Nigel Scotland

Dr Nigel Scotland is Field Chair of Religious Studies at Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education. His publications include Charismatics and the Next Millenium *(London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995).*

Introduction to Chartism

It should not surprise us that Chartism has attracted so much interest from social and political historians for there is no other period, with the possible exception of the years surrounding the General Strike of 1926, when there was so much working-class action and excitement. Chartism had its origins in a 'WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION' which was formed in 1836. William Lovett, who became its first secretary, published in the following year a pamphlet entitled *The Rotten House of Commons*. In it he showed that out of 6,023,752 adult males, only 839,519 had the vote. Helped by Daniel O'Connell and a few radical MPs, Lovett's Association drew up *The People's Charter*. This was intended to be the basis of a Bill which would be put to Parliament. It contained six proposals: universal suffrage, payment for Members of Parliament, secret ballot, the abolition of property qualifications for MPs, annual parliaments and equal electoral districts.

Chartism, as it became known, gathered rapid momentum and climaxed in a National Convention which was held in Palace Yard, Westminster, in the Spring of 1839. A 'monster' petition containing hundreds of thousands of signatures in support of the Charter was handed in to Parliament. The Charter campaign was kept up during the so-called 'hungry forties'. A third petition was made in 1848, the year of the revolutions, but failed to persuade those in authority to take any action. After this point Chartism began to lose momentum and the leaders who had formed the movement became discouraged and began to run out of energy. Feargus O'Connor, for instance, died in a lunatic asylum in 1855. Lovett became the proprietor of the National Hall in Holborn and died in 1877. A number of others emigrated to America and Australia and several of the clerical leaders reverted from Chartist preaching back to more orthodox Christian homilies. Joseph Rayner Stephens pastored an Independent Chapel in Ashton under Lyme and Arthur O'Neil left the Chartist Church in Birmingham and took on the leadership of a Baptist congregation in the same city. The last Chartist convention was held in 1848 and from that time the movement was a spent force.

Inevitably, there has been substantial literature on Chartism. One of the classic primary texts for the movement, and the only significant nineteenth-century account, is that written by Robert George Gammage (1829-80). Entitled *History of the Chartist Movement 1837-1854*, it was published in 1854. Gammage developed radical leanings at a very young age and joined the Chartists at an early point. He did not achieve prominence at National level until the very last phase of the movement from 1848 to 1854, although he was a Chartist lecturer in Newcastle on Tyne for two years from 1842. In May 1853, however, he was elected on to the Executive Committee of the National Association. Gammage in actual fact proved to be quite critical of the movement. He laid bare the various leadership conflicts and pronounced the Chartist Land Plan as 'the next great folly which was to contribute to the disgrace of the Chartist Movement'.

In the present century there was a cluster of studies around the time of the First World War. These included full histories by Hovell, Rosenblatt, Slosson and West. Harold Faulkner also produced his monograph *Chartism and the Churches* (1916) at this point.[1] The focus of Chartist studies then moved to detailed local analyses and biographical studies. This approach was begun by G.D. Cole in his *Chartist Portraits* (1945) and was followed by David Williams's

John Frost: A Study in Chartism and by John Saville's *Ernest Jones' Chartism* published in 1952. Subsequently there followed the publication of Asa Briggs's *Chartist Studies* and Dorothy Thompson's *The Chartists* (1984). The importance of these two latter volumes was that they provided a more serious attempt at analysis rather than contextual and descriptive history. Their writing also points up the diverse nature of Chartism, particularly the variations in motivation, leadership and policy from one area of the country to another.[2]

Historians of the Chartists have highlighted the significance of various causal factors of the movement. Edouard Doleans (1913), for example, identified the root as being 'a reaction of the working class against the Industrial Revolution'.[3] Mather (1965) supported his contention noting that Chartism was strongest in areas of decaying cottage industry.[4] J.R. Dinwiddy underscored the 'impact of economic depression.'[5] Others such as O. Ashton and J.F.C. Harrison stressed the role of Owenism and Poor Law issues.[6]

One factor which seems to have been largely overlooked is the role of religion in the Chartist movement. Professor H. Faulkner produced *Chartism and the Churches* (1916) and Robert Wearmouth offered some largely descriptive accounts of Methodist involvement in Chartism in 1938.[7] More recently, Eileen Yeo (1981) attempted a detailed explanation of the role of religion in the movement.[8] She saw religion functioning as 'contested territory' which both the Chartists and their opponents bought into. This was each side's way of demonstrating the righteousness of their cause and gaining the support of public opinion.[9]

Whilst acknowledging Yeo's point that there is clear evidence that both sides operated in this way, this article will argue that Christianity also had both a causal and sustaining impact on the Chartist movement. This role is most readily observable in Methodism.

Methodist conversion

The starting point for all branches of Methodism was conversion. Evangelical conversion after the pattern and style of John Wesley's own experience at Aldersgate Chapel was the *sine qua non* of all branches of Methodism throughout the nineteenth century. It had particular implications for a radical working-class movement such as Chartism. For the recipient, there was an immediate sense of being loved and accepted by Christ. This often gave a new feeling of dignity and self-worth which enabled working people to shake off an attitude of ingrained fatalism towards their low pay and conditions of work. Methodist conversion further conveyed a 'felt assurance'. The love of God had been shed abroad in the heart and this engendered in many lower-middle-class Methodists a compassion for the down-trodden and a desire to fight on their behalf. Of great significance, Methodists taught their new converts to maintain their experience by establishing a disciplined 'Methodical' lifestyle. This in turn generated tenacity and a gritty determination which led many to strive for a rudimentary education and other forms of self-improvement. It is not surprising, therefore, that many Chartist leaders were prompted into action by a 'new birth experience' in a Wesleyan or Primitive Methodist Chapel. In his study of Methodism, David Hempton observed the fact that many in working-class leadership had early Methodist conversion experiences between fourteen and seventeen years of age. This early commitment, he suggested, 'often moved to a more radical and politicised Christianity'.[10] It produced, he noted, Chartist leaders such as John Skevington, a Primitive Methodist local preacher at the age of fourteen, and Joseph Barker.[11] J.F.C. Harrison observed that, in Leicester Chartism, the local leaders were self-educated working-class men. The majority had a strong non-conformist (usually Methodist) allegiance.[12] Maldwyn Edwards also instanced the case of another Chartist leader, Thomas Cooper. He attended a Primitive Methodist Chapel, 'but at the age of fifteen became a

Wesleyan and was greatly influenced by the "intelligent and deeply spiritual preaching" of Lawrence Kershaw'.[13]

Methodist training

Another important contribution which Methodism brought to the Chartist movement was in helping to produce more articulate men and women. In their local chapel environment they learned the skills of organising their fellow workers, recording minutes of meetings and keeping simple financial accounts. Above all, many learned how to stand up in public and put their point across in a simple and effective manner.

Prior to the Forster Education Act of 1870, very few labourers' children attended a day school with sufficient regularity to gain even a rudimentary education. It was here that the Methodist Sunday Schools were of major importance. W.R. Ward and others have pointed out that a good many Wesleyan Sunday Schools in the northern manufacturing areas were decidedly radical in tone and readily defied the Conference ruling which prohibited Sabbath writing.[14] The Primitive Methodists in contrast had no such rule about Sunday writing in their schools and were able to offer a more fully rounded rudimentary education.

Methodism and social justice

From Methodism the Chartists also learned to make a stand for social justice. Wesley himself had fought hard against slavery and challenged the ill-treatment of women. Additionally, he also strongly opposed enclosures and the harsh conditions in mines and factories. All this fed into a strongly emerging tradition in Methodism which demanded more equitable treatment for the poor and those who found themselves at the bottom of the social pile. E.J. Hobsbawm observed that Methodist preaching fostered an element of protest which 'made all who took to it like the ancient prophets a stiff-necked people unwilling to bow down to the House of Rimmon'.[15]

Such protest is clearly apparent in the writing and public speeches of Chartist leaders. For them, the Bible, far from teaching submission, became a radical text which they used to put down the unjust designs of the clergy and those 'who were set in authority over them'. When William Lovett, on being taken into prison, was asked what was the nature of his religion, he replied that he was 'of the religion which Christ taught and which very few in authority practice.'[16]

In 1839, by way of raising their public profile, local Chartist groups paraded through the streets and attended the worship of their parish churches. Eileen Yeo observed that these public demonstrations took place in at least 31 different localities.[17] In most cases they supplied the incumbent with a biblical text in advance and asked that he preach to the assembled company on that theme. The texts conveyed the content of Christianity which the Chartists wished to hear. Stockport Chartists, for example, offered their clergyman a choice of several texts: 'Six days shalt thou labour', 'He that will not work, neither shall he eat', 'Thou shalt not worship any graven image', 'As Jesus said to the young man who professed to be perfect, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give it to the poor".' The most requested text, however, was James 5:1-6 which began: 'Go now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you'.[18] Very few clergy were prepared to have any truck with the Chartists. Most preferred to take a text of their own on which to hang the message they wished to put across. A similar situation occurred in Sheffield where the Chartists visited the parish church requesting the vicar to preach on the first five verses of the fifth chapter of the epistle of St James. Instead, one of the assistant ministers preached a sermon from Proverbs 24: 'My son, fear thou the Lord and King, and meddle not with them that are given to change'.[19]

Despite these and numerous other clerical 'put downs', the Chartists continued to cling to their keenly held view that the Bible was an essentially radical book. For example, at the large Chartist gathering held at Cronkeyshaw near Rochdale, on the morning of 14 August, the eve of the General Strike of 1842, James Mills of Whitworth asserted that 'every chapter of the Bible breathed nothing but freedom and liberty'. One of the women read out a passage from Luke 14:13: 'But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee'.[20]

It is, of course, possible to take Yeo's position, that the use of the Bible by the Chartists was simply part of the process of buying respect for their movement. However, the fact that most of these leaders were office holding Methodists active in the circuits before Chartism emerged, suggests another view. Here were people who had already been proclaiming social justice based on OT texts. It was inevitable that they should use the same biblical material in support of the Charter.[21]

Methodist leaders

In the light of the educative and practical opportunities provided by their chapels, it is small surprise that Methodism was a major contributor to Chartism insofar as leadership was concerned. In one sense, it might be argued that in areas where Methodism was dominant, it was not surprising that they gave the movement many leaders, particularly at the local level. Nevertheless, the case can be made that in certain Midlands counties there were strong pockets of other non-conformist groups. The fact of the matter is that some, such as the Particular Baptists and Congregationalists, were rather more quietist and apolitical by temperament and policy. Furthermore, Baptists and Congregationalists afforded little opportunity by comparison with the Methodists for lay men and women to exercise speaking or administrative roles.

Among the most prominent Methodist leaders of the Chartist movement were William Lovett and the Reverend Joseph Rayner Stephens of Ashton under Lyme. William Lovett (1800-1877), who helped to draw up the first Charter and was the London leader, was for a time a Bible Christian Methodist local preacher. Maldwyn Edwards suggested that his Methodism 'helped to shape his thinking and behaviour'. Like others it would seem possible to argue that his Methodist upbringing influenced him in favour of ordered protest. He once stated that 'whatever is gained by force in England, by force must be sustained; but whatever springs from knowledge and justice will sustain itself'.[22] Joseph Rayner Stephens (1805-1879), who was widely influential in Lancashire Chartism was notorious. He was a gifted preacher, whose radical ideas inevitably clashed with the Buntingite faction in London and elsewhere. He was particularly incensed by the injustices of the 1834 Poor Law Act, and his passion to help its victims led him to espouse the cause of violence. In 1836 he declared: 'I will help to plead for the poor, and when talking and pleading and praying are at an end and found to be of no effect, I will fight for the poor. The poor shall have their own again'.[23] Stephens's revivalist preaching attracted many to the Chartist ranks in the early stages, although he later disowned all commitment to the Charter.[24] Interestingly enough, other Methodist ministers in the north of England were happy to espouse physical force for Chartism. The Reverend Mr Jackson, a Methodist minister residing in the Stockport area, was reported to have talked of 'bullets and lead and guns and pistols and pikes'.[25] James Schofield, a Bible Christian Minister, was nominated as Chartist Chairman for Manchester on 19 March 1841. Two years later, a Chartist Conference of Factory Operatives was held in his chapel. He was among those taken for trial at the Lancaster Assizes for sedition and incitation to riot, but he was acquitted.[26]28 Thomas Cooper (1805-92), the leader of Leicester Chartism

where he became known as 'The General', was for a time a Wesleyan Methodist local preacher. In 1841 he became editor of the Chartist paper, *The Midland Counties Illuminator*. Later, when sales dropped, he produced his own publication entitled *The Chartist Rushlight*.

Among others who played prominent district leadership roles in Chartism were Joseph Markham and John Skevington. In his autobiography, Cooper referred to Joseph Markham as 'an influential Chartist leader and a famous Methodist local preacher'.[27] John Skevington (1801-1850) was the leading figure in Loughborough Chartism. Until 1836, he was a travelling preacher with the Primitive Methodists. The springs of his Chartist activities are not far to seek. He declared:

> As an advocate of the principles of the People's Charter, I found nothing on inspection to condemn them. . . but a firm conviction that though a man may be Chartist and not a Christian, a man cannot be a Christian and not a Chartist unless through ignorance.[28]

There were other local preachers who were active in Chartist leadership. Joseph Capper was a Primitive Methodist local preacher in Staffordshire who suffered two years' imprisonment in 1842 for his strong stand on Chartist principles. Local preachers J. Black, J. Barratt and J. Harrison of Nottingham were active Chartist supporters.[29] John Vallance (1794-1882), who served an active role as chairman, speaker and delegate to various Chartist meetings in the Barnsley area, was a lifelong member of the town's Pitt Street Wesleyan Chapel.[30] William Chadwick (1829-1908) became a Wesleyan local preacher by the time he was fourteen. On 3 April 1848 he was appointed as Corresponding Secretary for the Manchester Chartists. He later had to endure a six-month prison sentence in Liverpool for urging labourers who did not possess a sword to sell all that they had in order to buy one.[31]

This list could doubtless be considerably extended, but even as it stands it is more than sufficient to demonstrate that Methodism embued its local leaders with a heightened sense of social justice. This in turn motivated numbers of them to become active Chartist campaigners. The fact that their advocacy of the Chartist cause was taken up against the express disapproval of both the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist connexional policies suggests that this was much more than a case of Chartist leaders happening also to be Methodists.

Methodist Models of Organisation

Another way in which Methodism aided the growth of Chartism was in providing models of organization. In a comparative examination of the basic structure of Chartist and Methodist organizations, the most striking feature is the omission of the circuit from the Chartist structure. Methodism was founded on a four-tier structure of Conference, district meeting, circuit meeting and local society, whilst Chartism was based on a three-tier system of National Headquarters, districts and local branches. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Chartist district fulfilled a function which was very similar to that of the Methodist circuit. Chartist delegates, who were sometimes referred to as missionaries, had, as their main function, to move around the local area and give lectures or speak at public demonstrations and rallies.

One difference which R.F. Wearmouth observed was the way in which the Chartists skilfully democratized the structures they borrowed from Methodism. They wanted to guard against Wesley-style oligarchy and so Chartist leaders were elected not appointed, and time limits were frequently imposed on the duration of their office.[32] Wearmouth's view of Chartist borrowing differed from Yeo's opinion that this was a case of Chartism and Christianity overlapping or mutually reinforcing each other.[33] Wearmouth interpreted the borrowings as demonstrating Methodism's, and particularly Primitive Methodism's, conscious attempt to influence the whole structure of the Chartist movement.

Perhaps the most prominent borrowings were the Chartist camp meetings. These were deliberate copyings of Primitive Methodist camp meetings, which were outdoor gatherings where large numbers of people came together, often in out of the way places, to hear 'revivalistic' preaching. Such assemblies were frequently characterized by euphoric singing and charismatic phenomena in which respondents sank to the ground, screamed out or cried aloud for mercy.

The first reference to Chartist camp meetings was at the Rochdale Conference of 25 June 1839. According to the *Manchester Guardian* of 29 June 1839, 'Camp meetings for political purposes were recommended'. In September of the same year, *The Northern Liberator* reported a Chartist camp meeting midway between the adjoining towns of Sheffield and Barnsley. According to its reporter:

> On Sunday afternoon the men, and men they may emphatically be called, of Sheffield joined by immense assemblages from Barnsley and the surrounding districts held a religious camp meeting on Hood Hill; and never before was such a religious meeting held in Yorkshire. The Revd Mr Thornton of Bradford preached a sermon that must have gone witheringly to the souls of magistrates and minions of power that were present. Sure enough he did tear up by the roots the abomination of the State Church, plurality of livings and blasphemous mammon worshippers.[34]

Robert Wearmouth wrote: 'From 1839 to 1850 the Chartist Camp Meeting remained the most regular and important form of political propaganda among the lower classes'.[35] He identified nearly 400 reports of Chartist camp meetings in these years, in the columns of *The Northern Star*, which served as the semi-official organ of the movement. 1842 appears to have been the most significant year with 90 camp meetings. There were 73 camp meetings reported in 1843 followed by fewer meetings till 1847 and then heightened activity in 1848 prompted by news of the revolutions on the continent. The preaching at such Chartist camp meetings appears to have been for the most part based on OT and revolutionary texts.[36]

In 1839 the Magistrates of Sheffield put a ban on Chartist open air meetings in the town. In order, therefore, to maintain momentum for their cause, the Chartists borrowed another piece of Methodist organization, the class meeting. *The Sheffield Iris* of 3 September 1839 warned that upwards of 100 Chartist class meetings had been formed in every part of the town.[37]39 In the same year, Chartist classes were adopted and formed in a number of big towns, including Bolton, Manchester, Bradford, Barnsley, Birmingham, Bristol, Huddersfield and Rochdale. There were also a number of specifically Chartist class meetings established in connection with some Methodist chapels on the north-east coast.[38]

In many Chartist class meetings, each member was expected to pay a penny a week. This was the same requirement as laid down by John Wesley for his class meetings. The Chartist class meeting system divided a town into districts. Each district was then subdivided into as many classes as were felt to be necessary. Each class had leaders, including a treasurer, who collected contributions. In Chartism, unlike Methodism, the class leaders were elected, not appointed. The effectiveness of the early Chartist classes can be gauged by a comment from Joseph Wild, Constable of Manchester, who reported that 'the Chartists of Oldham are meeting in houses and that their society consists principally of working men'.[39] The majority of Methodist-style class meetings seem to have been located in Yorkshire, but they are known to have existed in Tower Hamlets, Brighton, Bristol, Leicester, Worcester, Durham and Nottingham. Feargus O'Connor was evidently impressed with the utility of the class meeting as a vehicle for spreading the Chartist message. At one point in 1843, he proposed a general organization of each Chartist area group into classes:

> Each class, when constituted, shall choose for itself a leader subject to the confirmation of the Branch Board. The duties of the leader will be to arrange for conversational meetings with his class at a place of meeting most convenient; to hold a friendly discussion relative to the principles and objects of the Association, to read the tracts and authorised documents and reports of the general body, to collect the subscriptions of the members and weekly hand them over to the branch secretary.[40]

Although O'Connor's proposals were not adopted, they nevertheless testify to both his knowledge of the Methodist class system and its potential as a unit of organization.

Rather more remarkably, *The Northern Star* of 9 November 1839 announced at Sheffield: 'On Sunday week, the Chartists of this town held what is called a Love Feast, after the style of a body of religionists called Methodists.'[41] The love feast had been adopted by Wesley from the Moravians and followed the early church practice of a simple fellowship meal which often included the sharing of bread and cake and drinking from a loving cup. The fact that Sheffield Chartists could organize a Chartist love feast suggests that a high proportion of Methodists were active in Sheffield Chartism. Since the love feast was a fellowship gathering for the religiously committed, it suggests that the town's leading Chartist officials had a strong personal involvement in Methodism.

Another way in which Methodism assisted Chartism was in the loan of its chapels for holding meetings. This happened despite the fact that both the Wesleyans and the Primitives had passed Conference resolutions forbidding the practice. In instances where a Methodist minister, such as Joseph Rayner Stephens, became a leader of a Chartist district it often followed that connexional premises were used for local branch meetings, at least until the trustees and circuit authorities forced the matter to a head. In Stephens's case, a number of Lancashire chapels seceded from Wesleyan Methodism following his resignation from the connexion in 1834. The Stephensite Methodists grew rapidly and could boast of ten preaching places and 31 preachers in the Ashton circuit alone. In this matter of the loan of chapels, the Primitive Methodists seem to have been more generous.[42]

As well as holding branch meetings in the chapels, Chartists also organized specifically religious services. These proved a valuable way of raising funds, particularly in the winter months, when the weather prohibited the holding of camp meetings. The preachers on these occasions were usually working-class radicals with strong Christian convictions, men such as Ben Rushton, who preached to a cluster of radical churches in Lancashire, and William Thornton, who often held services in Primitive Methodist chapels in the North-West.[43]

Methodist organization seems to have shaped Chartism at every level. Those aspects of Chartism which had counterparts in Methodism included 'delegate meetings', 'societies', 'associations', 'missionaries', 'weekly penny subscriptions' and 'lecturers' Plan of Engagements'. There were even, on occasion, Chartist tea meetings, such as that attended by a Government Commissioner in Birmingham in 1842.[44]

Denouement

There is no doubt, as Yeo and others have indicated, that both Chartists and their opponents sought on occasion to buy into Christianity in an effort to assert the righteousness of their cause.[45] This was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the town of Cheltenham, which in the nineteenth century had both a large and fashionable middle-class population, but also a decidedly vociferous and radical element which inhabited rows of terraced cottages at the lower end of the High Street. In a *Sermon Addressed to the Chartists of Cheltenham*, Francis Close, the ebullient incumbent of the parish church, denounced the local Chartists as 'a fire and faggot breed who came to set class against class'. They had 'lighted up the torch

of discontent and made the lowest labourer a prattling politician and taken him away from his duty'.[46] Close then went on to use the Bible in an attempt to justify his pontifications. 'The Book of Providence', he declared, 'is one grand scheme of subordination and mutual help. And you know,' he continued, 'that the Book which I have before me says that 'the poor shall never cease out of the land'.[47]

However, the fact that both sides sought to strengthen the hand of their cause by drawing on biblical imagery does not displace the contention that Christianity served to both motivate and sustain the Chartist cause. This article has indicated that Methodist conversion experience helped to generate both compassion and tenacity on the part of Chartist leaders. It also schooled them in the skills of management, organization and public speaking. Methodist biblicism, which was often rooted in the OT prophets, instilled a sense of justice and also provided local preachers with biblical metaphors of protest and deliverance which were not the familiar currency of the generality of working-class people.[48]

Methodist organizational structure offered good working models which the Chartist committees were able to adapt and, in some cases, take over wholesale. Methodism also made a major contribution to Chartism in the provision of many leaders at national, district and local levels. These leaders should not be regarded as Chartists who happened also to be Methodists. They were men, and in some cases women,[49] who were Methodists first and Chartists second. Many of their number had been converted in Methodist chapels and engaged in preaching and circuit work well before the emergence of Chartism. What is more, it cost them to be Chartists. It meant they had to defy official Conference pronouncements and likely as not run the risk of expulsion from a chapel community and fellowship which they and their families valued greatly. In 1839, for example, a meeting of Wesleyan preachers in Bath resolved that every Methodist who became a Chartist should be excluded from their body.[50] The Wesleyan Conference of 1848 spoke against the Chartists in severe tones as 'those disloyal and disaffected men who are endeavouring to allure the humbler of our fellow countrymen to take part in their schemes.'[51] In view of all of this, it seems reasonable to maintain that, at the very least, Christianity fulfilled a forthright and positive role in helping to galvanize the Chartist movement into action and in sustaining its subsequent campaigns.

Conclusion

There has been considerable debate in recent years over the nature of the relationship between Methodism and working-class political movements. Historians of the 1970s such as Alan Gilbert saw popular evangelicalism functioning as a safety valve against violent protest on account of its often standing apart from the established church and its association with the ruling classes.[52] More recently, however, David Hempton has suggested that this may not be the most accurate representation of the relationship between Methodism and radical movements. Rather, he has urged that we should regard the overlap between the two as a 'symbiosis' which generated a mutually reinforcing social and religious protest.[53] On such an interpretation, it is possible to say that there was little, if any, opposition between grass roots Methodism, on the one hand, and the Chartists on the other. Whatever the future of the Methodist inheritance, its past is nothing if not politically interesting!

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4 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
5 J.R. Dinwiddy, *Chartism* (London: Historical Association, 1987), p. 8.
6 J.F.C. Harrison, in *Chartist Studies*, ed. Asa Briggs, (London: MacMillan, 1959), pp. 128ff.
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10 D. Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1984) p. 212.
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15 E.J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), p. 139.
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17 Yeo, *Op Cit*, p. 123.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
19 E R Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London: The Lutterworth Press, 1957), p. 100.
20 Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p. 143.
21 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 27.
22 Mather, *op cit.*, p. 16.
23 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 25.
24 Yeo, *op cit.*, p. 114.
25 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 26.
26 R.G. Gammage, *History of the Chartist Movement* (New York: Kelley, 1969 reprint edn), p. 232.
27 T.Cooper, *Life of T Cooper*, ch., 9, cited in Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 28.
28 D. Thompson, *Chartist Studies* (Temple Smith, 1983), p. 131.
29 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 29.
30 See article by F.K. Donnelly in *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (London: MacMillan Press), Vol. IX, pp. 282-283.
31 See E. and R. Frow and J. Saville, *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 1984), Vol .VII, pp 53-55.
32 Cited Hempton, *op.cit.*, p. 211.
33 Yeo, *op cit.*,
34 R F Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p 139.
35 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
36 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
37 *Ibid.*, p. 147.
38 Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
39 *Ibid.*, p. 145.
40 A. Amstrong, *The Church of England, the Methodists and Society 1700-1850* (University of London Press, 1983).
41 Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p. 141.
42 See S. Mayor, *The Churches and the Labour Movement* (London: Independent Press Ltd, 1967), p. 247.
43 Yeo, *op cit.*, p 117.
44 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

[45] See for example, O. Aston, 'Clerical Control and Radical Responses in Cheltenham Spa 1838-1848', *Midland History*, 1983, Vol. 8, pp. 121-147.
[46] Close, *Op Cit* ., p 16.
[47] *Ibid*., p. 20.
[48] See N.A.D. Scotland, *The Revolt of the Field in East Anglia* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980), ch. 10.
[49] For women, see, for example, C. Dews, *From Mow Cop to Peake 1807-1932, Essays to Commemorate the One Hundred and Seventy Fifth Anniversary of the Beginnings of Primitive Methodism May 1892* (Wesley Historical Society, Yorkshire Branch, 1982), Occasional Paper No. 4, p. 51.
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[51] Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[52] A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England* (London: Longman, 1976) pp. 90 -91.
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