. Sawyer, (Annandale, 2001), pp.1-27.

<sup>44</sup> E. H. Lane, *Dawn to Dusk: Reminiscences of a Rebel* (Brisbane, 1939), p. 26.

<sup>45</sup> 'The Jubilee of Chartism', *The Age*, 11 July 1898, p. 6.

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<sup>46</sup> *The Commonwealth* (Wellington) 1 March 1909, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> *The Reformers' Year Book: 1903* (London, 1903), p. 68 and Brian T. Rhule, 'Temples of Bacchus: Temperance and Protestant Morality in Victoria, 1837-1908' (La Trobe University, Ph.D thesis, 2015), p. 145.

<sup>48</sup> J. Gurney, *Gerrard Winstanley: The Digger's Life and Legacy* (London, 2013), p. 116

<sup>49</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 10 April, 1908, p. 228.

<sup>50</sup> *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 10 Sept. 1876, p. 4, C. Bradlaugh, *Toryism from 1770-1879* (London, 1880), p. 5 and A. Taylor, "'Some Little or Contemptible War upon Her Hands': *Reynolds' Newspaper and Empire*" in *G.W.M. Reynolds, Nineteenth-Century Fiction, Politics and the Press*. Ed. A. Humpherys and L. James (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 99-119.

<sup>51</sup> As late as the 1980s, the Social Democratic Party spoke in terms of a 'progressive tradition' to be found across party lines, not confined simply to one. See D. Marquand, 'Phoenix from the Ashes: Revising the Progressive Tradition', in *The Radical Challenge: The Response of Social Democracy*. Ed. Alastair Kilmarnock (London, 1987), pp. 20-22 and M. Hilson and J. Melling, 'Public gifts and political identities: Sir Richard Acland, Common Wealth and the moral politics of land ownership in the 1940s; *Twentieth-Century British History*, xi (2000), 160-61.

<sup>52</sup> A. MacCallum Scott, 'The flight from the Liberal Party', *The Labour Magazine*, 1 March 1925, 484-6.

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<sup>53</sup> *National Reformer*, 8 Nov. 1874, p. 298.

<sup>54</sup> P. Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (London, 2003), pp. 135-6. See for an example of this, the plaque erected to Samuel Bamford in Middleton by the local council: *Teddy Ashton's Northern Weekly*, 15 Dec. 1906, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> The statue was commissioned and erected by the Nonconformist Goadsby family and marked the site of the first skirmish of the English Civil War; see the *Manchester City News*, 24 Feb. 1923, p. 7 and S. Cunniff and T. Wyke, 'Memorialising its hero: liberal Manchester's statue of Oliver Cromwell', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester*, lxxxix (2012), 179-206.

<sup>56</sup> Rev Paxton Hood, *The Instincts of Liberalism: A Lecture delivered before the Liberal Club of Hulme* (Manchester, 1879), pp. 21-2.

<sup>57</sup> See a speech by George Mantle in Trafalgar Square in 1867 in *The Bee-Hive*, 20 Apr. 1867, p. 1 and for Ernest Jones' remarks, the *People's Paper*, 24 March 1855, p. 4. Songs about Cromwell appeared in many radical publications; see William Kennedy, 'Cromwell at Marston Moor' in the *International Herald*, 3 Aug. 1872, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> John Markham, the veteran Leicester co-operator and reformer was compared to Cromwell; in the 1870s the Tichborne Claimant was described as a 'new Cromwell'; see *The Midland Workman*, 9 Nov. 1861, p. 9 and the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 3 June 1875, p. 6.

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<sup>59</sup> See the *People's Paper*, 20 Jan. 1855, p. 1, Henry Hyndman in the *National Reformer*, 10 Aug. 1884, pp. 98-9, Victor Grayson in *The Worker*, 11 Jan. 1908, p. 11 and A. Chadwick, *Augmenting Democracy: Political Movements and Constitutional Reform during the Rise of Labour, 1900-1924* (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 51-63.

<sup>60</sup> G. Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London, 1979 [1937]), p. 152.

<sup>61</sup> P. Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War* (London, 1975), p. 154, F. Brockway, *Bermondsey Boy: The Life of Alfred Salter* (London, 1949), p. 7, D. Macfadyen, *Sir Ebenezer Howard and the Town Planning Movement* (Manchester, 1933 [1970]), p. 38 and Richard Heath, 'The Puritan ideal', *Seed-Time*, 1 April 1891, pp. 8-12.

<sup>62</sup> *Reynolds' Newspaper*, 21 May 1893, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> K.O. Morgan, *Michael Foot: A Life* (London, 2007), pp. 7-10 and M. Foot, *Debts of Honour* (London, 1980), pp. 13 and 19-22.

<sup>64</sup> Samuel, *Island Stories*, pp. 276-322.

<sup>65</sup> *Teddy Ashton's Northern Weekly*, 20 Oct. 1906, p. 12

<sup>66</sup> For Labour as conservative in contrast to the Tory party's radicalism, see G. Sparrow, *How to Become an MP* (London, 1959), pp. 41-4. Recruits to the Labour party from other political traditions have received little attention, but see C.A. Cline, *Recruits to Labour: The British*

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*Labour Party, 1914-1931* (New York, 1963), chs. 1-2 and B. Pimlott, *Hugh Dalton* (London, 1985), chs. 2-4..

<sup>67</sup> M. Pugh, *Speak for Britain: A Hew History of the Labour Party* (London, 2010), pp. 8-13 and 18, also see G. McClymont, 'The Cultural Politics of Tory Socialism: *The Clarion* in the Labour Movement during the 1890', in *Classes, Cultures and Politics*. Eds, Griffiths, Nott and Whyte, pp. 211-226. Recent 'blue labour' theorists have also highlighted the importance of conservative doctrine in the labour tradition; see M. Glasman, 'The Good Society, Catholic Social Thought and the Politics of the Common Good', in *Blue Labour: Forging a Common Good*. Ed. I. Geary and A. Pabst (London, 2015), pp. 13-27.

<sup>68</sup> Ward, *Red Flag and Union Jack*, p. 71.

<sup>69</sup> A. Bonnett, *Left in the Past: Radicalism and the Politics of Nostalgia* (London, 2010), pp. 59-83.

<sup>70</sup> *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 5 July 1884, p. 3 and for the Chartist view of Alfred as 'the father-king of England', see *The Cabinet*, 1 Jan. 1859, p. 7. For the radical vision of Alfred more generally, see J. Parker, 'England's Darling': *The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great* (Manchester, 2007), ch. 4.

<sup>71</sup> *The Labour Journal*, 18 Nov. 1892, p. 3. See for John Lister, Patricia A. Dawson, 'The Halifax Independent Labour Movement: Labour and Liberalism 1890-1914' in '*The Rising Sun of Socialism*': *The Independent Labour Party in the Textile District of the West Riding of*



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*Yorkshire between 1890 and 1914*. Ed. Keith Laybourn and David James (Bradford, 1991), pp. 45-74.

<sup>72</sup> Clayton, *Leaders of the People*, vii.

<sup>73</sup> *Labour Leader*, 24 Apr. 1913, p. 14. A plaque in memory of Oastler was also unveiled at the opening of the Oastler Memorial Playground in Huddersfield in 1926. See the reference to it in by Arthur Gardiner, a founder of the Huddersfield Socialist Party in 1910, in Gardiner, *The Industrial Revolution and Child Labour* (Huddersfield, 1948), p. 43

<sup>74</sup> *Bradford Socialist Vanguard*, 1 Sept. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> M. McCarthy, *Generation in Revolt* (London, 1953). p. 1 and P. Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 71.

<sup>76</sup> McCarthy, *Generation in Revolt*, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> R. Poole, 'French revolution or peasants' revolt: petitioners and rebels in England from the Blanketeers to the Chartists', *Labour History Review*, lxxiv (2009), 18 and R. McWilliam, *The Tichborne Claimant: A Victorian Sensation* (London, 2007), ch. 12.

<sup>78</sup> K. Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848* (Manchester, 2016), pp. 38-9.

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<sup>79</sup> *Jottings of Original Matter from the Diary of Amelia, Countess and Heiress of Derwentwater* (Blaydon, 1869), vii-viii.

<sup>80</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 29 June 1906, p. 93. The paper also mocked the pageant at Ipswich the following year: see *ibid*, 19 July 1907, p. 50 and for reactions to the tableaux of labour at the Crystal Palace which featured the re-enactment of a Luddite riot, *The London News*, 1 Sept. 1934, p. 5. Many seemingly innocent Edwardian and inter-war pageants contained contentious messages: that at Scarborough in 1912 referred to the imprisonment of the Quaker George Fox in Scarborough Castle. See *Scarborough Historical Pageant and Play, Scarborough Castle Yard, June 9th to 13th, 1912: Book of Words* (Scarborough, 1912), p. 59.

<sup>81</sup> *The Clarion*, 29 June 1906, p. 5,

<sup>82</sup> W.M. Thompson. *Democratic Readings from the World's Great Teachers: Reprinted from Reynolds' Newspaper* (London, 1896), p. 135.

<sup>83</sup> Worden, *Roundhead Reputations*, pp. 332-3.

<sup>84</sup> *The Clarion*, 23 March 1906, p. 2 and E. Bedford Bax, *Justice*, 26 Oct. 1901, p. 4. Henry Hyndman made a similar point in H. Hyndman, *The Historical Basis of Socialism in England* (London, 1883), p. 14.

<sup>85</sup> Richard Cobden described Cromwell as 'no democrat'. See *The Letters of Richard Cobden*. Ed. A. Howe and S. Morgan (4 vols, Oxford, 2015), iv, p. 501. Ernest Jones blamed Cromwell for the rule of the major generals which he saw as the origins of the modern

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policing system; see the *People's Paper*, 29 Aug. 1857, p. 4. Gladstone was described as 'Cromwellian' for his coercion policy in Ireland: see *The Radical*, 12 Feb. 1881, p. 7. For the increasing Irish element in Labour party support from the 1920s, see Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party*, p. 308.

<sup>86</sup> P. Karsten, *Patriot-Heroes in England and America: Political Symbolism and Changing Values over Three Centuries* (Madison, Wisc., 1978), ch. 6 and Clayton, *Leaders of the People*, pp. 245-273. These were long-standing tropes. For Milton as an ascetic and father of press freedoms see the *Vegetarian Advocate* (2 vols., 1848), i, p. 85, and the *People's Paper*, 9 Apr. 1853, p. 4, for Elliot and Pym as part of a generic struggle against executive tyranny, the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 12 Apr. 1884, p. 4, and for Marvell as the model for parliamentary representation in the counties, P Pickering, 'A Wider Field in a New Country: Chartism in Colonial Australia', in *Elections: Full, Free and Fair*. Ed. Sawyer, p. 33 and W. Kent, *John Burns: Labour's Lost Leader* (London, 1950), p. 56.

<sup>87</sup> K.O. Morgan, *Ages of Reform: Dawns and Downfalls of the British Left* (London, 2011), pp. 130-32.

<sup>88</sup> N. Deakin and J. D. Smith, 'Labour, Charity and Voluntary Action: The Myth of Hostility' in *The Ages of Voluntarism: How we Got to the Big Society*. Eds. M. Hilton and J. McKay (Oxford, 2011), pp. 69-93.

<sup>89</sup> *National Reformer*, 20 Sept. 1885, p. 185.

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in D. Sandbrook, 'Family, faith and flag', *New Statesman*, 4 Apr 2011, p. 24.

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<sup>91</sup> *Justice*, 7 Sept. 1895, p. 1, 1 May 1901, p. 1 and G.B. Shaw, ‘Transition’, in *Fabian Essays in Socialism*. Ed. G.B. Shaw (London, 1889), p. 186.

<sup>92</sup> L. Barrow and I. Bullock, *Democratic Ideas and the British Labour Movement, 1880-1914* (Cambridge, 1996), ch. 1.

<sup>93</sup> Gurney, *Gerrard Winstanley*, pp. 116-122. The term ‘leveller’ survived into the mid-nineteenth-century, but without reference to John Lilburne and the Levellers: see the *English Chartist Circular*, i (1841), p. 55 and *The Radical*, 26 Feb. 1881, p. 7.

<sup>94</sup> J. Morrison Davidson, *The Wisdom of Winstanley the Digger: Being an Outline of the Kingdom of God on Earth* (London, 1904), p. 18.

<sup>95</sup> Brougham Villiers, *The Socialist Movement in England* (London, 1908), p. 26.

<sup>96</sup> D. Tanner, ‘Labour and its Membership’, in *Labour’s First Century*. Ed. Tanner *et al*, pp. 248-273.

<sup>97</sup> B. Tillett, *Is the Parliamentary Labour Party a Failure?* (London, 1908), p. 15.

<sup>98</sup> L. Goldman, *The Life of R.H. Tawney: Socialism and History* (London, 2013), pp. 299-305.

<sup>99</sup> P. Ackers and A.J. Reid, ‘Other Worlds of Labour: Liberal Pluralism in Twentieth Century British Labour History’, in *Alternatives to State Socialism in Britain: Other Worlds of*

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*Labour in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Ackers and Reid (London, 2016), pp. 1-27 and R.

McKibbin, *Parties and People: England 1914-1951* (Oxford, 2010), p. 72.

<sup>100</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London, 1964), pp. 375-6.

<sup>101</sup> See *The Radical*, 2 July 1881, p. 2, W.D.P. Bliss, *A Handbook of Socialism* (London, 1895), p. 50, De B. Gibbins, *English Social Reformers*, pp. 9-15, T.D. Benson, *A Socialist's View of the Reformation* (Manchester, 1913), p. 2, A Burns, 'Beyond the red vicar: christian socialism and community in Thaxted, Essex, c. 1910-1984', *History Workshop Journal*, lxxv (2013), 101-124 and S.J.D. Green, *The Passing of Protestant England: Secularisation and Social Change, 1920-1960* (Cambridge, 2010), chs. 2 and 4.

<sup>102</sup> P. Snowden, *Socialism and Syndicalism* (London, 1913), p. 46 and N. Thompson, *Political Economy and the Labour Party: The Economics of Democratic Socialism, 1884-1995* (London, 1996), chs 3 and 5.

<sup>103</sup> See D. Paz, 'The Chartists and the English reformation', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, xc (2014), 25-47.

<sup>105</sup> R. Blatchford, *Chetham College: The Oldest Free Library in the World* (Boston, 1910), p. 18.

<sup>106</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 9 Oct. 1913, p. 4 and B. Jarrett, *Medieval Socialism* (London, 1913 [1935], pp. 29-41..

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<sup>107</sup> J. Bruce Glasier, *William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement* (London., 1921), p. 42

<sup>108</sup> J. Leatham, *Sir Thomas More: First English Collectivist* (Turriff., 1924), pp. 81-2, *The Social Democrat*, 15 March 1904, p. 155 and Clayton, *Leaders of the People*, pp. 193-213.

<sup>109</sup> Thompson, *Democratic Readings from the World's Great Teachers*, pp. 125-6.

<sup>110</sup> Villiers, *The Socialist Movement in England*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>111</sup> *The Labour Leader*, 29 Apr, 1910, p. 3 November 1911, p. 700, and 7 June 1912, p. 370.

<sup>112</sup> Clayton, *The Rise and Decline of Socialism in Great Britain*, p. 53.

<sup>113</sup> Beers, *Your Britain*, ch. 5 and C. Waters, *British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914* (Manchester, 1990), pp. 27-42.

<sup>114</sup> *National Reformer*, 6 Jan. 1867, pp. 6-7 and *The Free Oxford*, 10 Dec. 1921, p. 18.

<sup>115</sup> *The New Order*, 1 Dec. 1897, p. 94 and Gurney, *Gerrard Winstanley*, pp. 113-15. See for this tradition, A. Howkins, 'From Diggers to Dongas: The land in English radicalism, 1649-2000', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 54 (2002), 1-25.

<sup>116</sup> *Freedom*, 1 March 1925, p. 15.

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<sup>117</sup> Worden, *Roundhead Reputations*, p. 321.

<sup>118</sup> C.J. Bundock, *Direct Action and the Constitution* (London, 1920), pp. 5-6 and pp. 7-9. My thanks to John Enderby for this reference.

<sup>119</sup> Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place*, p. 229.

<sup>120</sup> *Freedom*, 1 Sept. 1889, pp. 41-42.

<sup>121</sup> See for the classic statement of a passive, defenceless crowd, ridden down by an inebriated yeomanry, T. Quelch, *The Crimes of Liberalism and Toryism* (London, 1910), p. 10.

<sup>122</sup> For the reminiscences of Robert Cooper who remembered the inscribed stick passed down from his father he used to defend himself against the yeomanry, the *National Reformer*, 14 June 1868, pp. 373-4. Other radicals counselled against provocations by the military at mass meetings that might incite another Peterloo: see *The English Chartist Circular*, ii (1842), p. 109 and *The Radical*, 11 Dec. 1880, p. 3.

<sup>123</sup> A.A. Watts, 'Socialism against militarism', *The British Socialist*, 15 July 1913, p. 300.

<sup>124</sup> *The Call*, 14 Aug. 1919, p. 1.

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<sup>125</sup> See the radical picnic at Hardcastle Crag, Yorkshire, in *Teddy Ashton's Northern Weekly*, 7 May 1904, p. 4.

<sup>126</sup> See the speech by Ralph Curzon about Runnymede and English liberties in the *People's Paper*, 3 July 1852, p. 7. Also see for memories of gatherings of roundheads, strikers and Chartists at Whinney Hill near Accrington, McCarthy, *Generation in Revolt*, pp. 2-3, 8, and 9-10.

<sup>127</sup> S. Partington, *Truth Further Vindicated, Winter Hill Rights of Way Dispute: New Light on Bolton History* (Bolton, 1899), p. 23.

<sup>128</sup> R.H. Tawney, *The Attack and Other Papers* (London, 1953 [1981]), p. 55.

<sup>129</sup> *The Complete Works of George Orwell*. Ed. P. Davidson (20 vols, London, 1998), xviii, p. 62.