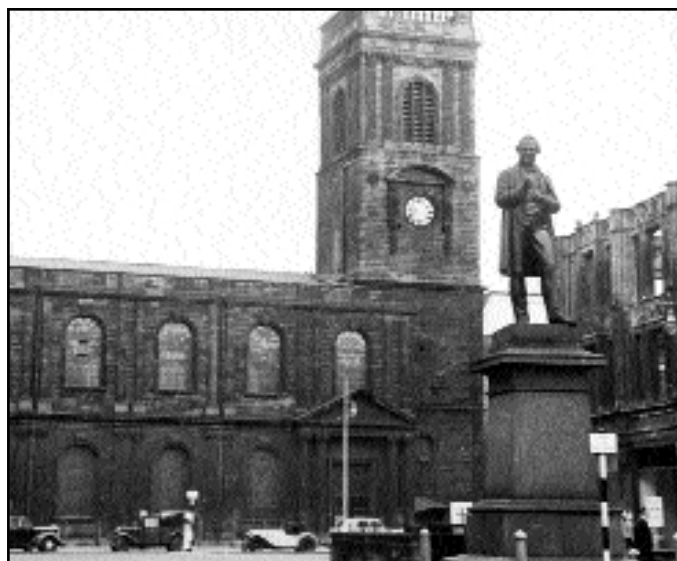


COBDEN AND MANCHESTER

Simon Morgan

It is 200 years since the birth of Richard Cobden, the charismatic leader of the Anti-Corn Law League who did so much to put the Manchester region on the political map.ⁱ Cobden left a lasting mark on the town's physical and political landscape, being largely responsible for obtaining the Charter of Incorporation that gave Manchester its elected municipal government, as well as providing the necessary land for the Free Trade Hall. However, the relatively remote position of his statue in St Anne's Square, away from Manchester's political centre of gravity, serves as a metaphor for his position in the modern historical memory.ⁱⁱ This is in stark contrast to John Bright, whose statue overlooks the town hall from Albert Square, and whose memory still eclipses that of Cobden over thirty-five years after Donald Read's attempt to set the record straight in his revisionist account of their political partnership.ⁱⁱⁱ



A legacy in stone: Cobden's statue in St. Ann's Square, by Marshall Wood, 1867

This article is partly an attempt to jolt the collective memory through a portrayal of the dynamic relationship between this important British statesman and his adopted region, from his first visit in 1825 to his death in 1865. It concentrates as much on what Manchester did for Cobden as on what Cobden did for Manchester. He himself was actually based in the city only from 1831 to 1847. From September 1841, his duties as MP for Stockport and as leader of the Anti-Corn Law League kept him busy in London or touring the provinces for much of the time, and for a large part of 1846-7 he was out of the country on his grand tour of the courts of Europe as the 'Apostle of Free Trade'. When he returned, he set about relocating himself to his native Sussex, where the national subscription raised in his honour had allowed him to repurchase his boyhood home, Dunford House at Heyshott near Midhurst. From this point on, he divided his time primarily between Sussex and London.

Nonetheless, he retained strong links with Manchester and its satellites, and his name is indelibly associated with that of the city where he first came to public notice.

In part, this association, as so much else in the modern memory of Victorian politics and society, is due to the aphoristic talents of Benjamin Disraeli, who first applied the term 'Manchester School' to Cobden, Bright and their followers in a debate on 20 February 1846.^{iv} But Cobden had already done much to establish himself in the popular imagination as *the* political representative of the industrial north, and of Manchester in particular, first through his early pamphlets written under the pseudonym of 'A Manchester Manufacturer', and second through his leadership of the Anti-Corn Law League, undoubtedly the most successful extra-Parliamentary political movement of the Victorian period, but in its early stages based almost exclusively around a small band of Manchester radicals. In so doing, he helped to promote a vision of Manchester and other industrial cities as vibrant centres of social and political enlightenment, which contrasted with the more negative visions of the urban/industrial future put forward by the likes of Frederick Engels, while also, along with Bright, becoming the archetype in the public mind of the earnest and sober 'Manchester Man'.^v

Cobden's first recorded visit to Manchester was in 1825. Just twenty-one years old, he had endured a harsh schooling at Bowes Hall, near the Yorkshire/Durham border, close to William Shaw's Bowes Academy which served as the model for the notorious Dotheboy's Hall in Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*.^{vi} In 1818, Cobden's parents removed him from the school, and sent him instead to work as a clerk in his uncle's calico-printing warehouse on Old Change, in the shadow of St. Paul's. By 1825, the firm was in trouble, with his uncle's partner Silvanus Partridge bailing out to set up on his own account. Partridge had been the firm's main commercial traveller, and the young Cobden was drafted in at short notice to fill the gap. Fortunately, Cobden left an itinerary of this first trip around the British Isles, which took him north through the Midlands to Lancashire, thence to Dublin and Belfast, across to Scotland, down through the north-east of England to Yorkshire, once again to Lancashire - apart from Edinburgh, Manchester was the only town he visited twice - and back to London. Cobden's letters home from this trip betray a somewhat romantic nature coupled with keen powers of observation. He was clearly impressed by the dynamism of the industrial districts of the Midlands and the North, which contrasted favourably with the desperate rural poverty of Ireland. More trips followed, on one of which, in 1826, Cobden found himself marooned for several days at the small coastal village of Donaghadee in the north-east of Ireland, awaiting a steam packet to Portpatrick. One of his companions was a fellow commercial traveller named Francis Sherriff, whose uncle also owned a business in Cheapside. It was possibly during this enforced confinement together that the pair first mooted a scheme to set up in busi-

ness in the North, acting as commission agents for an established calico printer.^{vii}

Whenever it was conceived, the plan was put into operation in 1828, with Cobden and Sherriff joined by George Gillett, another commercial traveller. The story goes that the trio journeyed north on the 'Peveril of the Peak' coach with hope in their hearts but little in their pockets, and by sheer force of personality persuaded the Fort brothers, successful Lancashire manufacturers, to employ their services. However, the notion that their preparation was so flimsy that they had to look Forts' up in the directories when they reached Manchester may be an exaggeration.^{viii} Certainly, Cobden told his father that Forts' had been one of the firms they had targeted before they left London.^{ix}

The next few years were spent in building up the business, and there is a paucity of letters from this period compared to earlier and later years. Despite his new Manchester connections, Cobden's move to the town was not completed until 1833, when the death of his father enabled him to bring his brothers and sisters to join him in the large house he had acquired on Quay Street, later the premises of Owen's College. By this time, Cobden had sole charge of the Manchester side of the business, which now included a calico print works at Sabden near Whalley, taken over from Fort Brothers in 1831. A second works was later acquired at Crosse Hall, near Chorley. As a newcomer to Manchester, Cobden was not yet the leading figure that he would become. Borrowing Ian Inkster's phrase, he was a 'marginal man'; but from 1834 onwards he would find himself moving from the wings towards the centre stage.^x

Manchester in the early 1830s was a place of great opportunity for the young, talented and determined. Cobden himself described his spirit at this time as 'Bonapartian', and he boasted to his brother Fred that Lancashire offered such openings for a man of talent that were he pitched into it naked and friendless he would still be able to make his fortune.^{xi} After making an astute property deal on Mosley St., he crowed that 'there being but one opinion or criterion of a man's ability – *the making of money* – I am already thought a clever fellow'.^{xii} As well as economic opportunities, Manchester also possessed a vibrant middle-class radical culture, whose members were to furnish Cobden's earliest co-workers.^{xiii} However, it was to be several years before Cobden turned his growing wealth to social and political account.

Cobden's local standing grew apace from 1834 onwards, as he made an increasing contribution to the cultural and political life of his adopted town; but this contribution was informed and enriched by a growing interest in the world beyond. By 1840, Cobden had claims to be one of the most well-travelled men in Britain. He had visited the United States, Spain and the Levant, and had made several trips to continental Europe, where he toured France, the German states and Switzerland.^{xiv} These travels were facilitated by the contacts he and his brothers had made through their various business dealings, and also by letters of introduction procured from other Manchester merchants. For example, the presence in Manchester of members of the Ralli and Franghiadi families, refugees from the Turkish massacre on the Greek island of Chios in 1822, meant that Cobden was able to gain access to the leading Greek merchants

in Constantinople and Smyrna. With the Swiss Arnold König and the Italian Philip Novello also among his contacts, Manchester was Cobden's gateway to the world in a very real sense.

While abroad, he gathered information that shaped his political views, particularly on free trade, but also on topics such as land reform and education. On his return from the United States in 1835 he helped to found the Manchester Athenæum, in imitation of similar societies he had found there; in Egypt, he collected specimens for the Manchester Natural History Society, skulls for the Phrenological Society, and wrote an account of his meetings with the Egyptian Pasha, Mehemet Ali, for the Literary Society.^{xv} In Germany, Cobden's observations of the 'rational recreation' enjoyed by Protestant workers informed his views on the opening of places of public amusement on Sundays – a lesson that he tried to pass on to his townsmen in debates over the opening of the Manchester Zoological Gardens on the Sabbath.^{xvi} All this helped to enhance Cobden's cultural capital, which he was not slow in turning to account.

By this time, Cobden was emerging as a radical man of letters. His reputation as a rising star was established by the publication of two pamphlets on foreign policy, *England, Ireland and America* (1835) and *Russia* (1836), which were discussed by British officials and foreign potentates alike, with translations apparently being read by the Tsar of Russia and the Ottoman Sultan. Both works were published anonymously under the sobriquet 'A Manchester Manufacturer'. However, Cobden's interest in British foreign policy was matched by his growing political ambitions at home, and there was one batch of pamphlets that he was keen should carry his name – those distributed in the Parliamentary borough of Stockport.



Cobden in his prime: engraving from an 1842 portrait by C. A. Duval

It seems that Cobden was approached as a potential candidate for Stockport some time in early 1836. On his departure for the East that October, he left behind him an address to the electors of the borough containing his commitment to a fairly standard radical platform of support for political and religious liberty, freedom and justice for Ireland and support for constitutional reforms, including the ballot.^{xvii} It was the publication of this address that caused him to curtail his sojourn in Turkey to return to Manchester in April 1837. Despite being a comparative stranger to the borough, Cobden was hopeful that the distribution of his pamphlets would persuade the electorate of his reforming credentials, and that the fact he was a calico

printer (one of the town's staple trades) would outweigh his lack of personal business or property interests there. Unfortunately, in the General Election of that year Cobden came bottom of the poll, behind the Tory candidate Major Thomas Marsland. The experience chastened Cobden and made him less than keen to put himself forward again as a candidate, despite the radicals' efforts to put a brave face on it by inviting Daniel O'Connell to attend the presentation of a testimonial salver to Cobden and the successful liberal, Henry Marsland.^{xviii} However, though unsuccessful, Cobden's campaign had introduced him to many radicals of national reputation, including George and Harriet Grote, Sir John Bowring and John Arthur Roebuck, and gave him many useful contacts in the metropolitan press. It also raised his standing among local radicals, and in particular secured him the patronage of Archibald Prentice, editor of the radical *Manchester Times*. This support would prove vital to Cobden in the coming years as he committed himself to campaigns for local and national reform.

In 1837 Cobden began to turn his mind to the reform of Manchester's creaking apparatus of local government, still based around the medieval institution of the Court Leet, in conjunction with the Churchwardens and Overseers, the Police and Improvement Commissioners, and the Surveyors of Highways. The campaign for Manchester's incorporation under the Municipal Reform Act of 1835 has been dealt with in some detail elsewhere.^{xix} Earlier attempts to push this issue, led by William Neild, had been defeated. However, in 1837-8 Cobden spearheaded a more successful campaign with his pamphlet *Incorporate Your Borough*.^{xx} Drawing details from his own experience of being called as a juror for the Court Leet, he complained of the absurdity of the great commercial town of Manchester, already becoming the model of industrial modernity, being governed by feudal institutions and of the privileged position of Sir Oswald Mosley as lord of the manor. It was in this campaign that Cobden first showed his talents as an agitator, not only in putting forward persuasive verbal and written arguments backed up by a mastery of detail, but also in his determination to succeed and attention to the mechanics of agitation in the teeth of a determined opposition from the vested interests whose privileges were threatened by the new machinery.

These talents were soon needed. In order to obtain a charter of incorporation, a town had to demonstrate that a majority wished it. Very soon both sides were sending off petitions to Parliament, which led to the Privy Council appointing commissioners to adjudicate the competing claims. The anti-incorporation petition was far larger, on account of it including many non-electors. However, Cobden and his friends were able to secure the services of two Irishmen, named Lonergan and Finney, who were willing to testify that they had been employed by the 'anti-corporators' to forge names on their petitions. These revelations led to wholesale revisions of the total of names, and though the anti-petition was still larger the commissioners, Captain Jebb and Alexander Gordon, eventually decided in favour of Incorporation in September 1838. Manchester's first municipal elections were held in December, and Cobden was returned as one of the first aldermen of the borough.

This was by no means the end of the incorporation story, with 'anti-corporators' continuing to mount opposition through the Police Commissioners, disputes over the inclusion of Chorlton-upon-Medlock, and even controversy over the legitimacy of the coroner appointed by the new corporation (leading to the farcical yet macabre situation of post-mortems having to be carried out twice). As a result, the reformers could not claim a full victory until 1842. Cobden soon wearied of these endless wrangles, and was in any case distracted by his work for corn law repeal from 1839 onwards. However, his biggest disappointment was with the behaviour of some of his own colleagues. Cobden had envisaged a municipal government on rational lines, liberated from the feudal trappings of the past and from obeisance to the aristocracy. He was therefore disgusted when Manchester's first Mayor, Thomas Potter, accepted a knighthood from the Queen. Afterwards, in his letters Cobden insisted on referring to him as 'the old Knight'.^{xxi}

While trying to impart a higher tone to its civic government, Cobden was also increasingly involved in the campaign to raise the condition of Manchester's working population through educational reform. Cobden supported local educational initiatives, including the establishment of the infant school at Sabden in 1837 (though this was mainly the project of his business partner, George Foster). The same year rules were introduced at the plant stipulating that employees should be able to read and write.^{xxii} Later, Cobden was to be a key supporter of the Lancashire Public Schools Association, which aimed to deliver secular education at a time when educational reform was hamstrung by the mutual antipathy and suspicion of the various Protestant sects. Politically, the education campaign brought him into contact with men like Thomas Wyse, the Irish Whig, whose aid Cobden enlisted in the struggle for Incorporation in order to win the support of Manchester's large Irish population.^{xxiii} More significantly, at least in the long-term, it also introduced him to a young Rochdale Quaker called John Bright.^{xxiv}

Cobden's interest in education also explains what, at first sight, seems his rather eccentric beliefs in the popular pseudo-science of phrenology. Modern myth sees phrenology as a crude attempt to divine a person's entire personality merely by the shape of their head, but to many educationalists, including Cobden, phrenology was at once less reductive and potentially more significant. Cobden believed that it could provide the basis for a scientific system of education, by providing a guide to an individual's potential skills and attributes which could then be developed or, if necessary, curbed. His phrenological guru was George Combe of Edinburgh, whose *Constitution of Man* comfortably outsold Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in the nineteenth century, and who ran a school in Edinburgh based on his principles. It should therefore be no surprise that Cobden took a keen interest in the Manchester Phrenological Society, and helped to reinvigorate it by inviting Combe to give a series of ten lectures in 1836.^{xxv}

By the late 1830s radical opinion in Manchester was coalescing around the demand for repeal of the Corn Laws, a raft of prohibitive tariffs on foodstuffs introduced in 1815 to prevent the collapse of British agricultural prices in the face of a flood of imports from Europe after the defeat of Napoleon.^{xxvi}

Political Economists had long argued against them on the grounds that they not only denied markets to British manufacturers, by preventing corn-exporting countries from earning the necessary currency to afford British goods, but also because the sliding scale of duties caused instability in the market, by encouraging merchants to hold grain in bond until prices were at their highest and duties at their lowest (usually just before the harvest in September), before releasing it in vast quantities to the detriment of domestic growers. An intermittent campaign for free trade in corn had continued since 1815, particularly in Scotland. In Manchester, a few radicals had periodically tried to generate opposition to the corn laws, particularly John Benjamin 'Corn Law' Smith and Archibald Prentice. However, it was not until the Autumn of 1838, with Britain drifting towards a severe trade depression, that a Manchester Anti-Corn Law Association was founded. Cobden himself did not figure on the original committee list, as he was in Germany hoping to gather information on the effects of the corn laws in Britain through observation of the *Zollverein*, or German Customs Union. This situation was amended shortly after his return, and Cobden quickly began to stamp his personality on the movement.



The interior of the Manchester Anti-Corn Law Bazaar, held in the Theatre Royal, Manchester, in February 1842. Cobden's wife Catherine was the president of the Ladies' Committee of the bazaar, which raised £10,000 for the free trade campaign

That personality was, at this early stage, inclined towards confrontation. Cobden's first major contribution was to help pass an uncompromising anti-corn law petition through the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, hitherto a conservative body, which entailed overturning a more conciliatory draft put forward by the directors. At the subsequent Annual General Meeting in 1839, he engineered an even more extraordinary coup by having the list of proposed directors rejected in favour of a revised free-trade list, with J.B. Smith as the new President.^{xxvii} The result was a split, with the protectionists seceding to form the Manchester Commercial Association. The Chamber now provided a secure base from which to agitate both town and nation.

However, winning control of this staid and respectable institution was one thing; it was quite another to secure the Anti-Corn Law movement a hearing in Manchester as a whole. Early in 1839 the failure of ministers to alter the corn law resulted in the formation of a national Anti-Corn Law League, with local free-trade associations coming under the umbrella of a national committee based at Newall's Buildings in Manchester. The problem was that local Chartists, with Tory support, were not averse to breaking up League demonstrations in the belief that the mill-owners desired cheap bread only as a means of driving down wages. That particular argument was not to be won until the return of commercial prosperity in 1843, which coincided with a fall in the price of bread and disproved the link between food prices and wages. In the meantime, the League was faced with the embarrassing situation of not being able to hold a public meeting in its own town. Eventually, the Manchester Irish would come to the League's rescue, once the campaign had received the endorsement of Daniel O'Connell, liberator of the Catholics and believer in free trade (though Cobden retained a great distrust of O'Connell, and refused to act on his suggestions to turn the League into a campaign for the suffrage). Marshalled by the future railway promoter and Channel-tunnel projector Edward Watkin, local Irish roughs, known ironically as 'lambs', began to police League meetings and to turn the tables on the Chartists. Things came to a head at a meeting in Stevenson Square on 2 June 1841, when a Chartist assault on a meeting of the Operative Anti-Corn Law Association was violently repulsed. Thereafter, the League held the upper hand in Manchester street-politics.^{xxviii}

Despite the securing of Manchester for the League, Cobden was acutely aware of the need to make the movement a national one. His letters from the early 1840s are full of exhortations and encouragement to leading radicals in other towns near and far – from Peter Rylands in Warrington and Edward Baines in Leeds, to George Toms in Great Torrington, Devon, and William Beadon in Taunton. In the early years of its existence, the League was also threatened by rival agitations which sprang up in other major cities, particularly the Household Suffrage campaign in Leeds and the Complete Suffrage movement led by Joseph Sturge of Birmingham. Both of these agitations aimed to heal the breach between the working and middle-classes, but both failed to attract either the more hot-headed wing of the Chartist movement or the necessary backing from influential members of the middle-class. However, by 1843 the League was able to transform its situation and emerge as the leading pressure group of the age.

The reasons for this turnaround have been dealt with elsewhere in the literature about the League. They included the decision to concentrate less on agitating the urban centres and more on the agricultural heartlands of protection, the securing of a regular and substantial income through the raising of great annual fighting-funds, the creation of an efficient and effective organisation under the chairmanship of George Wilson, and the removal of the League's official headquarters to London (although effective power remained in Manchester). However, Cobden also played an important role in these developments, and increasingly became the public personification of the movement.

There were two main reasons for this. First, Cobden now had a national platform for his oratory, having been elected to Parliament for Stockport in 1841. This raises the question of why Cobden did not stand for Manchester, his home borough and headquarters of his business, particularly given the difficulty with which a suitable candidate was found. Cobden himself was unhappy with the eventual choice of Thomas Milner Gibson, a Suffolk squire, to represent the great manufacturing metropolis of the north, telling the veteran radical Francis Place: 'I am quite disgusted at it. What wonder we [the manufacturers] are scorned by the landed aristocracy, when we take such pains to shew our contempt of ourselves?'^{xxxix} However, the truth was that he himself had ruffled too many feathers during his meteoric rise to be successful as a candidate. It has been suggested that a major factor was Cobden's support for William Neild in the election of Manchester's first Mayor, which offended the successful candidate, Thomas Potter.^{xxx} Writing to Smith from Geneva, during his wedding tour in 1840, Cobden declared that his candidature 'would be a letting loose of "envy, hatred, malice, & all uncharitableness" from a hundred *liberal bosoms*, & my election would be lost, not from the strength of the enemy, so much as the jealousy of our own friends'.^{xxxi} Indeed, Cobden declared several times in 1840 that he had no intention of standing for Parliament at all while the parties remained in their current states. It was with some sheepishness that he informed his brother Fred of his election in 1841, not least because Fred (with some justification) feared the impact on the business if Cobden were to commit himself full-time to public duties.^{xxxii} In the House, Cobden quickly acquired a reputation for the effective, unadorned oratory that Peel would praise so highly in his resignation speech after the corn laws had been repealed.^{xxxiii} On arrival, it seems he had every intention of falling in behind the leadership of Charles Pelham Villiers, younger brother of Lord Clarendon and hitherto the foremost parliamentary advocate of corn law repeal. However, circumstance, coupled with his own talent and energy, meant that he quickly came to eclipse his more hesitant and limited colleague.

The second reason for Cobden's pre-eminence was his growing reputation as an agitator 'out of doors'. Realising that nothing could be done in Parliament without the support of pressure from without, he spent more and more time touring the provinces delivering anti-corn law speeches – often in the company of men such as Bright and the veteran campaigner Colonel Perronet Thompson. In January 1843, they mounted an expedition to Scotland, where Cobden was embarrassed to find himself being granted the freedom of every Burgh they passed through. It was clear that the 'Manchester Manufacturer' was becoming a major national politician, a fact revealed in the aftermath of one of the most painful episodes in Cobden's public career – his dispute with Peel in the House of Commons on 17 February 1843.

During his speech on Villier's annual motion against the corn laws, Cobden made it clear that he held Peel personally responsible for the desperate economic plight of the country and the consequent human suffering. Peel, still suffering from the shock occasioned by the recent assassination of his private secretary by a deranged mechanic, accused Cobden of deliberately inciting violence against his person. Although bound by the rules of the House to accept Cobden's explanation of his words, Peel

made it obvious that he thought Cobden had overstepped the mark.^{xxxiv} The incident temporarily damaged Cobden in the House, but to the country at large he appeared a martyr. There was an outpouring of public addresses in his support, with the majority emanating from the textile districts of Lancashire and West Yorkshire and from Scotland.^{xxxv} He was now a household name, with fellow members of the Reform Club complaining that they could find nothing but biographies of him in the newspapers. His portrait and autograph were in demand, while his status as a truly British politician was underlined by the deluge of Welsh petitions he received against the education clauses of the Factory Bill of 1843 – ironic given his unwavering support for state education.^{xxxvi} However, his growing celebrity status, together with the huge personal and financial costs of seven years of almost continuous agitation, would have profound ramifications for his future relationship with the town and region of Manchester.

By the time the corn laws were finally repealed in 1846, with his reputation sealed by Peel's famous, if controversial, eulogium on his unselfish efforts, Cobden was in a state of physical and financial exhaustion. He decided that the best way he could use his new status as a major statesman would be to tour Europe, spreading the gospel of free trade among its rulers and peoples – a plan he put into action between August 1846 and October 1847.^{xxxvii} However, his personal affairs were in a mess. He had to accept the inevitability of winding up his long-neglected business affairs in Manchester, although he retained some property in the borough. In the meantime, the testimonial fund that was raised to save him from ruin also enabled him to put into effect a long-term ambition: the re-purchase of his family's ancestral farmhouse. This entailed selling up his house at Victoria Park in Manchester and the permanent removal of the Cobden household to the South, with the family staying in London until the necessary alterations and improvements could be made at Dunford.^{xxxviii} Such a physical removal would have made it difficult in any case to maintain his links with south Lancashire; but the task was made even more complicated by his unsolicited election for the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1847.

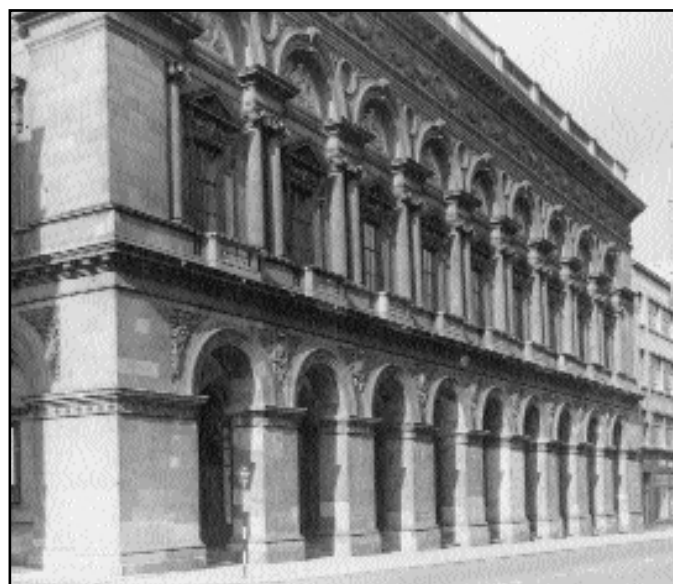
Again, the question needs to be asked: why not Manchester? Many were keen for Cobden to stand, but, after some vacillation, he did his best to scotch the idea. This was primarily due to his unwillingness to upset Bright, who had made no secret of his ambition to represent the borough. Cobden made it clear to his League colleagues that he was not prepared to stand in Bright's way, though he was obviously irked by the tone of some of Bright's letters on this issue.^{xxxix} However, it is also true that Cobden was perfectly happy representing Stockport, a relatively small borough which made few demands on his time and who's Town Clerk, Henry Coppock, was ready and willing to take responsibility for day-to-day constituency management. Manchester, in contrast, with its internecine rivalries and increasing demands on its representatives, would have been more difficult to control (as Bright discovered in 1857). It was therefore ironic that, during the General Election of 1847, Cobden was elected for the West Riding of Yorkshire while absent on his European tour.

Although Cobden was also returned for Stockport, he felt duty bound to accept the Yorkshire seat. This decision has led to

Cobden being perceived in the borough as a mere ‘carpet-bagger’, an outsider who used Stockport to get himself into Parliament, only to abandon it when his political ambitions outgrew the constituency. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Not only did Cobden claim to have been pressed into standing for the borough by local liberals in 1841, against his own inclination, we have already seen that he enjoyed the freedom of action provided him by a borough which had only just over 1,000 electors in 1832.^{xl} The West Riding, by contrast, had the largest electorate of any county – over 18,000 in 1832 – and Cobden’s unopposed return was a powerful demonstration of his great popularity in the country at large. But the size of the electorate created peculiar difficulties of party management, and meant an increased workload at a time when most Parliamentary business consisted of local bills dealing with issues such as railway construction and urban improvement. Moreover, it seems that Cobden’s nomination was something of an afterthought, and in some ways was merely the latest instalment of a long-running dispute between the aristocratic Whigs and the urban Liberals for control over the local reform party.^{xli} Perhaps the Leeds reformers, led by Edward Baines, editor of the influential *Leeds Mercury*, also hoped that securing Cobden would associate them more closely with the League’s great triumph, as Cobden had often been scathing about the relative lack of support from their town and region during the campaign itself. These difficulties swiftly manifested themselves when the liberal party in the Riding began to tear itself apart over the issue of state-sponsored education, a measure supported by Cobden but bitterly opposed by Baines.^{xlii} In this instance, Cobden’s celebrity status actually limited his freedom. Faced with abandoning Stockport, or offending the electors of the most popular county constituency in the country, he had no choice but to go with Yorkshire, though he made it clear from the start that he saw himself as only a temporary resident in the seat. Just how secure Cobden could have been had he remained at Stockport is suggested by the fact that until 1880 the constituency returned two liberals at every subsequent General Election except 1868. This included the otherwise disastrous year of 1857, when the two ‘Manchester School’ candidates, James Kershaw and J.B. Smith, bucked the national trend and were returned with increased majorities. Smith himself represented the borough from 1852 until his retirement in 1874.

Despite the removal of his financial, domestic and political centres of gravity from the area, Cobden did not entirely sever his links with Manchester. Many close friends and family remained, including his sisters Mary and Priscilla with their families, and his brother Charles (Fred accompanied Cobden to Dunford). He maintained close contacts with many of his League coadjutors, including Bright, Smith and Henry Ashworth, and there were other important friendships, including those with Thomas Thomasson and the Schwabes, Salis and Julie. George Wilson continued to run the town’s liberal electoral machine, while Ashworth served as President of the Chamber of Commerce from 1862-5. There was even a brief re-constitution of the League in 1852, when there seemed a real danger of the Tories forming a protectionist administration. Ironically, this episode forced Cobden to stand once more for the West Riding, for fear that this important constituency might fall prey to a protectionist. In 1853, he was involved in the construction of the

Free Trade Hall on Peter Street, Manchester, for which he provided the land. He also continued his interest in the Lancashire Public School Association’s experiments in secular education, as a way through the sectarian impasse which pitched dissenters such as Edward Baines against state support for education in the belief that it would give too much power to the established church. In 1855 he brought together a consortium of Manchester businessmen, including George Wilson and Henry Rawson, to finance a daily penny newspaper in London in conjunction with Joseph Sturge of Birmingham. The aim was to challenge the primacy of *The Times* by exploiting the removal of the newspaper stamp. The *Morning Star* first appeared in 1856 and, though never a commercial success, it remained a useful vehicle for Cobdenite ideas until its demise in 1869.



The Free Trade Hall in 1960. Cobden supplied the land for the building, which was completed in 1856

However, Cobden’s trips to the North were fraught with difficulties, not least because any visit to Lancashire that did not also take him to the West Riding was sure to arouse the jealousy of his constituents and make it impossible for him to avoid commitments to speak in the county. Such demands became more of an issue as Cobden got older. Throughout his life he remained morbidly aware that neither of his parents had reached fifty years of age, and became increasingly cognisant of the need to husband his health and strength. He suffered recurrently from a painful inflammation of the eye, possibly due either to neglect during his school years or the unfortunate effects of the chemicals used in calico printing, as well as a bronchial complaint later diagnosed as ‘nervous asthma’. For most of the 1850s, though, the demands of his large constituency represented more of an irritating drain on Cobden’s time, especially as his political divergence from the bulk of the local liberal party became ever more apparent.

For Cobden, the 1850s were a time of personal trial and political disappointment. They saw his final disillusionment with the commercial and industrial middle-class that he had once seen as the motor of reform. This disillusionment centred in particular on the heartland of that class: Manchester. Cobden had

always seen the repeal of the corn laws as the first stage in a broader radical programme to challenge the dominance of the aristocracy and to replace it with an enlightened government composed of the middle-classes – a programme which means he is sometimes labelled the ‘Marx of the bourgeoisie’. In 1846 this vision seemed on the verge of realisation, and was encapsulated in an extraordinary letter to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, urging that after repeal had been secured he should go to the country as the head of a middle-class party and break aristocratic rule forever.^{xliii} Unfortunately, it was an illusion, as Peel had repealed the corn laws precisely to avoid such an outcome.

In the aftermath of the corn law campaign, there were great hopes that other liberal reforms could be achieved in the same fashion. However, the Manchester School soon found itself divided as to which should be next. Whereas Bright was keen on campaigning for an extension of the franchise, Cobden set his sights on an assault on government expenditure, particularly on the armed forces.^{xliv} They were also divided as to the best means to achieve these ends, with Bright favouring another Manchester-led agitation, while Cobden believed that Manchester was exhausted, arguing that new blood must be found. The failure of new men to come to the fore in the town bothered him, and he ascribed it in part to George Wilson’s monopoly of important chairmanships, which prevented new talent from emerging. The truth was that the dominance of the corn law party in the town was to some extent illusory: substantial differences existed within the liberal party and between them and the moderate Whigs, which meant that the Tory minority continued to pose an electoral threat. In particular, after the brutal suppression of the continental revolutions of 1848, Cobden’s peace principles created tensions with those who believed that armed intervention was the only way to liberate the oppressed peoples of Europe. This was apparent at the Manchester Peace Congress of 1853, which attracted little local support.^{xlv} Cobden was well aware of these divisions, even complaining that free trade had been achieved too soon, and that the newfound prosperity of the commercial classes was preventing them from pursuing further reform.

After a reprieve at the 1852 General Election, when Free Trade was again at the top of the agenda, Cobden’s disillusionment reached its climax at the General Election of 1857. Ironically, this had been precipitated by arguably his greatest parliamentary triumph since the repeal of the corn laws: the defeat of Palmerston on a motion over the British bombardment of Canton. Palmerston decided to go to the country, but despite their victory in the House the auguries were not good for the Manchester School. Cobden had at last decided to break with the West Riding, his position there having become untenable due to his public disputes with Edward Baines over the *Mercury’s* support for the Crimean War. With the political music about to stop, Cobden found himself without a sure seat and launched himself in desperation at Huddersfield. At the same time, he found himself canvassing Manchester on behalf of the absent Bright, who had suffered a nervous collapse after the constant strain of opposing the war in the Crimea. His efforts were in vain, and the election was seen as a resounding endorsement of Palmerston’s foreign policy.

Cobden accepted his own defeat with relative equanimity, even relief, for it gave him an opportunity to retire from public life to look after his domestic affairs. In April 1856 his only son, Richard Brookes, had died in Germany of Scarlet Fever, precipitating Cobden’s wife Catherine into a nervous breakdown and listless dependence on prescribed opiates. In contrast, his letters were full of eloquent rage about Manchester’s rejection of Bright:

now that a few years prosperity have shone upon its people they turn away from their benefactor & kick down the ladder by which they have been raised to their present happy condition. – The time may come (for the Cotton trade has a rotten prop) when they may have to cry aloud from the depths of their tribulation for better men than their present members to help them, & then, & not til then, the selfish snobs who put him at the bottom of the poll will remember with remorse their ingratitude to John Bright –xlvi

In Cobden’s eyes, the fault was magnified by the fact that Bright had been voted out while he was still incapacitated by an illness brought on by his selfless devotion to public service.^{xlvii} It is also reasonable to infer that Cobden took Manchester’s ‘ingratitude’ as a personal slight.

In 1857 Cobden thought he was retiring from public life for good. The following year his domestic woes were compounded by the death of his brother Fred, who had often played the role of sounding board for his ideas and as a mine of useful information, particularly about the United States where he had briefly been in business in the 1820s. Cobden himself was fascinated by America, whose great economic potential impressed him enormously. It was therefore with no great reluctance that he allowed himself to be persuaded to take a trip to the States in 1859 as representative of the British shareholders of the Illinois Central Railroad, a scheme which eventually yielded great profits to investors, but which in the short-term proved costly to a man of Cobden’s slender financial resources. During the trip he was fêted everywhere he went, and was a guest of President Buchanan at the White House.^{xlviii} Cobden’s return marked the opening of a new chapter in his public life, and in his relationship with the industrial north-west. When he stepped off the steamer at Liverpool he was astonished to be met by cheering crowds, and to find himself Member of Parliament for Rochdale with an offer of a place in Palmerston’s cabinet as President of the Board of Trade. Despite the pleas of his friends, Cobden felt bound to reject the latter honour, on the basis that he could not accept office under a premier of whose bellicose foreign policy he had been the most trenchant and outspoken critic. He also feared the limitations that an official post would place on his freedom of speech and action both in and out of Parliament.

In the remaining years of his life, Cobden made full use of these freedoms. In 1860, he was responsible for the negotiation of the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty (or Cobden-Chevalier Treaty), the first of a network of such agreements which created the nearest thing to peaceful European economic integration before the Common Market. As demonstrated by the correspondence of Charles Sumner at Harvard University, he also

made use of his unrivalled transatlantic contacts to help diffuse Anglo-American tensions at strategic points during the American Civil War. During the *Trent* Affair, when two Confederate agents were arrested aboard a British steam-packet, Sumner produced letters from Cobden and Bright at the crucial meeting where Lincoln defused the crisis by deciding to let the men go. Cobden also vented his fury at Lord John Russell for letting the confederate cruiser *Alabama* escape from Lairds' Birkenhead shipyard to wreak havoc on Federal shipping, demanding assurances that measures would be taken to avoid a repeat.^{xlix}

Cobden was also well aware of the difficulties that the Federal blockade of the southern ports was causing in the Lancashire cotton district. He lobbied Sumner to press for a change in tactics, arguing that the blockade was the one thing that threatened recognition of the South by the European powers and a subsequent intervention in the war on her behalf. He also made the case for an alteration of international maritime law to exempt neutral ships not carrying contraband of war from being stopped by the blockading power. In 1862 he published his arguments in the form of a letter to Henry Ashworth in his capacity as President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, still being used after twenty-five years as a vehicle for Cobden's ideas.^l However, despite his often perceptive appreciation of the future implications of new technologies, Cobden seems to have missed the point that the new conditions of industrialised warfare under which the American Civil War was fought meant that almost anything now constituted *materiel*, particularly if, like cotton, it was a potential source of revenue for one's opponents.

As well as trying to alleviate the root cause of the cotton famine, Cobden played a role in trying to alert others to the unfolding disaster in the north and in helping the relief movement where he could. A letter to Villiers in November 1862 reveals that he arrived in Manchester to find the Relief Committee in disarray, and that with characteristic energy he immediately took steps to suggest improvements, including the creation of a nationally based body to raise funds under the patronage of the Queen. In the same letter, he pointed out that the distress was most acute not in Manchester, with its diverse economy, but in the smaller satellite towns, and that as a result the more positive reports of the Manchester Poor Law Guardians risked underplaying the severity of the crisis.^{li} Cobden also wrote to other influential individuals, trying to shake them out of their complacency. To James Thorold Rogers, the Oxford economist, he wrote asking that Oxford's academics sign up as members of the committee: 'the begging box must go through the land ... The blow must be borne by the whole body politic'.^{lii} He also wrote to Lady Hatherton, whose husband had been one of the few peers to support the League from its early days.^{liii} The enormity of the situation prompted him to delay his return south until the end of the month, breaking his usual routine of retreating early to a winter of hibernation at Dunford for the sake of his now fragile constitution.

Cobden's health was by now thoroughly incompatible with the damp northern climate. This added psychologically to the physical distance between himself and his Rochdale constituency,

which he only visited when absolutely necessary. It seems that he missed having a local figure like Henry Coppock at Stockport to arrange local affairs, and found himself relying on Bright for advice on whom to cultivate.^{liv} However, in 1864 Cobden once more found himself prolonging his stay in the North, in order to address a lengthy meeting of his constituents. The speech, on 23 November, proved to be his last public performance. By the time he got back to the relative safety of Dunford, he was in a state of near collapse, and he did not rally until after Christmas. By the early spring of 1865, he felt well enough to contemplate a return to the House of Commons to take part in a debate on Canada. However, on arrival at his lodgings on Suffolk Street, he suffered a relapse from which he would never recover. He died on 2 April 1865.

Cobden never made it any secret that he remained at heart a Sussex yeoman. In his earliest pamphlet he reminded his readers of these rural roots, claiming that 'had we the casting of the *rôle* of all the actors on this world's stage, we do not think we should suffer a cotton-mill or a manufactory to have a place in it'. On the other hand, he defended the factory system as an established part of modern life and a necessary foundation of national prosperity.^{lv} Nonetheless, he was sincerely attached to the region that had brought him his early financial success and his lasting public prominence. When his eldest daughter Kate became engaged to the son of a nearby Sussex farmer, he confided to his sister his disappointment that she was not to marry the son of one of his friends in Lancashire: 'for the sake of planting my family in the midst of my friends'.^{lvi} During the anti-corn law campaign, Cobden was hopeful that Manchester, the 'shock city' of the industrial revolution, could also produce a social and political revolution that would end the dominance of a parasitic aristocracy and so achieve in practice what the Great Reform Act had promised in theory: the transfer of political power to the middle-classes. These hopes were to be disappointed during the Crimean War, as many of his erstwhile supporters rejected Cobden's non-interventionist creed in favour of support for Palmerston's strong line against Russia, in the hope that this would lead to greater freedom for the likes of Hungary and Poland.^{lvii} However, during the Cotton Famine he found a new respect for the stoicism in adversity of the region's working-classes, which went hand-in-hand with his growing appreciation of the radical potential of their nascent political organisations. In this way, the social and economic dynamism of the industrial north-west continued to provide food for Cobden's political thought, although he was still some way from seeing the working-class as a substitute for the middle-class as the motor of reform, an evolution he never had time to make.^{lviii}

To conclude, Cobden's role in Manchester life was significant, both during and after his lifetime. His leadership of the Anti-Corn Law League helped make Manchester politically, arguably the most important of, the provincial 'great cities' until Joseph Chamberlain's rise to prominence in the Birmingham of the later nineteenth century. His legacy includes Manchester's Charter of Incorporation, the Manchester Athenæum (which now houses part of the Manchester City Art Gallery), Sabden Primary School, and the Free Trade Hall. Many of his friends and associates remained active in regional politics until well after his death. However, by the same token Cobden owed much of his

public position and intellectual influence to the opportunities of life in Manchester and its environs. These opportunities were not simply economic, though it is doubtful he would have risen so far so fast without the security brought by a successful business. Politically, his contact with an older generation of Manchester radicals completed his apprenticeship and provided him with a platform from which to address a national and international audience; but equally importantly, the cosmopolitan nature of the town, with its communities of Greek, French, German and Italian merchants, helped foster the internationalism that lay at the heart of his beliefs in a world order based on peaceful, commercial intercourse between sovereign nations. Cobden the 'Manchester Manufacturer' and Cobden 'The International Man' were indivisibly one and the same.

The Letters of Richard Cobden Project

The aim of this AHRB-funded Project, directed by Professor Anthony Howe, is to published a fully-annotated set of the letters of this prominent British radical, who became a statesman of national and international standing through his leadership of the Anti-Corn Law League and his pursuit of a vision of international peace based on freedom of trade between sovereign nations. The Project is currently organising a number of events to commemorate the bi-centenary of Cobden's birth in 2004, including an international conference at Dunford House in Sussex on 16-18 July. So far the Project has discovered over 5,500 letters in nearly 100 libraries, archives and private collections. However, we would very much like to hear of any other collections, in both private and public hands. If readers know of any such collections, we would be grateful if you would contact Simon Morgan on s.j.morgan1@lse.ac.uk, or Anthony Howe, a.c.howe@uea.ac.uk, tel 01603-593635.

Notes

ⁱ The major biographies of Cobden are: J. Morley, *The Life of Richard Cobden*, 2 vols (London, 1881); N. Edsall, *Richard Cobden: Independent Radical* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1986); and W. Hinde, *Richard Cobden: A Victorian Outsider* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1986).

ⁱⁱ This contemporary indifference may be compared with the Victorian and Edwardian 'Cult of Cobden' described by A. Howe, *Free Trade and Liberal England, 1846-1946* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 141-52. Literary celebrations of Cobden's local influence included E. Watkin, *Alderman Cobden of Manchester* (1891), and W.E.A. Axon, *Cobden as a Citizen: A Chapter in Manchester History* (London, 1907).

ⁱⁱⁱ D. Read, *Cobden and Bright: A Victorian Political Partnership* (London, 1967). Tellingly, Patrick Joyce chose Bright over Cobden as the archetypal middle-class statesman in his book *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994).

^{iv} T.S. Ashton, 'The origins of the Manchester School', *The Manchester School* 1:2 (1930-31), pp. 22-8; *The Times*, 21 Feb. 1846; Robert Blake erroneously has 27 February in *Disraeli* (New York, 1967), pp. 231-2.

^v For an account of Cobden and the League's contribution to public perceptions of Manchester and its inhabitants see G. Messinger, *Manchester in the Victorian Age: the Half-known City* (Manchester, 1985), esp. chap. 5 and pp. 175-7.

^{vi} U. Pope-Hennessy, *Charles Dickens* (1945), pp. 130-1.

^{vii} RC to William Cobden, 21 Aug. 1825, W[est] S[ussex] R[ecord] O[ffice], Add. MS 6019 f. N33; to Frederick Cobden, 26 Aug. 1825, M[anchester] C[entral] L[ibrary], Cobden Family Papers, M87/2/1/4; 20 Sept. 1825, WSRO Add. MS 6011 f. G3; and 30 Jan. 1826, WSRO Add. MS 2762 f. C3.

^{viii} Both of these tales appear in H. Ashworth, *Recollections of Richard Cobden and the Anti-Corn Law League* (London, 1876; reprinted 1993), p. 15. Ashworth's account of Cobden's early days contains a number of inaccuracies.

^{ix} RC to William Cobden, 18 Sept. 1828, WSRO Add. MS 2760 f. A5.

^x I. Inkster, 'Marginal Men: Aspects of the social role of the medical community in Sheffield, 1790-1850', in J. Woodward and D. Richards, (eds.), *Health Care and Popular Medicine in Nineteenth Century England* (London, 1977), pp. 128-63.

^{xi} RC to Frederick Cobden, 30 Jan. 1832, WSRO Add. MS 2762 f. C11; John Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden*, (London, 1881), vol. 1, pp. 19-20.

^{xii} RC to Frederick Cobden, Sept. 1832. Printed in Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden*, vol. 1, p. 22 n.

^{xiii} See M.J. Turner, *Reform and Respectability: The Making of a Middle-Class Liberalism in Early Nineteenth-Century Manchester* (Manchester, 1995).

^{xiv} Cobden's diaries of these trips are in the Cobden Papers at the British Library, Add. MS 43807 and 43672-3. The diary of his 1835 tour of the United States is published in E.H. Cawley, *The American Diaries of Richard Cobden* (Westport, Connecticut, 1952), pp. 85-140.

- xv The latter published as 'Interviews with Mehemet Ali', *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, Nov. 1838.
- xvi RC to Absalom Watkin, 3 Dec. 1838. Printed in Watkin, *Alderman Cobden*, pp. 60-2.
- xvii RC to the Liberal Electors of Stockport, 10 Oct. 1836. *Manchester Guardian*, 17 Dec. 1836.
- xviii *Stockport Advertiser*, 17 Nov. 1837.
- xix S.D. Simon, *A Century of City Government: Manchester, 1838-1938* (London, 1938), chap. 3; A. Redford, *The History of Local Government in Manchester*, 3 vols. (London, 1940), vol. 2, chap. 15; V.A.C. Gatrell, 'Incorporation and the pursuit of liberal hegemony in Manchester, 1790-1839', in D. Fraser (ed.), *Municipal Reform and the Industrial City* (Leicester, 1982).
- xx Reproduced in Axon, *Cobden as a Citizen*.
- xxi RC to Frederick Cobden, 13 July 1840. University of California Los Angeles, Cobden Papers Box 1:6.
- xxii A manuscript copy of the rules of the Sabden print-works is preserved at the V&A, Department of Textiles and Dress, T.5A-1978.
- xxiii RC to Thomas Wyse, 14 Jan. 1838. Perkins Library, Duke University.
- xxiv RC to John Bright, 14 Dec. 1837. B[ritish] L[ibrary] Cobden Papers, Add. MS. 43649 ff.1-2.
- xxv RC to George Combe, 23 Aug. 1836. BL Cobden Papers, Add. MS. 43660 ff. 1-2; *Manchester Guardian*, 12-29 Apr. 1836.
- xxvi See M. J. Turner, 'Before the Manchester School: Economic theory in early nineteenth-century Manchester', *History*, 79 (1994), pp. 216-41. The standard narrative history of the repeal campaign is N. McCord, *The Anti-Corn Law League, 1838-46* (London, 1958); the political culture of the agitation is more fully explored in P. Pickering and A. Tyrrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (Leicester, 2000).
- xxvii *Manchester Guardian*, 15 and 22 Dec. 1838; *Manchester Times*, 16 Feb. 1839.
- xxviii Watkin, *Alderman Cobden*, pp. 67-78; D. Hodgkins, *The Second Railway King: The Life and Times of Sir Edward Watkin 1819-1901* (Whitchurch, 2002), pp. 24-7.
- xxix RC to Francis Place, 29 Sept. 1840. BL Place Papers, Add. MS 35151 ff. 283-4.
- xxx Redford, *History of Local Government in Manchester*, vol. 2, p. 29 and n.
- xxxi RC to J. B. Smith, 28 June 1840. MCL JB Smith Papers, MS.923.2 S345, 17. The quotation is from the Litany of the *Book of Common Prayer*.
- xxxii RC to Frederick Cobden, 16 June 1841. BL Cobden Papers, Add. MS 50750 ff. 43-4.
- xxxiii See Morley *Life of Richard Cobden*, vol. 1, pp. 388-9.
- xxxiv Accounts of the incident are to be found in Edsall, *Richard Cobden*, pp. 122-4; Hinde, *Richard Cobden*, pp. 118-23; Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden*, vol. 1, pp. 256-63.
- xxxv These addresses are preserved at WSRO, Cobden Papers 522-85.
- xxxvi RC to Catherine Cobden, 1 May 1843. WSRO Add. MS 6015 f. L31
- xxxvii See M. Taylor (ed.), *The European Diaries of Richard Cobden, 1846-49* (Aldershot, 1994).
- xxxviii The development of Victoria Park, and the Cobdens' connection with it, is described in M. Spiers, *Victoria Park, Manchester: A Nineteenth-Century Suburb in its Social and Administrative Context* (Manchester, 1976).
- xxxix See Edsall, *Richard Cobden*, pp. 177-8, which rescues Bright from the rather partial account in Read, *Cobden and Bright*, chap. 3, part 1.
- xl RC to Peter Rylands, 20 June 1841. WSRO Cobden Papers 65.
- xli F.M.L. Thompson, 'Whigs and Liberals in the West Riding, 1830-1860', *English Historical Review*, 74 (1959), pp. 214-39, esp. pp. 229-31.
- xliv Derek Fraser, 'Voluntaryism and West Riding politics in the mid-nineteenth century', *Northern History*, 13 (1977), pp. 199-231.
- xliv RC to Sir Robert Peel, 23 June 1846. BL Peel Papers, Add. MS 40594; printed in Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden*, i., pp. 390-7.
- xliv For post-repeal politics in Manchester, see A. Howe, *The Cotton Masters, 1830-1860* (Oxford, 1984), chap. 6; the weaknesses of the Manchester School after repeal are outlined in N. McCord, 'Cobden and Bright in politics, 1846-1857', in R. Robson (ed.), *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark* (London, 1967), pp. 87-114; and M. Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 48-9 and 55-6.
- xlv See D. Nicholls, 'The Manchester Peace Conference of 1853', *Manchester Region History Review*, 5:1 (1991), pp. 11-21.
- xlvi RC to John Robertson, 8 Apr. 1857. WSRO Cobden Papers 84.
- xlvi For example RC to George Moffatt, 7 Apr. 1857. Herefordshire County Record Office, F8/IV/42/90/31.
- xlvi Cawley, *American Diaries*, pp. 143-219, esp. pp. 177-9.
- xlvi RC to Lord John Russell, 25 Mar. 1863. Navarro College Texas, Pearce Civil War Collection.
- l R. Cobden, *Political Writings* (London, 1868), vol. 2, pp. 5-22.
- li RC to Charles Villiers, 6 Nov. 1863. BL Cobden Papers, Add. MS 43662 ff. 112-15. For the impact of Cobden's arrival see N. Longmate, *The Hungry Mills: The Story of the Lancashire Cotton Famine, 1861-5* (London, 1978), pp. 135-6.
- lii RC to J.E. Thorold Rogers, 5 Nov. 1862. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Thorold Rogers Papers, Box 1 f. 214.
- lii RC to Lady Hatherton, 3 Nov. 1862. WSRO Cobden Papers 77.
- lii For example, RC to John Bright, 14 Sept. 1864. BL Cobden Papers, Add. MS 43652 ff. 181-2
- lii Cobden, 'England, Ireland and America', *Political Writings*, vol. 1, pp. 5-153, esp. pp. 139-40.
- lii RC to Priscilla Sale, 6 Oct. 1863. WSRO Add. MS 6012 ff H36-7.
- lii For a recent appraisal of Cobden's opposition to the Crimean War see A. Howe, 'Richard Cobden and the Crimean War', *History Today*, 54:6 (2004), pp. 46-51.
- lii See Edsall, *Richard Cobden*, pp. 421-3.