

Chapter Five

The Romance of the 'Whig Dungeon'

Chartism's first resurgence after the widespread legal repression of 1839-40 has long been attributed to the formal restructuring of the movement. Even historians said to have epitomised the 'social' interpretation of Chartism such as Mark Hovell in fact placed considerable weight upon the significance of organisational innovation.¹ The general move away from the economic reductionism of some earlier histories has only served to reinforce the organisational explanation of renewal. Now the National Charter Association is generally recognised as the world's first independent working-class political party, as well as the impetus behind the 'movement culture' that flowered in the 1840s.² So obvious is the NCA's historical significance, in fact, that it has arguably obscured other elements of Chartist renewal – particularly the extraordinary quest narrative cultivated around Feargus O'Connor's trial and imprisonment in 1840, his liberation from York Castle in August 1841, and the celebratory tours he subsequently undertook in late 1841 and early 1842. This neo-Gothic romance of the 'Whig dungeon', which cast O'Connor as the popular hero in a protracted battle with a tyrannical state, was a concerted and successful propaganda campaign that helped establish Chartism's credentials as the first modern mass-movement.

Although the romantic tenor of Chartist poetry and literature has been recognised for some time, in this chapter I am primarily interested in the propaganda value of the narrative form Northrop Frye has termed 'sentimental romance'.³ At the

¹ Hovell, *The Chartist movement*, ch. 12.

² Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 212; Belchem, *Popular radicalism in nineteenth-century Britain*, p. 80.

³ Vicinius, The industrial muse; Tholfsen, *Working class radicalism in mid-Victorian England*,

heart of this ancient popular genre is the journey of a hero between two imaginative worlds set apart from that of ordinary existence: one is an idyllic world associated with happiness, security and peace; the other is a night world associated with loneliness, separation and pain. As Frye stresses in *The secular scripture*, fixed identities have no place in the story:

It is existence before 'Once upon a time', and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever after' ... Most romances end happily, with a return to the state of identity, and begin with a departure from it. Even in the most realistic stories there is usually some trace of a plunge downward at the beginning, and a bounce upward at the end. This means that most romances exhibit a cyclical movement of descent into a night world and a return to the idyllic world, or to some symbol of it like marriage.⁴

Formally speaking, symbolic metamorphoses commonly denote the hero's entry into the contrived and polarised imaginative worlds of romance. But how might an understanding of the framework, narrative tactics and characteristic motifs of the formula illuminate the rather neglected subject of Chartist propaganda?

'The complete form of the romance', writes Frye, 'is clearly the successful quest'. This genre has three main elements: 'the *agon*, or conflict, the *pathos* or death struggle, and the *anagnorisis*, or discovery, the recognition of the hero'.⁵ The typical romance hero, Frye adds, 'moves in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended: prodigies of courage and endurance, un-natural to us are natural to him'.⁶ This description, of course, fits O'Connor's gentlemanly public persona perfectly. One of the most charismatic popular leaders of the nineteenth century, by

pp. 72-8; B. Maidment, *The poorhouse fugitives: self-taught poets and poetry in mid-Victorian Britain* (Manchester, 1987); A. Janowitz, *Lyric and labour in the romantic tradition* (Cambridge, 1997), chs. 4-6; T. Randall, 'Chartist poetry and song' in O. Ashton, R. Fyson, and S. Roberts, eds., *The Chartist legacy* (Rendlesham, 1999), especially pp. 177-9.

⁴ N. Frye, *The secular scripture: a study in the structure of romance* (Cambridge MA, 1976), p. 54.

⁵ N. Frye, *Anatomy of criticism: four essays* (Princeton, 1957), p. 187.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33 and *passim*.

1840 O'Connor was widely acknowledged as Henry Hunt's legitimate successor.⁷ 'His figure was tall and well proportioned, and his bearing decidedly aristocratic', recalled the Barnsley Chartist John Vallance of the first time he saw O'Connor in the mid 1830s:

He wore a blue frock coat and buff waistcoat and had rings on the fingers of each hand. In a graceful manner, and in emphatic language, he told the Radicals of Barnsley that he had sold off his horses and dogs, had greatly reduced his establishment, and come weal or woe, he would henceforth devote his whole life to promote the well-being of the working classes.⁸

According to Gammage, O'Connor's thunderous lungs 'out Stentor'd even Stentor himself'.⁹ 'FEARGUS, of high-born patriotic zeal, of fearless gait and matchless fortitude', gushed a Chartist poet.¹⁰ O'Connor's gentlemanly visage, his mastery of the stagecraft of the mass platform, and the considerable political capital bound up in his family's close links with the revolutionary leadership of the United Irishmen (particularly his uncle, Arthur O'Connor) made him an obvious choice to build a narrative of renewal around.¹¹ By the time of his imprisonment, O'Connor also controlled a considerable political machine in the *Northern Star*. Deliberately named after its Irish forbear of the 1790s, the *Star* was easily the most significant and widely distributed Chartist paper.¹²

As we shall see in the next chapter, romance motifs were quite common elements of Chartist rhetoric. The antipodean experiences of the Dorchester labourers and Chartist transportees, for example, were typically presented as journeys into an

⁷ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, pp. 90-1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁹ Gammage, *History*, p. 45.

¹⁰ *Northern Star*, 24 October 1840, p. 3.

¹¹ For Arthur O'Connor see F. MacDermot, 'Arthur O'Connor', *Irish Historical Studies*, 15 (1966-7), pp. 48-69.

¹² Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the *Northern Star*'; Thompson, *The Chartists*, pp. 46-54.

inhuman hell.¹³ On the other hand, I have also touched upon the way in which the Chartist Land Plan was construed as a collective journey to what Ernest Jones called 'the promised land'.¹⁴ The story cultivated around O'Connor's imprisonment and liberation, however, was unmatched in its creative usage of the basic formula. Crucially, both the descent phase of the narrative (O'Connor's trial, sentencing and incarceration) and the return (his release and the liberation tour) involved metamorphic episodes. These carefully fabricated transformations of identity – whether rhetorically cultivated in print, or visually mobilised in Chartist pageantry – lent the dungeon odyssey much of its distinction.

Amongst the thousands of Chartists who were arrested between 1838 and 1848, many hundreds were convicted and imprisoned for significant periods.¹⁵ By the late 1840s some activists had been gaoled a number of times. George White's political recalcitrance, for example, was rewarded with three separate terms in 1840, 1843-4 and 1848-9.¹⁶ Other 'victims' experienced considerable privation during their incarceration, often being treated as felons, or forced to endure the 'silent system' and treadmill labour.¹⁷ Samuel Holberry, imprisoned for four years after leading the abortive Sheffield insurrection in early 1840, became the best known of a number of Chartist 'martyrs' who died in prison.¹⁸ Historians have long recognised how O'Connor managed to cement his leadership of the movement whilst incarcerated at

¹³ See Loveless, *The victims of Whiggery*; W. Ashton, *A lecture on the evil of emigration and transportation* (Sheffield, 1838); J. Frost, *The horrors of convict life* (Hobart, 1973 rep.).

¹⁴ *Northern Star*, 22 August 1846, p. 8; Chase, "We Wish only to Work for Ourselves", pp. 136-7.

¹⁵ Godfrey, 'The Chartist prisoners, 1839-41'.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 218-19.

¹⁸ Gammage, *History*, p. 213; Thompson, *The Chartists*, pp. 141, 280-1. Holberry died at York Castle in June 1842, approximately nine months after being moved from the Northallerton House of Correction.

York. 'From his first day in gaol', wrote Donald Read and Eric Glasgow, 'Feargus began through the *Northern Star* to surround himself with an aura of martyrdom'.¹⁹

'Trial and imprisonment provided the acid test of Chartist leadership and commitment', adds James Epstein:

in contrast to the history of earlier working-class movements, the removal of Chartism's national leadership and many of its local militants did not precipitate the collapse of radicalism. When the 'People's Champion' emerged from York Castle in September 1841, he was greeted by a mass movement ... which during his imprisonment had laid the foundations of the first working-class political party in world history.²⁰

But how was failure undone, allegiance cemented and hopes raised once more? We need to look beyond the formation of the NCA, significant as it was, to understand the invention of Chartist rebirth.

In his work on nineteenth-century radical culture Epstein has stressed the importance of the courtroom as a political forum. Often defendants could 'draw on historical and legal precedents that seemed to ensure certain key rights and liberties'.²¹ 'More than occasionally', Epstein continues, 'authorities were embarrassed as radicals turned their tables on their accusers'.²² Outside the metropolis, however, such victories were rarely won. An *ex officio* information was laid against O'Connor for publishing seditious libels in the *Northern Star*, the case commencing before Justice Coleridge at the York Lent Assizes on 17 March 1840. According to the *Yorkshireman*, 'a greater degree of excitement was probably never before witnessed in the Nisi Prius court'.²³ The importance the government attached to proceedings can be

¹⁹ Read and Glasgow, *Feargus O'Connor*, p. 90.

²⁰ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 212.

²¹ J. Epstein, 'Narrating liberty's defense: T.J. Wooler and the law' in *Radical expression: political language, ritual and symbol in England, 1790-1850* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 29-69.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²³ *Yorkshireman*, 21 March 1840 cited in A.J. Peacock, 'Feargus O'Connor at York', *York History*, 2 (1975), p. 66.

gauged by the fact that the Attorney-General, Sir John (later Lord) Campbell prosecuted in person, assisted by three counsel. O'Connor, a barrister by profession, appeared for himself – although it was noted in the *Star* that he was accompanied by a London lawyer.²⁴ Despite regaling the court with an heroic defence speech lasting almost five hours, O'Connor was found guilty and bound over for sentence.²⁵

Given the sense of inevitability about the verdict, it is no surprise that the theme of persecution ran through O'Connor's defence. His courtroom rhetoric, in fact, seems to have been aimed at the national Chartist body, rather than the Special Jury of local gentry and merchants.²⁶ Supported by a belligerent and vocal group of York activists (who were threatened with removal by Coleridge) O'Connor remonstrated with the Jury from the outset:

Gentlemen, I have already learned, from your countenances, that you have attached to me the odium and guilt of every word contained in the many speeches of others which are set forth in this boundless information ... in the outset let us understand each other. We are of different politics. I neither court your sympathy, desire your pity, or ask for your compassion. I am a Chartist – a democrat to the fullest sense of the word; and if my life hung upon the abandonment of those principles, I would scorn to hold it upon so base a tenure.²⁷

Other Chartists put on trial were expected to make similar symbolic stands. The second edition of Gammage's *History* contains an illustration of a Byronic looking Peter Murray McDouall in a courtroom pointing to his notes, perhaps in the midst of the four-hour speech Gammage suggested was his undoing, 'for the Attorney General alluded to it as a proof of the danger in allowing men of such talent to be at large'.²⁸

Thomas Dunning, who witnessed McDouall's 1839 trial at Chester, went as far as

²⁴ *Leeds Mercury*, 21 March 1840 (Supplement), p. 2; *Northern Star*, 21 March 1840, p. 1; Peacock, 'Feargus O'Connor at York', p. 66.

²⁵ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 211.

²⁶ For the Jury see *Leeds Mercury*, 21 March 1840 (Supplement), p. 2.

²⁷ *Northern Star*, 21 March 1840, p. 1.

²⁸ Gammage, *History*, p. 158. Illustration 4 is taken from *ibid.*, p. 157. For McDouall generally see Pickering and Roberts, 'Pills, pamphlets and politics'.

comparing his defence with that of Robert Emmet, the tragic Irish revolutionary whom Chartists held in particular awe.²⁹

At the beginnings of the typical sentimental romance, Frye notes, there is often a 'sharp descent in social status, from riches to poverty', particularly after the hero has suffered some kind of false accusation.³⁰ O'Connor's symbolic journey began in precisely these terms. The Home Office and the York magistracy may have inadvertently enriched the tale waiting to be told, however, when O'Connor entered the Castle on the evening of 19 May.³¹ After being escorted from London to York by rail, O'Connor's captors indulged him with a somewhat bizarre sight-seeing tour of the city.³² As A.J. Peacock has noted, the day after Feargus' visit the Minster was engulfed in a spectacular conflagration, its second such disaster in eleven years.³³ Despite the obvious concessions to O'Connor's social status made in transit, upon classification he was placed on the felon's side of the County gaol. Considerable capital was immediately made from the scenario of Chartism's gentleman leader 'HERDING AND FEEDING WITH CONVICTED FELONS'.³⁴ Even the *Times* contended that 'No surer mode of attracting the public sympathy towards Mr. O'Connor could have been devised than this cruel treatment'.³⁵ As Epstein emphasises, 'O'Connor rarely failed to exploit the full potential of any pretext for

²⁹ T. Dunning, 'Reminiscences of Thomas Dunning' in D. Vincent, ed., *Testaments of radicalism: memoirs of working-class politicians 1790-1885* (London, 1977), p. 140; Pickering, "'Repeal and the Suffrage'", p. 119.

³⁰ See Frye, *The secular scripture*, pp. 97-104.

³¹ *Northern Star*, 23 May 1840, p. 1.

³² *Times*, 26 May 1840, p. 3.

³³ Peacock, 'Feargus O'Connor at York', p. 74. For the Minster fire see also O. Chadwick, 'From 1822 until 1916' in G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant, eds., *A history of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), p. 280.

³⁴ *Northern Star*, 23 May 1840, p. 4.

³⁵ *Times*, 26 May 1840, p. 3.

agitation', and Chartist propagandists could hardly have hoped for better ammunition.³⁶

The sensational news of Feargus' fallen state certainly provoked an outcry in a number of Chartist communities. As soon as the *Star* arrived in Manchester 'the news spread all over the town with the rapidity of lightning'.³⁷ Indignant public meetings were also held at Carlisle, Bradford, Rochdale, Birmingham and elsewhere.³⁸ At a meeting of 'Socialists, Chartists and Radicals' in Leeds, William Hick 'threw himself into a theatrical attitude, and quoted the oration of Mark Antony lamenting over the body of Julius Caesar' ('O mighty Caesar! dost thou lie so low?') whilst moving for the adoption of a petition calling for O'Connor's immediate liberation.³⁹ Bradford Chartists stated in their memorial

that Mr. O'Connor was subjected ... to the same treatment as burglars, felons, and reputed murderers. They stated that he is obliged to lie on an iron bed, without any sheets to cover him, or a pillow to repose on. That he is obliged to undergo many menial offices, such as cleansing his own utensils – that he is not allowed to receive any visitors, and that whilst suffering severely from rheumatism he ... was obliged to sit on a cold stone. The petitioners believed that this harsh treatment would tend to destroy his life.⁴⁰

Soon after his incarceration O'Connor forwarded a petition outlining his travails to Thomas Talfourd, the member for Reading, who mentioned it in the Commons on 25 May.⁴¹ Home Office Under-Secretary Fox Maule attempted to defuse a burgeoning scandal by deflecting responsibility for O'Connor's treatment on to local authorities.⁴²

³⁶ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 268.

³⁷ *Northern Star*, 30 May 1840, p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 8.

³⁹ *Leeds Mercury*, 6 June 1840, p. 7. The *Northern Star* account of Hick's motion (6 June 1840, p. 6) does not mention this flourish.

⁴⁰ *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 1.

⁴¹ *Northern Star*, 30 May 1840, pp. 3, 8.

⁴² *Leeds Mercury*, 30 May 1840, p. 4; *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 1.

Maule made little headway, however, against the opinion that the government was pursuing a malicious course against the Chartist leader.⁴³

Under some pressure, the Whig administration belatedly acted to turn the tide of condemnation, and in early June O'Connor was moved to private rooms where he spent the rest of his sentence. According to William O'Neill Daunt, he had already been excused from chapel attendance after he had 'scandalized the parson by bellowing the responses in stentorian tones'.⁴⁴ O'Connor also had his own food brought in from outside the Castle, and was given access to books, newspapers and visitors.⁴⁵ 'It is a large vaulted stone cell at the very extremity of the building', Feargus wrote to William Hill, then editor of the *Star*, 'quite out of earshot, and shut out from human observation, or communication'.⁴⁶ In this letter O'Connor also mentioned that his new accommodation was located above the condemned cell, an image he later drew upon extensively in his open letters. Hill and Joshua Hobson, the *Star's* publisher who visited O'Connor on a regular basis, were crucial allies in the rendering of the dungeon romance.⁴⁷ Although the Home Secretary Lord Normanby had decreed that O'Connor not write political articles, he actually had almost continual printed contact with the Chartist body.⁴⁸ Why this interaction was tolerated is not clear, but O'Connor's experience of incarceration was plainly mild when compared to the great majority of Chartist prisoners.⁴⁹

⁴³ See *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 6 for reprints of criticisms made by the *Manchester Times*, *Satirist*, *Examiner*, *Spectator*, *Dublin Freeman's Journal*, *Standard*, *World*, *Weekly Dispatch*, *Sun*, *Weekly Chronicle*, *Sunday Times*, *United Services Gazette*, *Argus* and *Sheffield Iris*.

⁴⁴ O'Neill Daunt, *Eighty-five years of Irish history*, p. 159.

⁴⁵ *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 6; Read and Glasgow, *Feargus O'Connor*, p. 91; Peacock, 'Feargus O'Connor at York', pp. 70-3; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 218.

⁴⁶ *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 6.

⁴⁷ *Northern Star*, 2 January 1841, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 218.

⁴⁹ York's visiting Magistrates seem to have regarded themselves as powerless in this respect, and recommended to the Home Office that O'Connor be removed to a distant gaol to prevent his contact with Hill and Hobson. See HO 52/47, E. Harper to Normanby, 21 June 1840.

The complaints made about O'Connor's treatment were motivated by the assault on his gentlemanly identity and the perceived perils of his 'living tomb'. Soon after arriving at York O'Connor complained that he had rheumatism in his legs and back, a cough and a pain in his chest. His physicians had already made depositions stating that confinement in the Castle would probably shorten his life.⁵⁰ Yet to O'Connor's chagrin the Home Secretary Lord Normanby replied 'that he saw *nothing* in them to cause any alteration in the place of my imprisonment'.⁵¹ The true state of O'Connor's health during this period is rather difficult to determine. During April and May he claimed to be very ill, and as his sentencing was adjourned twice on this basis, there seems little reason to doubt that he was in considerable distress.⁵² Yet illness could also be fashioned into something of a political tool – even respectable Parliamentary liberals such as Thomas Duncombe and John Bright portrayed their broken constitutions and mental break-downs as part of the sacrifice they endured on behalf of 'the People'.⁵³ One of the characteristics of the dungeon romance, moreover, was a contempt for prosaic reality.

Just before he entered the Castle, O'Connor penned a final open letter to 'THE MEN WITH FUSTIAN JACKETS, UNSHORN CHINS, AND BLISTERED HANDS, THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN'. He informed his followers that physicians had cupped, bled and drugged him at prodigious levels – enough to have killed a lesser man. This routine demagogic communication, however, then took a strange twist. Deploying an unprecedented rhetorical tactic, O'Connor recounted a nightmare he had suffered whilst ill and awaiting sentence at the Queen's Bench:

⁵⁰ *Northern Star*, 6 June 1840, p. 4.

⁵¹ *Times*, 26 May 1840, p. 3. Italics in original.

⁵² *Northern Star*, 2 May 1840, pp. 3, 8; 9 May 1840, p. 8.

⁵³ Taylor, 'Modes of political expression and working-class radicalism', pp. 162-74; Vernon, *Politics and the people*, p. 280.

For four nights I raved incessantly ... I thought I was forced out of bed to go to the Queen's Bench; and in trudging through highways and byeways, across the fields, I was pursued by a hedgehog. At last I turned on my pursuer, who, in his turn, retreated. At length I ran it down; and in endeavouring to catch it, its bristles stuck to the palm of my hand ... and in that situation I made my way to the Queen's Bench, where I saw the Attorney General without his wig, and who, the moment I entered, claimed the hedgehog as his wig, charged me with the theft ... and there I remained with my handful during the whole of a long trial, after which I was found guilty of being a physical force Chartist ... Now, that is true as the gospel.⁵⁴

This passage makes strange reading at first. But in the evolving narrative context of the romance of the Whig dungeon, the dream and the false accusation make perfect sense. Many of those who heard or read O'Connor's letter would certainly have recognised the creative function of the similitude: it was a narrative beacon, drawing upon symbolic conventions found in the literature working people knew best such as the Bible and *The pilgrim's progress*. As Frye stresses, dreams often mark the transformations of identity so important to the narrative movement of the romance form.⁵⁵ We can only speculate whether O'Connor had any inkling of the impolitic decision to place him on the 'felon's side' at York; in any event, this further challenge to his honour was exploited most effectively.

In mid-June 1840 William Hill proclaimed that 'O'Connor yet remains in his dungeon ... He is, during the ascendant reign of treachery and despotism, politically *dead*'.⁵⁶ This statement could not have been further from the truth. Despite the fact that Feargus was never held below ground, and despite the predominantly neo-classical and utilitarian architectural reality of the Castle precincts in 1840-41, the *agon* phase of the romance was permeated with Gothic images of dark, damp and

⁵⁴ *Northern Star*, 16 May 1840, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Frye, *Secular scripture*, pp. 102-3.

⁵⁶ *Northern Star*, 13 June 1840, p. 4. Italics in original.

smoky dungeons, labyrinthine stone corridors, echoing irons and tormented felons.⁵⁷

Even the mighty O'Connor was not safe from creeping death. Hill cried:

We saw him on the 9th; but he was wonderfully changed. In the presence of the Under-Governor, who waited on our visit, he held up his limb and said: 'the villains say I'm better; look here'. It was not like O'Connor's limb – it was a poor, shrunken, emaciated thing which we could not have recognised for his.⁵⁸

The *Star* editor's next lines almost outdid his employer in their sophistry. Recounting O'Connor's avowed belief that he would perish in his 'stone coffin', Hill declared:

He then told me a tale which might have made the stones to mutiny, and when we said the people should be roused about it, he seized our hand and said, 'The people must not know it. It is imposed upon me not even to publish even the state of my health ... if I do, all visits will be stopped ... FROM ME NOT A WORD MUST APPEAR.'⁵⁹

'We pledged ourselves it should be so', wrote Hill in the process of breaking his vow.⁶⁰ Numerous 'refined cruelties' were charged against O'Connor's scheming captors. On one occasion Joshua Hobson's elderly mother journeyed from Leeds to visit the 'caged lion', only to be denied admittance. 'We understand O'Connor stormed furiously on being informed', declared the *Star*.⁶¹

'Sentimental' romance pitted honourable heroes against evil villains, and O'Connor invariably presented his struggle as a personal duel with the Marquis of Normanby.⁶² He 'aimed a dagger at my heart' claimed Feargus of his aristocratic foe, 'and having failed to murder me, he then assaulted my honour'.⁶³ As Lord Lieutenant

⁵⁷ R. Evans, *The fabrication of virtue: English prison architecture, 1750-1840* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 255. In 1840-41 the York Castle yard consisted of the thirteenth-century Clifford's Tower, a new radial-shaped penitentiary, the renowned English Baroque Debtor's Prison dating from the early eighteenth century, and the later Palladian Female Prison and Assize Courts. See also Royal Commission on historical monuments, *York Castle: an illustrated history* (London, 1973).

⁵⁸ *Northern Star*, 20 June 1840, p. 7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* Emphasis in original.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Northern Star*, 29 August 1840, p. 4.

⁶² For Normanby see L. Stephen and S. Lee, eds., *Dictionary of national biography*, XV (London, 1937-8), pp. 1116-17.

⁶³ *Northern Star*, 11 July 1840, p. 7. See also 18 July 1840, pp. 6-7; 1 August 1840, p. 4; 8

of Ireland, Normanby had also previously developed a close working relationship with Daniel O'Connell. In earlier chapters we saw the extent of the Chartist wrath incurred by O'Connell's pro-Whig stance on a succession of radical grievances in mid-to-late 1830s, following the Lichfield House 'compact'.⁶⁴ The links between Normanby and the Liberator were not lost on Chartists such as the Whitby activist and writer John Watkins, whose home was located near Normanby's Yorkshire estate.⁶⁵ In September 1840 Watkins denounced his neighbour as a 'four-eyed, haggard, tyrant' who had won 'Dan's broad, brazen smile'.⁶⁶ Somewhat ironically the Home Secretary had himself published a number of romance novels in the 1820s and 1830s, leading to William Hill's denigration of the 'namby pamby Lord – the novel writer'.⁶⁷ 'Vile tyrant-boss! Hotspur's scorn'd fop art thou', spat Watkins rather more vehemently.⁶⁸

Amongst the wider Chartist leadership there were a number of critics of O'Connor's theatrical leadership style: William Lovett's disdain for O'Connorite appellations ('unwashed faces, unshorn chins and dirty habits') and his rationalist objections to Chartist pageantry are well known.⁶⁹ In 1840 Watkins had become a regular contributor to the *Star* on subjects such as 'SCRIPTURAL CHARTISM' and 'CHARTISM FROM SHAKESPEARE'; within a few years, however, he too was writing on the perils of 'MAN WORSHIP', and in 1844 he unsuccessfully attempted

August 1840, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Hovell, *The Chartist movement*, pp. 70-3; H. Treble, 'O'Connor, O'Connell and the attitudes of Irish immigrants towards Chartism in the north of England, 1838-48' in J. Butt and I.F. Clarke, eds., *The Victorians and social protest: a symposium* (Newton Abbot, 1973), especially pp. 34-43; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, pp. 126-8.

⁶⁵ See Roberts, 'Who wrote to the *Northern Star*?', p. 57.

⁶⁶ *Northern Star*, 12 September 1840, p. 7.

⁶⁷ *Northern Star*, 4 July 1840, p. 4. Normanby's novels included *Matilda: a tale of the day* (London, 1825), *Yes and no: a tale of the day* (London, 1828) and *The contrast* (London, 1832).

⁶⁸ *Northern Star*, 12 September 1840, p. 7.

⁶⁹ Lovett, *Life and struggles of William Lovett*, II, p. 252; Pickering, *Chartism and the Chartists in Manchester and Salford*, pp. 168, 170.

to 'impeach' O'Connor for 'treason to the people'.⁷⁰ Watkins' criticisms made at this time also give us a rare insight into the cleavage between O'Connor's conditions whilst in prison and their rendering for public consumption. 'I thought O'Connor all that he seemed', Watkins recalled, 'a self-denying, disinterested, devoted friend of freedom and virtue':

Indeed, I regarded him as a personification of the Cause ... With a view to raising his spirits, which seemed very low, I conceived the romantic idea of performing a pilgrimage to his cell, as to the shrine of a martyred patriot.⁷¹

Having then changed his mind, Watkins only decided to proceed after he found his literary efforts suddenly being passed over by the *Star*. He eventually found O'Connor in a spacious room 'with many singing birds to cheer his captivity':

He showed me his portrait, which had just come from the engraver's ... it was just the crying look which he wore in prison. He had many books and papers to beguile his time, with a sofa and easy chair to comfort him, and he was constantly cheered by congratulatory addresses from all parts of the country. His dinners were brought to him hot from a tavern in the city. The place looked more like a parlour than a prison.⁷²

According to Watkins' contemporary account of his pilgrimage, he was prevented by the Under-Governor from delivering to his hero an address from the 'best workmen of Whitby'.⁷³ 'This piece of petty vexation', of course, 'annoyed the noble O'Connor'.⁷⁴ Not to be denied, Watkins composed a fawning sonnet to 'that man of men!' which Hill duly published in mid-October 1840.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ J. Watkins, *John Watkins to the people in answer of Feargus O'Connor* ... (New York, 1986 rep.). For 'MAN WORSHIP' see *Northern Star*, 7 January 1843, p. 7; 14 January 1843, p. 4; 21 January 1843, p. 7; 28 January 1843, p. 7; 11 February 1844, p. 7. For 'SCRIPTURAL CHARTISM' see *Northern Star*, 12 September 1840, p. 7; 19 September 1840, p. 7; 3 October 1840, p. 6; 31 October 1840, p. 7. For 'CHARTISM FROM SHAKESPEARE' see *Northern Star*, 25 April 1840, p. 7; 2 May 1840, p. 7; 9 May 1840, p. 7; 23 May 1840, p. 7; 6 June 1840, p. 7.

⁷¹ Watkins, *John Watkins to the people*, p. 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Northern Star*, 17 October 1840, p. 7.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* Watkins visited O'Connor again in early 1841. See *Northern Star*, 20 February 1841, p. 4.

⁷⁵ *Northern Star*, 17 October 1840, p. 3.

Watkins' apparent financial dependence upon the *Star* was shared by many local Chartist activists engaged in the 'Trade of Agitation'.⁷⁶ A number of commercial aspects of the dungeon romance should not be overlooked. The *Star* sold more copies in 1840-41 than at any other period apart from the millenarian year of 1839.⁷⁷ The prison portrait Watkins viewed was subsequently distributed to subscribers in April 1841, after O'Connor had reduced the original supplementary price from eightpence to sixpence-halfpenny.⁷⁸ Later, medals celebrating the liberation ceremony were also distributed.⁷⁹ Non-Chartist entrepreneurs also evidently saw opportunities in O'Connor's torment. His trial (like that of the Newport leaders, Frost, Williams and Jones) was included in popular chronicles of sensational cases and infamous miscarriages of justice such as *Wilson's Remarkable Trials*.⁸⁰ In late October 1840 the *Star* was forced to parry a pamphlet circulating in Manchester which alleged that O'Connor had been poisoned and found dead in his cell.⁸¹ Chartist identity and pride, ultimately, were closely tied up with O'Connor's virile demagogic persona. Despite the pervasive images of illness, lethargy and death mobilised around his imprisonment, it was also emphasised (without any sense of contradiction) that O'Connor's spirit remained undiminished, that he would conquer adversity, and that hope remained for the faithful.

The basic romance elements of alienation, struggle and return had a number of advantages as propaganda. Firstly, everyone knew how the story was supposed to end;

⁷⁶ See Pickering, 'Chartism and the "Trade of Agitation"', pp. 221-37.

⁷⁷ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 86.

⁷⁸ *Northern Star*, 16 January 1841, p. 5; 6 March 1841, p. 5.

⁷⁹ *Northern Star*, 20 November 1841, p. 5; 11 December 1841, p. 4. Illustration 5 is taken from Roberts and Thompson, *Images of Chartism*, p. 59.

⁸⁰ See the advertisement in *Northern Star*, 20 June 1840, p. 6. For similar literature upon the Newport leaders' trial for treason see J. Warner and W.A. Gunn, *John Frost and the Chartist movement in Monmouthshire* (Newport, 1939), pp. 19-20.

⁸¹ *Northern Star*, 31 October 1840, p. 5.

secondly, a sense of hope was inherent in the form. Consider some verses 'composed on the miserable and noisy loom' by Samuel Whitelocke of Glasgow well over a year before O'Connor's release. This ode not only contains the 'night-world' themes of alienation O'Connor and his conspirators were busily propagating, but also pre-empted his ascension from his dungeon. After some ritualised flattery ('All hail O'CONNOR! Freedom's hero, hail!') Whitelocke conceded the fall of his champion: 'And thou art from thine own bright lofty sphere/ Flung down at once, amid earth's vilest things'.⁸²

In sentimental romance, however, what goes down must come up:

Yet from the darkness of the present hour,
Thou shall emerge still more sublimely bright,
Clothed with fresh lustre, and terrific might ...
For hope, even now, in whispers sweet reveals
The morn that comes on gold careering wheels ...
Garlands and triumphs await thy advent day,
When sorrow's clouds shall part and flee away.⁸³

With these lines an otherwise anonymous Glasgow weaver actively contributed to the narrative of hope being cultivated by O'Connor, Hill, Hobson, Watkins and company. The almost oracular quality of Whitelocke's verse also evokes what Northrop Frye has called the 'special knowledge' embedded in the romance form itself.⁸⁴

II

In 1840 Chartists began to reorganise. The subsequent battle over the neo-Owenite plan of national association authored by William Lovett and John Collins (the 'New

⁸² *Northern Star*, 27 June 1840, p. 7.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Frye, *The secular scripture*, pp. 6-7. Frye's humanist theory of romance has been extensively re-worked in Jameson, *The political unconscious*.

Move') has long been a staple of the movement's historiography.⁸⁵ O'Connor's victory in the test of leadership which eventuated in 1841 was all the more remarkable given his circumstances. From about the time of the formative Manchester conference of July 1840, in fact, a distinct change in the tone of some of the dungeon correspondence is discernible. In a long series of letters said to have been smuggled out of the Castle (in a mirror carried by a released prisoner) O'Connor detailed his experiences and a suppressed Home Office investigation of his treatment.⁸⁶ This illicit 'LOOKING GLASS' correspondence also carried O'Connor's ideas about re-organisation, including the oft-mooted establishment of a metropolitan daily Chartist paper.⁸⁷ But perhaps the most intriguing feature of the letters are not so much their content, but rather the triumphant tone which surrounded their publication. 'My voice has burst the dungeon walls; once more you shall hear it', O'Connor proclaimed at this important juncture.⁸⁸

Iorwerth Prothero and James Epstein point out that the *Star* had not been particularly critical of Lovett's and Collins' ideas when they were first published in 1840, and William Hill freely dissented from O'Connor's strictures on 'CHURCH CHARTISM' the following year.⁸⁹ Following somewhat clandestine moves to sound out support for the alternative National Association, however, an intense attack upon 'CHURCH CHARTISM, TEETOTAL CHARTISM, KNOWLEDGE CHARTISM,

⁸⁵ Compare Gammage, *History*, pp. 195-6; Hovell, *The Chartist movement*, ch. 15; Ward, *Chartism*, ch. 6; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, ch. 7; Thompson, *The Chartists*, ch. 10.

⁸⁶ *Northern Star*, 20 June 1840, p. 4; 11 July 1840, pp. 6-8.

⁸⁷ *Northern Star*, 18 July 1840, p. 6. This proposal was rejected by delegates, although O'Connor later established the ill-fated Chartist daily, the *Evening Star*, in 1842. See Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, pp. 80-1; Thompson, *The Chartists*, p. 54.

⁸⁸ *Northern Star*, 11 July 1840, p. 7.

⁸⁹ Prothero, 'Chartism in London', p. 98; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 260. For Hill's criticisms of O'Connor see *Northern Star*, 16 January 1841, p. 5; 3 April 1841, p. 4.

AND HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE CHARTISM' was launched in the *Star*.⁹⁰ The New Move was denounced as an affront to Chartist unity, and a ploy designed to remove O'Connor from the head of the movement. Eventually Daniel O'Connell was implicated as the malign architect behind the challenge, and the O'Connorite rank and file once again groped for words with which to execrate 'the arch-traitor Dan, his dupes, slaves and hungry tools'.⁹¹ O'Connor's victory was also reflected in the public addresses of the faithful: 'Let it be known to the world, that there is not one man in the parish of Ripponden', wrote a correspondent, 'who cares one straw for the "New Move"'. Feargus O'Connor is our star pilot, and shall and will be ours'.⁹²

This victory was actually the second success O'Connor had initiated through his regular prison letters. Early in 1841 the Leeds Parliamentary Reform Association (LPRA), which had been founded in May 1840 by a number of wealthy industrialists and Parliamentary liberals, invited O'Connell to speak at a large meeting to be held at J.G. Marshall's Leeds mill. From his cell O'Connor exhorted Yorkshire Chartists to hold an intimidatory 'Welcome to Dan' demonstration on Holbeck Moor, before attending the LPRA festival in force.⁹³ In the end O'Connell failed to attend the meeting, where prominent liberals such as Joseph Hume, J.A. Roebuck, Sharman Crawford and Colonel Thompson were joined on the platform by a number of Chartists. In triumph, and at 'enormous expense', the first page of the *Star* was emblazoned with a large satirical illustration of 'THE GOOSE SHOW'.⁹⁴ As Epstein notes, this manoeuvre effectively 'marked the end of the LPRA'.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ *Northern Star*, 3 April 1841, p. 7; 24 April 1841, p. 7.

⁹¹ *Northern Star*, 1 May 1841, p. 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2. See also 8 May 1841, pp. 1-2.

⁹³ *Northern Star*, 16 January 1841, p. 1; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 268.

⁹⁴ *Northern Star*, 23 January 1841, pp. 1, 5, 8.

⁹⁵ Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 270.

However, before these controversies over direction and collaboration gained momentum, O'Connor's hardships began to be overshadowed in the *Star* by long accounts of demonstrations in England and Scotland following the release of a number of Chartist prisoners.⁹⁶ One of the biggest triumphal entries was held at Manchester for Peter Murray McDouall and John Collins in August 1840. Large bodies of radicals from local towns first marched to the traditional central meeting place of Stevenson Square, before proceeding westwards to Salford Crescent where the liberated patriots were met *en masse*. McDouall, who 'bore evident marks of the shameful treatment he had received from the merciless Whigs', was presented with a 'splendid green scarf' and a satin rosette by a deputation of the Hulme Female Radical Association.⁹⁷ On the return march to the Carpenter's Hall in Manchester, 'considerable groaning' and 'loud cheers' were given as the throng passed the *Manchester Guardian* and *Advertiser* offices respectively.⁹⁸ At the Exchange 'the "nobs" came running out to witness the sight'.⁹⁹ And as the parade passed the Mosley Arms Hotel 'three cheers were given for Feargus O'Connor, that being the house where he stops on his visits to Manchester'.¹⁰⁰

These aural manifestations of opprobrium and approval mingled with the visual symbols which demarcated Chartist incursions of civic space – the ubiquitous green sashes and ribbons, the flags and banners inscribed with their dire warnings and predictions. Again, these visual symbols had rich historical resonances. For instance, when McDouall was given his scarf he first had to remove a white beaver hat given to

⁹⁶ For typical demonstrations see *Northern Star*, 1 August 1840, pp. 8, 1; 12 September 1840, pp. 1, 6; 19 September 1840, p. 1; 26 September 1840, pp. 7-8; 3 October 1840, pp. 7-8; 10 October 1840, p. 3; 24 October 1840, p. 1; 11 November 1840, p. 1.

⁹⁷ *Northern Star*, 22 August 1840, p. 7.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

him earlier in the day by the 'men of Audenshaw'.¹⁰¹ Clearly, the white hat still had a meaningful currency for the children of Peterloo. Nonetheless, the term 'fustian jacket' had also become closely associated with a militant form of Chartist allegiance – not least through O'Connor's persistent cultivation of the appellation in his open letters. As mentioned earlier, the 1841 national petition was borne to the Commons by a delegation of eighteen stonemasons dressed in fustian.¹⁰² Requesting the release of all political offenders and a free pardon for the Newport leaders Frost, Williams and Jones, this memorial also demanded the adoption of the People's Charter 'without any alteration'.¹⁰³ When the Commons divided the numbers appeared 58 apiece, and Thomas Duncombe's motion in favour was only lost by the speaker's casting vote. William Hick, the Leeds activist, put the unexpectedly close finish to verse:

But joy to the 'fustians' who sign'd!
And joy to the glorious 'eighteen'!
And joy be to him in whose heart were enshrin'd
Though a barrier of bolts is between.¹⁰⁴

Daniel O'Connell, who had supported Duncombe's motion in debate, managed to alienate Chartists even further by leaving the house before the division took place.

As these demonstrations took place O'Connor must have begun to think very carefully about the possibilities of his own release.¹⁰⁵ Yet one of the most striking features of dungeon romance was its inherently participatory character. A 'Demonstration Committee' had been formed by local democrats at York, for example, as early as March 1841.¹⁰⁶ It was responsible for co-ordinating the release

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Northern Star*, 29 May 1841, p. 4.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Northern Star*, 5 June 1841, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ An anonymous correspondent was assured that O'Connor received the paper regularly. See *Northern Star*, 12 September 1840, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ *Northern Star*, 3 April 1841, 3. For Chartist organisation and activity see A.J. Peacock, 'Chartism in York', *York History*, 3 (n.d.), pp. 118-46.

ceremonies originally expected to take place in November. However, following a decision to remit the remainder of O'Connor's sentence (due to additional medical evidence) he was freed with comparatively little fanfare on Thursday, 26 August 1841 – or just as Peel's Tory administration was about to assume office. This unexpected turn of events evidently threw the Demonstration Committee's plans into some disarray. Some press reports even claimed that O'Connor had bluntly refused to quit the gaol when first requested.¹⁰⁷ 'MR. O'CONNOR has broken loose sooner than we wished, or than he had originally intended', a curious note in the *Star* later revealed.¹⁰⁸ On Monday the 30th, however, O'Connor took leave of his hotel apartment and re-appeared at the Castle Gates at one o'clock as originally planned. According to the *Star*, his fustian suit 'had been manufactured expressly for the occasion, and was presented by those who had not only his welfare at heart, but were imbued with his principles, and with his spirit – the blistered hands and fustian jackets of Manchester'.¹⁰⁹ Does this much publicised return, then, evoke a new working-class consciousness? Or does it tell us more about *Chartist* identity in the summer of 1841? And was O'Connor's suit the only symbolic revelation of the day?

III

York was not a Chartist stronghold, and much of the visual paraphernalia used at the liberation demonstration had to be requisitioned from other localities. Nevertheless, a carnival-like atmosphere seems to have been imposed upon the ancient city: 'nearly

¹⁰⁷ *Times*, 31 August 1841, p. 5. See also *Leeds Mercury*, 28 August 1841, pp. 4, 7.

¹⁰⁸ *Northern Star*, 11 September 1841, p. 5.

¹⁰⁹ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 6.

all the shops were closed in', said the *Star*. 'In fact, the day was an entire holiday'.¹¹⁰ Apart from the considerable numbers of supporters who had travelled from Chartist communities in the West Riding, approximately 100 elected delegates from English and Scottish localities made the pilgrimage to witness O'Connor's return. The London stonemasons sent one of the 1841 petition-bearers as their delegate.¹¹¹ Some followed the example of O'Connor's innovative barnstorming tours, making the journey to York by the newly completed Leeds railway. Joseph Linney, on the other hand, was said to have walked all the way from Manchester. Each of the delegates carried a flag denoting their place of origin, adding to the array of colour. 'Mr. William Martin, of Bradford, was particularly conspicuous: he had a large green flag, on which was inscribed – "William Martin, M.P., formerly an inhabitant of Northallerton Hell-hole, delegate for Bradford"'.¹¹²

This inscription recorded Martin's contestation of the recent general election as a Chartist candidate at Bradford, where he had won the show of hands.¹¹³ Before his imprisonment at Northallerton, Martin had also spent six months in York Castle, having been arrested in Sheffield just prior to the tumultuous 'silent protests'. At the conclusion of his trial in March 1840, Martin facetiously beseeched the judge to let him remain at York, where he had been 'very comfortable'.¹¹⁴ At Northallerton, however, the Irish Chartist found himself placed upon a treadmill and subjected to the 'silent system'.¹¹⁵ Described by a prison inspector as a 'most dangerous, violent and

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ See *Northern Star*, 2 October 1841, p. 8.

¹¹⁴ *Leeds Mercury*, 28 March 1840, p. 7; Godfrey, 'The Chartist prisoners', p. 216.

¹¹⁵ *Northern Star*, 6 March 1841, p. 7. Martin had also unsuccessfully petitioned Normanby to be transferred from Northallerton to York Castle, although he was later removed to Lancaster Gaol. See *Northern Star*, 13 June 1840, p. 1; 25 July 1840, p. 2; 19 December 1840, p. 5.

unprincipled man', in October 1840 the *Times* fleetingly portrayed Martin 'unlike his lucky friend Feargus O'Connor ... seated on his stool picking oakum and preserving a total silence'.¹¹⁶

O'Connor himself had actually been tried twice at York. The first prosecution of July 1839, for publishing a criminal libel in the *Star*, has been largely passed over by historians.¹¹⁷ This neglect is not surprising, because the case commenced just as 'ulterior measures' such as the sacred month were being debated following the rejection of the first national petition. At his first appearance O'Connor was also found guilty, although he was never called up for sentence.¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, in the context of the creative possibilities drawn upon in the romance of the Whig dungeon, it is important to bear in mind that Feargus had contested two legal battles with the state at York.

Assize sittings were traditionally complemented by a considerable degree of pageantry, and these customs had survived relatively intact at York.¹¹⁹ Visiting judges dressed in their professional attire of scarlet, ermine and periwig were generally met by local dignitaries just south of the city walls at Dringhouses, before returning to the Castle where the Assize was formally opened. This mobile display of the majesty of the law was a substantial visual and aural spectacle involving bailiffs armed with javelins, liveried attendants, trumpets and pealing bells. Before O'Connor's first trial

¹¹⁶ Thompson, 'Ireland and the Irish in English radicalism', p. 134; *Times*, 24 October 1840, p. 6.
¹¹⁷ Compare Read and Glasgow, *Feargus O'Connor*, p. 85; Epstein, *The lion of freedom*, p. 173. Hovell, *The Chartist movement*, p. 222 confuses the first and second trial. A.J. Peacock does not mention the first prosecution in either of his articles on O'Connor's imprisonment and York Chartism. For the proceedings see *Northern Star*, 27 July 1839, p. 6; *Charter*, 27 July 1839, p. 418; *Leeds Mercury*, 20 July 1839, p. 5. The case was brought by the Guardians of the Warminster Union over a reprinted report which claimed that a child inmate had eaten his own flesh before starving to death. See *Northern Star*, 22 December 1838, p. 7.

¹¹⁸ *Leeds Mercury*, 21 March 1840 (Supplement), p. 2.

¹¹⁹ For assize cavalcade and ceremonial procedures see J.M. Beattie, *Crime and the courts in England, 1660-1800* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 314-18.

in 1839, the judges were met by the High Sheriff 'in his state carriage with trumpeters, halberdiers, and tradesmen, the City Sheriff ... in his state carriage, with his friends and tradesman on horseback, the Lord Mayor's carriage, and several private carriages'.¹²⁰ Prior to his second trial in March 1840 a similar celebration took place, the High Sheriff being attended by 100 of his tenantry, 'all well mounted, and their bridles trimmed with blue and yellow favours'.¹²¹ The geography of this tradition is also arguably quite significant, because the O'Connor demonstration almost seems to have been designed as a radical contestation of the kind of state pageantry customarily associated with Assize cavalcades.

Whilst Chartist processions in the urban heartlands of the movement usually took well-worn (and thus meaningful) routes, no such precedent existed at York. An intimidatory display, in effect, had to be manufactured from scratch – and what better model to appropriate and usurp than the Assize, the forum of repeated Chartist persecution? Provocative symbolic confrontations with this arm of the law were not unknown. 'God save the People!' exclaimed a Chartist billposter calling upon Newcastle radicals to peaceably invade the Assize sermon graced by visiting judges in July 1839.¹²² The York procession was clearly described in the *Star* and can be traced quite accurately. Intriguingly, the O'Connor demonstration commenced approximately where Assize cavalcade traditionally ended – and *vice-versa*. The Chartist starting point of the Castle, of course, was primarily governed by the visual pretence of O'Connor's fustian-clad 'liberation'. The parade then traversed the four principal entry points to York (Walmgate, Monk, Bootham and Micklegate Bars) as if the

¹²⁰ *Leeds Mercury*, 13 July 1839, p. 5.

¹²¹ *Leeds Mercury*, 7 March 1840, p. 5.

¹²² *Times*, 6 August 1839, p. 6; Gammage, *History*, p. 149; Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist struggle', p. 131.

demonstrators were symbolically taking possession of the 'the most benighted and corrupt city in the empire'.¹²³ The destination of the Knavesmire racecourse grandstand near Dringhouses, it must be said, may have been determined by entirely practical imperatives. A large indoor room was required for festivities, and Chartists often had great problems in obtaining this kind of accommodation – particularly in such a 'priest-ridden' city as York.¹²⁴ Nonetheless, the contestatory tendencies evident in the geography of the liberation march also extended to some of the most striking visual features of the demonstration.

Consider O'Connor's triumphal carriage, which was specially built for the occasion by local Chartists. A highly decorated vehicle, it was 'composed of green velvet, on a pink velvet ground work', drawn by six horses and attended by postilions in green and white livery. The *Star* described the car as being shaped in 'the form of a conch-shell', whilst another contemporary newspaper report said that it was in 'the form of a cornucopia'.¹²⁵ Note the use of the traditional colour of liberty as opposed to the livery of the local aristocracy. The shell design is perhaps more interesting, as there is no apparent precedent in the radical-Chartist symbolic repertoire. However, John Watkins' reverie written after his first visit to York Castle did include a close metaphor:

O'CONNOR! I have made my pilgrimage
 Across the lonely mountain moor to thee;
 Thoughts, hallow'd as my steps, did me engage
 As onward where, enshrin'd with liberty,
 Hope's path I paced and won my scallop shell.
 Oh holier than the 'House of Houses' far

¹²³ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 4.

¹²⁴ Peacock, 'Chartism in York', pp. 119-20.

¹²⁵ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 6; Peacock, 'Chartism in York', p. 130. Compare the triumphal carriage used by Daniel O'Connell in Dublin following his liberation from Richmond prison in 1844. See *Times*, 6 September 1844, pp. 5-6 and O. MacDonagh, *The emancipist: Daniel O'Connell, 1830-47* (London, 1989), pp. 247-52.

Is now the Castle with its altar cell.¹²⁶

The scallop shell reference alludes to the tokens traditionally worn by pilgrims who had made the journey to a tomb of St James the disciple at Compostela in Galicia.¹²⁷ Watkins also probably alluded to the opening lines of Walter Raleigh's 'The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage', a meditation possibly written whilst Raleigh was under the sentence of death in 1603, but commonly ascribed to his last hours in 1618: 'Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,/ My staff of faith to walk upon'.¹²⁸ The image of a condemned hero certainly accords with O'Connor's carefully cultivated prison persona in 1840-41.

No visual representation of O'Connor's triumphal carriage survives, although the conch-shell-cornucopia descriptions do suggest a spiral, horn-like design. Perhaps the float was intended as a visual summons, calling the faithful to bear witness to O'Connor's return? Traditional symbolic associations of the cornucopia with prosperity and fecundity, and the conch with rebirth may appear rather tenuous in isolation, but they were not inconsistent with the return phase of the dungeon romance.¹²⁹ Nor can the sensual connotations of the car be completely dismissed – it is certainly difficult to imagine an upright idol such as the 'People's William' (Gladstone) ensconced in such a voluptuous vehicle. O'Connor's chariot of deliverance invoked the libertine – the 'Lion of Freedom' roused for battle. His frugal attire, on the other hand, implied a stoic, celibate incarceration. These paradoxical associations were later juxtaposed in a fleeting public ceremony which had distinctly religious overtones. Just after O'Connor's arrival at Knavesmire, 'several carrier

¹²⁶ *Northern Star*, 17 October 1840, p. 3.

¹²⁷ J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: an image of mediaeval religion* (London 1975), p. 174 and *passim*.

¹²⁸ See A. Latham, ed., *The poems of Sir Walter Raleigh* (London, 1951), pp. 140-2.

¹²⁹ A. de Vries, ed., *Dictionary of symbols and imagery* (Amsterdam, 1974), pp. 110, 419.

pigeons, charged with important news of his appearance amongst the people, were let off'.¹³⁰ Given that this assignment was now virtually redundant, the release of the birds must have implied the idea of resurrection to those present.

O'Connor's last dungeon letter contained a number of 'night-world' motifs: exile, tyranny, brutality, solitude, immobility, the ever-present spectre of death. An incipient return to a superhuman demagogic identity, however, was also intimated:

TO THE
FUSTIAN JACKETS, BLISTERED
HANDS, & UNSHORN CHINS
MY BELOVED FRIENDS,

On the 11th of May I was snatched from you by the ruthless arm of tyranny; on Monday next I shall be restored to you by the hand of Providence, and upon that day you will judge for yourselves whether nearly sixteen months of solitary – mind, solitary – confinement in a condemned cell, in a felon's prison, and treated brutally and in violation of every rule by which prison discipline is administered to the worst of felons, has damped my ardour, or slackened my zeal. On Monday you shall judge whether oppression has broken O'Connor's heart, or O'Connor has broken oppression's head. Till then, farewell. *On leaving you, my motto was Universal Suffrage and no Surrender.* On joining you once more, the same words will be upon my banner. O! Monday next will be a great and glorious day for Chartism and right. I shall, with God's help, aided by the people's prayers, gain a giant's strength, 'twixt this and the hour for which I pant.

Ever your fond and devoted friend,

To the death,

FEARGUS O'CONNOR

York Castle, 25th of the 16th month of confinement in the Condemned Cell.¹³¹

Whilst O'Connor found it convenient to continue the mock-fiction of his 'Condemned Cell', the images of bodily degeneration so important in the early phase of the dungeon romance are no longer apparent. Given the return to his pre-imprisonment identity hinted at the end of the letter, this element of the narrative had simply lost its relevance.

¹³⁰ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 6.

¹³¹ *Northern Star*, 28 August 1841, p. 1. Italics in original.

In the context of the romance of the Whig dungeon, O'Connor's appearance in fustian primarily signalled his unity with the Chartist body. This symbolic function was not necessarily synonymous with the rather more complex idea of the emergence of a working-class consciousness in the early-Chartist period. As postmodern critics of class never tire of reminding us, symbolic meanings are 'invariably ambiguous or diffuse'.¹³² The plain cloth of labour worn by many at York, for instance, might be seen as another inversion of the lavish ceremonial costumes associated with civic pageantry. The multiple and potentially contradictory meanings touched upon in relation to O'Connor's suit and carriage might even point to competing claims about what he represented to Chartists hailing from different locations. Too often the rank and file has been treated by historians as an homogenous entity possessed of an impossibly unified purpose of mind. The triumphal car, manufactured by a small band of activists at one of the domestic outposts of the Chartist 'empire', arguably tended to accentuate the cultural *differences* which long had distinguished the 'gentleman leader' from his constituency. Alternately, the Mancunian gift of fustian does seem to signify a *collective* identity forged in social and political struggle. But the fustian suit was only one element of the counter-pageant, just as the liberation demonstration was only one phase of the Chartist quest.

Paul Pickering points out that O'Connor explicitly spoke of the meaning and significance of his suit during his first public speech made at the Castle gates. His words at this point were surely carefully chosen, and something of a revelation:

I have appeared, Brother Chartists and working men, amongst you in fustian, the emblem of your order, in order to convince you, at a single glance, that what I was when I left you, the same I do return to you.¹³³

¹³² Vernon, *Politics and the people*, p. 114.

¹³³ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 6.

O'Connor then re-deployed the metaphor of a dream, a particularly significant rhetorical tactic in the progress of the dungeon romance:

I pass over what has occurred as a dream; I turn my back on York Castle; I forget the past, and shall devote my mind to the future ... 'Onward we conquer, backward and we fall'.¹³⁴

The nightmare had passed. Not only had O'Connor survived a life-sapping journey into the bowels of Whiggery; he had returned the same man, dressed in a badge of *Chartist* allegiance. Unity, constancy, rebirth and the future: these were the main themes of the liberation demonstration. All that remained was to convert the tremendous political capital invested in O'Connor's martyrdom into mass political mobilisation.

IV

Elsewhere Chartists replicated the York liberation demonstration with considerable zeal. These local celebrations were often militant displays that again emphasise the combative quality of the dungeon romance. At Bromsgrove the 'morning was ushered in by the firing of cannons, which continued at intervals during the day'.¹³⁵ A similarly belligerent martial tribute was made at Winlaton, where locals also pledged themselves to the NCA and unceasing agitation. The *Star* was inundated with enough congratulatory addresses (particularly from Scotland) to 'fill two newspapers'.¹³⁶ The exact timing of O'Connor's staged release was crucial to the authenticity of the regional festivities. At precisely one o'clock, for example, the large crowd which had

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 1.

¹³⁶ *Northern Star*, 11 September 1841, p. 5. See *ibid.*, p. 4 for 'The Lion of Freedom', the famous O'Connorite song James Beattie (of Charterville) later parodied.

gathered in the Leicester marketplace 'burst into a spontaneous shout, which was repeated three times three'.¹³⁷ At this moment a group of Nottingham Chartists assembled in the large room of the King George on Horseback 'commenced firing a *fue de joie* of small arms from the window looking into King Square, and kept this constantly up for an hour'.¹³⁸ The 'college youths of Ashton' also decided upon a boisterous gesture of solidarity when some scholars invaded the parish church and rang 'a true and complete order in beautiful style, consisting of as many changes as Mr. O'Connor had been confined days and nights in the Whig Bastile – 954'.¹³⁹ And at Boston Church, just as the clock struck one, a 'backboner' called Mr. Slight 'had his daughter aged fourteen years, named Emma O'Connor O'Brien Frost'.¹⁴⁰

Historians have noted the spate of political christenings which occurred in 1840-41, and their place within a broader radical-Chartist tradition.¹⁴¹ Yet little comment has been made upon the specific cultural context in which these rites of passage were performed. In July 1840 O'Connor had concluded a 'LOOKING GLASS' letter with the exhortation: 'Let every man sing my Charter song, and call every child, whether boy or girl, that shall be born to you this year, Feargus, that we may keep a record of Whig villainy'.¹⁴² Within weeks an infant was christened Charles Feargus O'Connor at York's Roman Catholic Chapel.¹⁴³ A few weeks later again Ayrshire Chartists told their brethren that they had also christened a young Feargus, 'in order that 'the patriot's name may be transmitted, unimpaired, to

¹³⁷ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 1.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Northern Star*, 11 September 1841, p. 5.

¹⁴¹ Jones, *Chartism and the Chartists*, p. 24; Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist movement*, p. 124; Pickering, *Chartism and the Chartists in Manchester and Salford*, pp. 40-2.

¹⁴² *Northern Star*, 11 July 1840, p. 7.

¹⁴³ *Northern Star*, 1 August 1840, p. 6

posterity'.¹⁴⁴ 'If our governors were wise', wrote another pointedly, 'they would learn something from these slight things'.¹⁴⁵ Here again we see the familiar relationship between O'Connor's letters and energetic local activity, for the 'Young Patriots' column which duly appeared in the *Star* in the Autumn of 1840 recorded hundreds of christenings – and a number of conflicts over the choice of name. 'I think if you refer to the Bible you would not have named this child Feargus O'Connor', two parents were admonished by a priest at Sprowsby, near Norwich.¹⁴⁶ Determined to 'perpetuate his Chartist faith' but not 'prostrate his conscience to the hireling of the state', a radical at Johnshaven on the Scottish coast also 'reserved his "two bairnies" for baptism' until a Chartist missionary could perform the service about the time of O'Connor's release.¹⁴⁷

Fire was symbolically deployed in various ways on the evening of the York demonstration: at Kinross a torchlit procession was held, echoing the legally proscribed parades of late 1838; at Macclesfield, Hebden Bridge, Diss and Parkhead, Chartist rooms were illuminated. So too was Thomas Cooper's Leicester shop window, which was further decorated with 'arches of flowers, O'Connor portraits and inscriptions such as "O'Connor our pride and glory"'.¹⁴⁸ Macclesfield enthusiasts held a typical 'grand festival':

The rooms were decorated with evergreens, flowers and appropriate devices; the walls were hung with portraits of O'Connor, O'Brien, Emmet, and other illustrious patriots. In the evening the rooms were most brilliantly illuminated in every part. Dancing, patriotic speeches, and singing and recitations, were continued to a late hour.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ *Northern Star*, 22 August 1840, p. 4.

¹⁴⁵ *Northern Star*, 29 August 1840, p. 5.

¹⁴⁶ *Northern Star*, 1 May 1841, p. 6.

¹⁴⁷ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 6.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Feargus claimed descent from Irish royalty, and these adornments had something of the trappings of a royal entry, despite the absence of the regal democrat himself.¹⁵⁰ This deficiency of all the synchronised celebrations, however, was soon to be remedied.

In spite of his supposed ill-health, in late 1841 O'Connor embarked upon one of the busiest speaking tours of his entire career. 'I have plunged', he declared, 'into the agitation ocean'.¹⁵¹ First he addressed a number of meetings in and around London, and then was given tremendous public welcomes in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield. Then, as 1841 drew to a close, O'Connor made his way through Chartist strongholds in Scotland before returning to centres in northern England.¹⁵² The following year further speaking tours were undertaken.¹⁵³ One of the initial welcomes was held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in London, where John Watkins moved the first resolution. Other speakers included two of the stonemasons who had borne the national petition in May, Armstrong Walton and Alexander Wilson.¹⁵⁴ Despite 'a bad sore throat and violent inflammation of the chest', O'Connor also made a point of addressing the masons at the Craven's Head Tavern, Drury Lane on 11 September.¹⁵⁵ In that month nearly 400 builders employed on the new Houses of Parliament commenced a long strike over the manner of the timing of their work and the conduct of a notorious foreman.¹⁵⁶ This industrial protest by a trade

¹⁵⁰ O'Neill Daunt, *Eighty-five years*, p. 165; Read and Glasgow, *Feargus O'Connor*, pp. 9-10. For the pageantry of royal entries generally see R. Withington, *English pageantry: an historical outline*, I (2 Vols., New York, 1963 rep.) and D.M. Bergeron, *English civic pageantry, 1558-1642* (London, 1971).

¹⁵¹ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 1.

¹⁵² Posters promoting O'Connor's public entries into Birmingham and Halifax can be found in HO 45/52 and HO 45/43.

¹⁵³ See HO 45/254 for similar demonstrations at Nottingham in February 1842.

¹⁵⁴ *Northern Star*, 4 September 1841, p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ *Northern Star*, 18 September 1841, p. 1.

¹⁵⁶ Goodway, *London Chartism*, p. 180.

now closely associated with Chartism had obvious symbolic overtones. It should also be remembered that the 1842 Chartist national petition, the most militant document of its kind and signed by over three million Britons, was mobilised in conjunction with O'Connor's liberation tours.

At the Birmingham rally in September the York ceremonial carriage was again used to ferry O'Connor, this time to a hustings built near Holloway Head.¹⁵⁷ 'It was not a procession', boasted a correspondent, 'it was a town full of people'.¹⁵⁸ A palpable sense of conquest was bound up in O'Connor's appearance in his conch-shell: 'The fiat has gone forth, and the assembled thousands at Birmingham have decided the question. CHARTISM IS OMNIPOTENT'.¹⁵⁹ A slightly chaotic scene ensued, however, when part of the hustings collapsed and had to be hastily repaired.¹⁶⁰ Significantly, neither the *Birmingham Journal* nor the *Northern Star* made any mention of O'Connor's dress, although the *Journal* did note that the Wolverhampton Chartist and mason Henry Candy appeared on the platform attired in 'his working dress'.¹⁶¹

Paul Pickering suggests that O'Connor wore his ceremonial fustian suit a number of times after the York liberation.¹⁶² Yet in all the many meetings, rallies, parades, dinners, tea-parties and balls that O'Connor attended in England and Scotland during the liberation tours, only one of the lengthy accounts of proceedings published in the *Star* actually makes any mention of his attire.¹⁶³ This exception was

¹⁵⁷ *Northern Star*, 25 September 1841, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1. Emphasis in original.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* *Birmingham Journal*, 25 September 1841, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ *Birmingham Journal*, 25 September 1841, p. 5.

¹⁶² Pickering, 'Class without words', p. 156.

¹⁶³ For liberation demonstrations O'Connor attended in England and Scotland see *Northern Star*, 11 September 1841, pp. 1, 8; 18 September 1841, p. 1; 25 September 1841, pp. 1, 4-5; 2 October 1841, pp. 4, 6, 8; 9 October 1841, pp. 1, 5; 16 October 1841, pp. 4-5; 23 October

the great demonstration held at Manchester approximately a month after O'Connor's release.

Not surprisingly, this triumphal entry traversed roughly the same route as the McDouall-Collins welcome the year before. The scene at Salford Crescent, opined the *Star* correspondent, 'was almost without parallel in the history of Manchester'.¹⁶⁴ Banners and other visual devices abounded, including a large oil painting of 'Feargus O'Connor, with Henry Hunt pointing from the clouds, and giving him the following charge – "Welcome Feargus! thou has been found faithful; now lead my people on to victory"'.¹⁶⁵ O'Connor was also presented with several children bearing his name – they had become living embodiments of Chartist aspiration. A precocious young Feargus could even be seen on horseback 'carrying a small flag, with the names of Feargus O'Connor, Frost and other patriots'.¹⁶⁶ The conch-shell carriage built at York, however, was not used on this occasion. And according to the *Leeds Mercury*, O'Connor's suit had been specifically presented to him by 'the Chartist ladies of Manchester'.¹⁶⁷ Ritualised forms of flattery were significant elements of the leadership style O'Connor had inherited from Hunt, and it would appear that his one recorded re-appearance in a fustian costume was primarily an act of demagogic diplomacy, rather than a concerted feature of the liberation tour. We should also remember that the fustian suits and the triumphal carriage were *gifts* which O'Connor was obliged to acknowledge in public at least once, even if their semiotic connotations were potentially ambivalent, or at cross-purposes with his long-term tactical plans. There

1841, pp. 3-4; 30 October 1841, p. 3; 6 November 1841, pp. 1, 7; 13 November 1841, p. 7; 20 November 1841, p. 3; 27 November 1841, p. 5; 4 December 1841, pp. 4, 6; 11 December 1841, pp. 4, 6; 24 December 1841, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ *Northern Star*, 2 October 1841, p. 6.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Leeds Mercury*, 2 October 1841, p. 7. Italics in original.

was some truth in Feargus' admission that he was ultimately 'led by the people'. The great Manchester mobilisation, moreover, was not the final movement of the dungeon romance. This was saved for O'Connor's entry into Scotland.

Again, just like McDouall and Collins before him, Feargus voyaged from Liverpool, arriving at Greenock on Saturday 9 October. On the following Monday Glasgow Chartists rose before dawn, and bands were sent crashing their way around the streets of Gorbals, Calton and Bridgeton to stir a slumbering populace into action. Later in the morning a large procession also left Greenock for Port Glasgow. Veteran radicals chose to meet here 'in consequence of many of them having witnessed the departure of Mr. O'Connor's father and uncle from that port, when, forty-three years ago, they were consigned for seventeen months to Fort St. George'.¹⁶⁸ Back at Greenock, Feargus was presented with another collection of infants bearing his name (who were all 'kissed very affectionately in rotation') before he was taken to Glasgow on the *Royal Tar*, a steamer manned by a hand-picked Chartist crew and bedecked with ever-greens, laurel, 'branches of birch and Royal Oak'.¹⁶⁹ Note the use of laurel to distinguish the vessel, and its unmistakable associations with conquest, peace and rebirth.

Although O'Connor spoke of his 'changed appearance' – as opposed to his unchanged principles – the extensive *Star* reports of the meetings, processions and social festivities held at Glasgow again reveal nothing about his attire. A report of the mass-meeting held on Glasgow Green, however, was published in the *Glasgow Courier* and subsequently reprinted in the *Times*. Although typically hostile, this

¹⁶⁸ *Northern Star*, 16 October 1841, p. 4.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

account does reveal something of the fair-like atmosphere of larger Chartist gatherings:

The road to the hustings was lined on either side with standings and barrow-loads of apples, speldings, soda-water, gingerbread, and sundry *bonbons*; and there was not wanting the charms of minstrelsy to cheer on the knights of tomfoolery, for at the four entrances to the green were ballad-singers, with lusty lungs, singing—

‘Come away, come away’,
 ‘This is O’Connor’s day’;
 ‘We’ll give him a great demonstration’.¹⁷⁰

The report also stated that O’Connor ‘appeared not, as many expected, in the fustian dress in which he has been meeting the English Chartists of late, but dressed like a gentleman – blue surtout, with velvet collar, and yellow vest’.¹⁷¹ Clearly, Feargus had re-assumed his native demagogic identity, despite his earlier ceremonial use of fustian at York and Manchester.

Later that evening O’Connor consummated his pact with the people. At a soiree attended by about 3,000 Chartists at Glasgow’s New Bazaar Hall, three young women ascended the stage and addressed the liberated hero. After the inevitable comparisons with William Wallace were relayed, Feargus was presented with a ‘truly massive and valuable’ diamond ring.¹⁷² Whilst the constancy of a Mr. McFarlane ‘of Condorratt, the venerable Chartist of 1819, and for twenty years an exile for the advocacy of their principles’ was also rewarded with a ‘handsome ebony staff, silver mounted, and a sovereign for travelling expenses’, Feargus momentarily retreated from centre-stage.¹⁷³ Then, with impeccable timing, he returned to thank his audience:

¹⁷⁰ *Times*, 14 October 1841, p. 5. The report estimated the crowd at 10,000, which is likely to have been considerably underestimated.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² *Northern Star*, 16 October 1841, p. 5.

¹⁷³ McFarlane appears to have been Thomas McFarlane, one of the insurgent Stirlingshire weavers transported to New South Wales in late 1820. See M. McFarlane and A. McFarlane, *The Scottish radicals tried and transported to Australia for treason in 1820* (Sydney, 1975), pp. 38-40.

It requires a man to calm himself for a moment when he receives such an impulse in the cause of liberty such as this. When the name of Wallace is made use of by female lips, and when the sons of Scotia are asked if they would not rather fight for their liberty than pine in slavery, what arguments have I to use to impress upon this large assembly the necessity of working out their political salvation? (Loud Cheers) As I have not words to express my feelings, I shall pass from this point, simply returning my heartfelt thanks to those ladies who have done me the honour to present me with these tokens of regard. I would say, that if before I was engaged to the people, now I am wedded to their cause. (Renewed cheering).¹⁷⁴

The romance of the 'Whig dungeon' was thus resolved with perhaps the classic symbol of unity. Was the ring genuine? Probably not. Was O'Connor lost for words? In all likelihood he had suggested the 'marriage' ceremony himself. But perhaps these suspicions are immaterial. For here we are touching upon one of the most expressive moments of a long struggle.

The resurgence of mass-Chartism in 1841-2 cannot be understood without extended reference to the symbolic realm of political allegiance. Organisational innovation was undoubtedly relevant – but so was the remarkably coherent narrative painstakingly cultivated around O'Connor's trial, imprisonment and liberation. Unlike the chaste quests for constitutional perfection favoured in the post-Chartist period, the dungeon romance was a vulgar, neo-Gothic fantasy cultivated for a proletarian and potentially insurrectionary audience. Yet the Chartist quest – like any romance – also spoke an enticing language of purpose, unity and hope. Extraordinarily, a sense of triumph was manufactured from the unpromising materials of failure and repression. The cultivation of democratic struggle as a quest narrative must also have encouraged Chartists to grasp their earthly travails as a symbolic journey, and one which ultimately reached the shores of Australia.

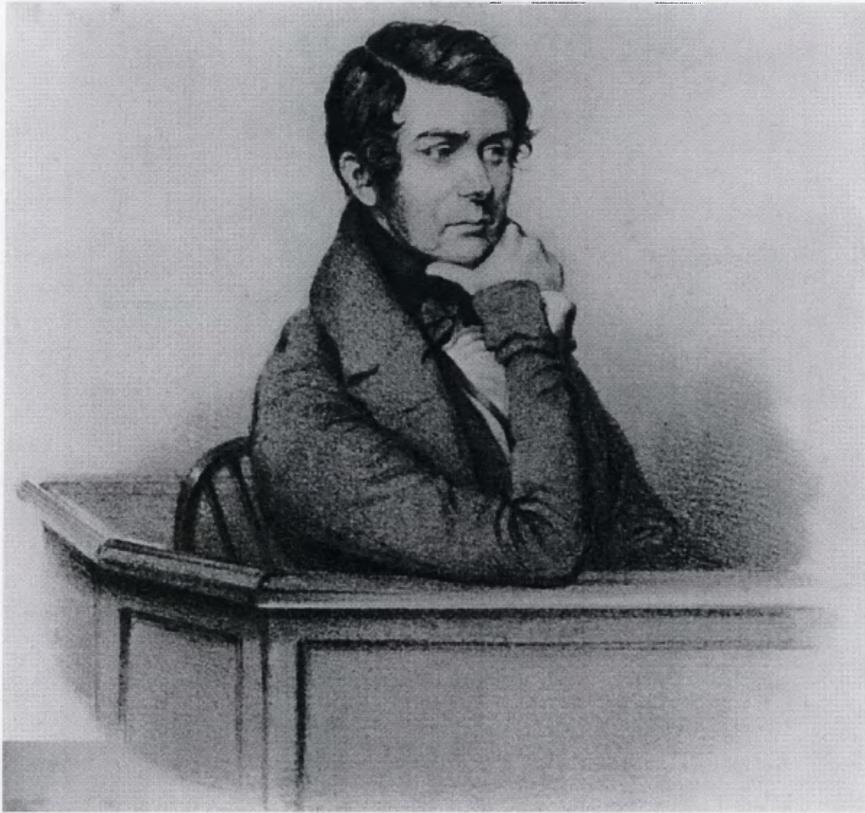
¹⁷⁴ *Northern Star*, 16 October 1841, p. 5.



1. Fergus O'Connor.



2. Thomas Cooper.



3. *John Frost.*



4. *Peter Murray McDouall.*



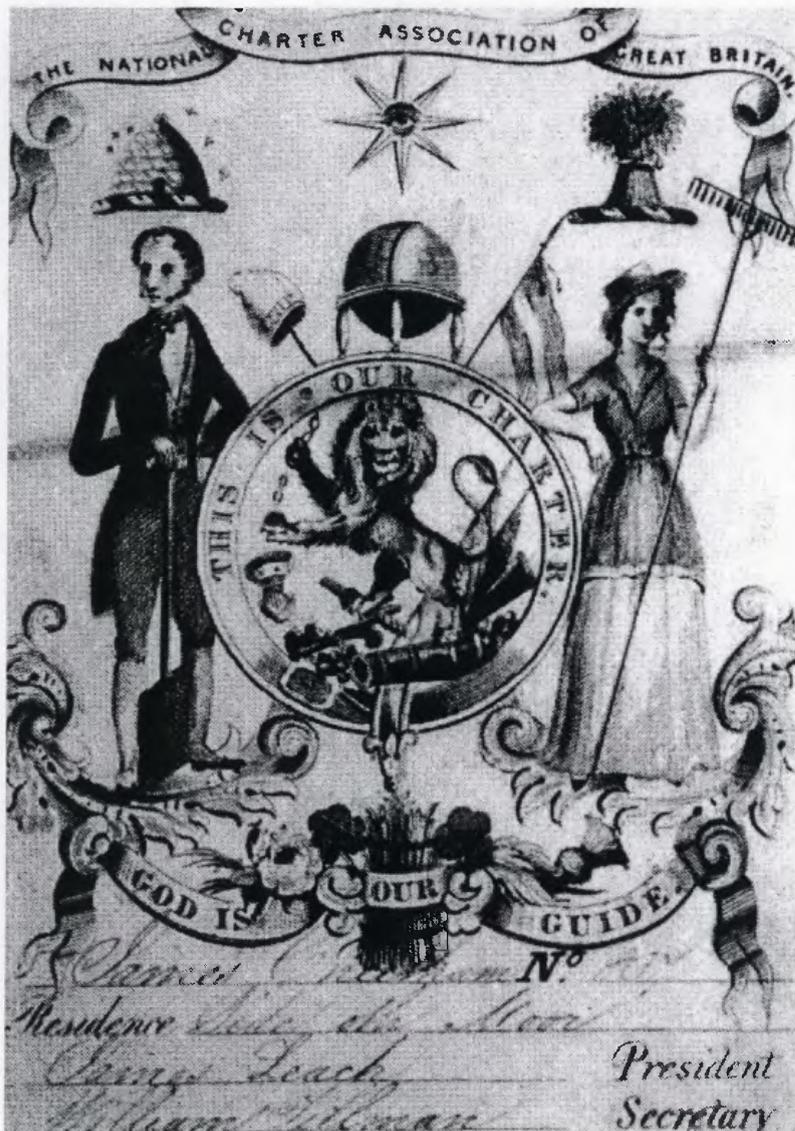
5. O'Connor liberation medal.



6. 1839 Chartist Convention.



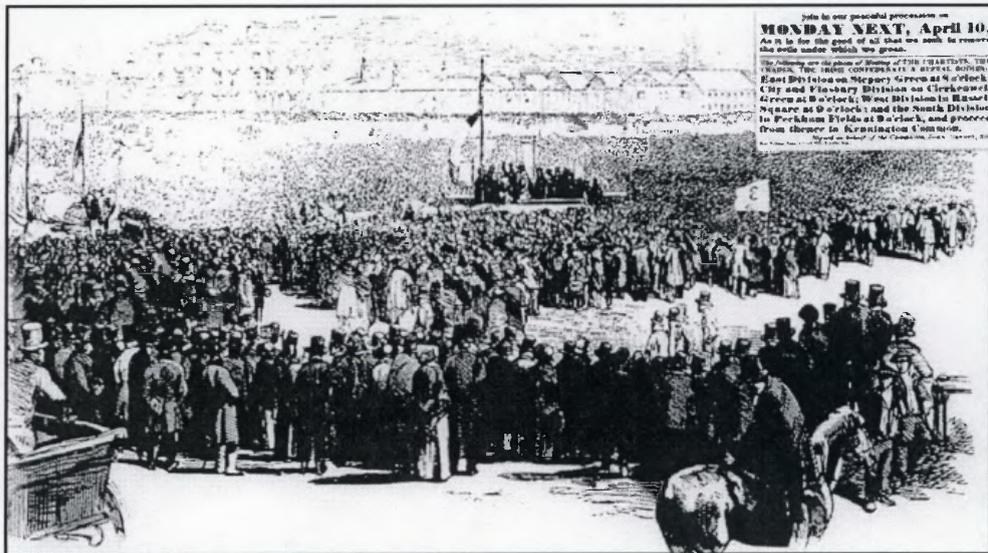
7. Church demonstration.



8. National Charter Association Membership Card.



9. Kennington Common, 10 April 1848.



10. Illustrated London News
 engraving of Kennington Common
 meeting.