

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, no peer was a more ardent electioneer and boroughmonger than Sir James Lowther, Earl of Lonsdale, whose influence returned nine MPs at the general election of 1784. None of the electoral battles he fought – not even his costly interventions at Lancaster – matched in duration and intensity his struggle to monopolise the representation of Carlisle in the 1780s and 1790s. Carlisle was a freeman borough with an electorate of approximately 750 out of a population of some 7,000. Admission to the freedom was confined to sons of freemen and to persons who had served a seven-year apprenticeship to a freeman, and was conditional on being “brothered” into one of the city’s eight guilds.¹ Controversy centred on a third route to the freedom: the conferment of an honorary freedom by the corporation. The corporation, which was self-elected, held that it possessed the unilateral right to create honorary freemen; the guilds maintained that their consent was required beforehand. Carlisle politics turned on this dispute, which Lonsdale exploited to the full in his endeavour to turn the city into a pocket borough.²

The failure of Lonsdale’s first attempt to capture both Carlisle seats in 1761 had led him to believe that control of the corporation would assist his ambition: in 1759 he had become an alderman, and in 1761 his friend Humphrey Senhouse became Mayor. From then on, vacancies were filled by Lonsdale’s nominees, until by 1786 the once dominant “Blue” or anti-Lonsdale party had been reduced to two aldermen out of twelve, and seven common councillors out of twenty-four.³ But the election of 1768, in which Lonsdale’s two candidates were defeated by some 380 votes to 310, showed that control of the corporation was insufficient of itself to overcome the hostility of the freemen. It was not until 1784 that Lonsdale attempted to surmount this hurdle by using the corporation to create honorary freemen.⁴ From 1774 the Blue and Yellow parties shared the representation between them, the parallel courses charted in national politics by Lonsdale and the Blue leaders undoubtedly assisting the standstill on local rivalries.⁵ But after 1784, with Lonsdale supporting Pitt, and Portland and Surrey supporting Fox, the compromise began to break down.

In the election of April 1784, the two parties had again divided Carlisle’s representation between them, Surrey being the Blue candidate and Edward Norton the Yellow candidate. However, Lonsdale was determined that on the death of Surrey’s father, the 10th Duke of Norfolk, the Yellows would be in a position to dispense with the compromise and capture the second seat in the ensuing by-election. Hence on 28 October 1784, with Lonsdale present as an alderman, the corporation repealed all restrictions on its power of creating honorary freemen: on the following two days, and on 13 and 14 January 1785, it conferred the freedom of the city on no less than 1,447 people. These “Mushroom voters” – so called from the rapidity of their appearance overnight – were mostly chosen from lists made out by Lonsdale’s stewards, and consisted largely of miners from his Whitehaven collieries and tenants from his Westmorland estates. Not one of the “mushrooms” was entitled to the freedom by patrimony or servitude, and none was a member of any guild; despite this, a number of them were immediately appointed aldermen or common councillors of Carlisle.⁶

The guilds, regarding their privileges as violated by this move, established a committee in February 1785 to consider their response. The committee reported to the freemen on 27 July, when a decision was taken to seek legal redress.⁷ Hence, in the Michaelmas term of 1785, John Atkinson of London, a member of the merchants' guild, initiated a test prosecution in the court of King's Bench against three mushrooms, alderman Thomas Whelpdale, John Ebdell and John Henderson. The three men selected in this test case were all men of substance, able to bear the costs of a prosecution, Ebdell and Henderson being materially interested in supporting their honorary freedoms, because as cattle dealers they benefited from the freemen's exemption from certain tolls. The corporation was initially obstructive in permitting the plaintiff to examine its records, and the Mayor, Richard Jackson, and alderman Jeremiah Wherlings were reprimanded in court by Lord Mansfield on 1 February 1786, narrowly escaping an attachment for contempt. In the Hilary term of 1786, *quo warranto* informations were formally issued against the three mushrooms, commanding them to show by what right they claimed to be freemen of Carlisle.⁸

Before the case could proceed further, Edward Norton, the Yellow MP for Carlisle, died on 27 March 1786. In the ensuing by-election, John Christian Curwen of Ewanrigg Hall was chosen as the Blue candidate to face the Yellow nominee, John Lowther of Swillington, Lonsdale's cousin. Knowing that Lonsdale would use his mushroom voters to carry the day and that a petition to the House of Commons would be necessary, the Blues called for a decisive vote for Curwen from the traditional freemen to emphasise that the creation of the mushrooms was "a daring and outrageous violation" of their rights.⁹ Their wishes were gratified, for the freemen voted for Curwen by a margin of 422 votes to 107. So appalled were the traditional electors at Lonsdale's proceedings that, apparently, virtually all the London out-voters polled for Curwen, as did the electoral interest of Sir James Graham, who was to be Lonsdale's candidate in 1796. But because 461 mushrooms had been allowed to vote for Lowther, swelling his total poll to 568, the Yellow candidate was duly returned on 18 April.¹⁰

The Blues petitioned against the election, and in late May a select committee was appointed to hear the case, with Charles James Fox as Curwen's nominee. Clearly, the question turned on the determination of Carlisle's franchise, and whether the corporation was empowered to confer honorary freedoms at will. The evidence on this was ambiguous: common council by-laws of 1689, 1712, 1713, 1736, 1750 and 1758 appeared to limit the freedom of the city to members of the guilds: namely, the sons of freemen and those who had served an apprenticeship to a freeman. However, by-laws of 1697, 1721, 1733 and, of course, 1784 suggested that the corporation could confer honorary freedoms without restriction. Further, on 6 September 1759, the common council had asserted its right to create honorary freemen, but five days later, having created Lonsdale an honorary freeman, it had suddenly reversed itself and had pledged to the guilds that it would make no more.¹¹ The previous declaration of the House of Commons, given on 23 February 1712, provided no guidance, for the House had not explicitly ruled on the question of honorary freemen when determining Carlisle's franchise.¹²

The Yellows' counsel asserted that the power of creating honorary freemen was inherent in the common council, and pointed to clauses in the Mayor's oath which enjoined him to follow the advice of the council in all matters touching the government of the city. It was argued that the creation of freemen clearly fell within this category. Both before and since the charter of 1637, the corporation had exercised its right and created honorary freemen

who had exercised their franchises without dispute. The by-laws in which the corporation had appeared to limit the freedom of the city to members of the guilds were neither declaratory laws nor renunciations of an illegal exercise of power, but merely rules of convenience which had been repealed in October 1784.

The Blues' counsel argued that the consent of the guilds was required for the corporation to confer honorary freedoms, and that prior admission to a guild was a necessary qualification for admission to the freedom. Witnesses testified that although a number of honorary freemen had indeed been created in the past, these creations had been viewed as encroachments on the rights of the guilds. The Dormont book of 1561, containing the ordinances of the city, was produced, the nineteenth order of which had given the guilds the power to veto the conferment of honorary freedoms by the council. Because this order was described in the book as being "agreeable to the ancient custom and constitution of Carlisle", it was therefore founded on some earlier but no longer extant charter. The necessity of prior admission to a guild was based on immemorial usage, which was also evidence of its foundation in an early charter. Being fundamental laws enshrined in a charter, they were paramount to the derivative power of making or repealing by-laws, upon which the Yellows had based their case.

On 31 May the select committee resolved that Curwen had been duly elected at the by-election, and unseated Lowther.¹³ However, the committee made no pronouncement on the wider question of the legality of the mushroom voters; thus the Blues attached considerable importance to the outcome of their prosecutions of Whelpdale, Ebdell and Henderson. In the Trinity term of 1786, the three mushrooms replied to the *quo warranto* informations issued against them, arguing that the corporation had the right to create honorary freemen. The stage was thus set for a trial. However, in the ensuing Michaelmas term, the three defendants suddenly abandoned the case, and judgements of *ouster* from their freedoms were therefore entered by default against them, Whelpdale losing his aldermanic gown in addition.¹⁴ The Blues maintained that this was proof of the illegality of the mushrooms, but the Yellows denied this, arguing initially that the case had been abandoned because Ebdell and Henderson were about to be disfranchised by the corporation for having abused their exemption from paying tolls.¹⁵ This claim was later altered to the assertion that the committee's decision of 31 May 1786 had prejudiced their chance of a fair trial.¹⁶

In any case, Lonsdale had every intention of using his mushrooms again in his attempt to win control of Carlisle, and his second chance came with the death on 31 August 1786 of Surrey's father, the Duke of Norfolk, which elevated Surrey to the House of Lords and necessitated a second by-election. In the ensuing poll, the Blue candidate was Rowland Stephenson of Scaleby Castle, and his Yellow opponent was Edward Knubley of Wigton, Sheriff of Cumberland in 1785-6. Despite vociferous Blue protests, the Mayor permitted the mushrooms to poll again. The arguments that James Boswell, the Mayor's counsel, used to justify the acceptance of the mushroom votes were that the select committee of May had made no determination on the question of the honorary freemen; that the judgements of *ouster* applied only to the three individuals concerned and had no wider application; and that because the judgements had been entered by default, the merits of the question had not been decided.¹⁷ At the close of the poll, Stephenson led Knubley by 405 votes to 147 among the freemen, but because 407 mushrooms had voted, swelling Knubley's total poll to 554, the Yellow candidate was duly returned on 15 December.¹⁸

The Blues petitioned against the election, and a select committee of MPs, having heard

the two sides, declared on 26 February 1787 that Stephenson had been duly elected.¹⁹ But once again, while seating the Blue candidate, the committee did not rule on the general issue of the legality of the mushroom voters. Further, whereas the committee of May 1786 had seated Curwen by a vote of 14 to 1, the February committee seated Stephenson by the narrower margin of 10 to 5.²⁰

Lonsdale's ire at his second setback was vented against five publicans who had voted for Stephenson, for on 7 October 1788 Lonsdale and Boswell refused to renew their ale licenses. On 22 November a writ of *mandamus* was granted by the King's Bench at the behest of the publicans, commanding Lonsdale and Boswell to issue the licenses. Affidavits were filed by all the parties concerned, in which Lonsdale and Boswell, disclaiming all political motivation, denied that the publicans had ever applied for new licenses. On 10 February 1789 the case was dismissed, the inn-keepers not choosing to try and prove perjury by their opponents.²¹ In the autumn of 1789, the offending publicans were again refused licenses by the corporation, but Norfolk and Curwen intervened in their capacities as county magistrates, held a petty sessions, and issued the requisite licenses. Lonsdale was enraged by this defiant action, and on 27 November 1789 and 23 January 1790, his counsel obtained rules in the King's Bench to show cause why criminal informations should not be filed against the two Blue leaders. Norfolk's case was heard on 27 January 1790, when it was argued that the Duke had no legal authority within the city of Carlisle, and that he had acted from political motives. However, Norfolk's counsel, Erskine, proved that the Duke had acted within his statutory rights, and that he had taken legal advice beforehand. The rule was therefore unanimously discharged, and it does not seem that the parallel case against Curwen was proceeded with.²² Nevertheless, Lonsdale continued his vendetta against the publicans, for at Carlisle quarter sessions on 14 July 1790, at his dictation, three of the innkeepers were each fined £2 and costs by Boswell for selling ale without a corporation license. At the next quarter sessions held on 5 October, Norfolk and Curwen were actually indicted by a grand jury for having licensed the publicans in defiance of the corporation. The case was removed to the King's Bench by a writ of *certiorari*, but it does not seem that any further action was taken.²³

The publicans' affair was essentially a sub-plot in the continuing contest over the mushroom voters, where both sides manoeuvred in readiness for the general election of 1790. To strengthen the claims of the mushroom voters, Lonsdale decided to stage a legal action which would, hopefully, confirm the corporation's right to make honorary freemen. On 23 September 1788, Robert Bennet and three other persons, all sons of freemen but who had not been brothered into any guild, applied to the corporation for admission to the freedom of the city. The corporation, with the connivance of the applicants, refused their request, stating that they must first join one of the guilds. At Bennet's instigation, a writ of *mandamus* was issued in May 1789 against the corporation, which in reply answered that membership of a guild was a precondition of admission to the freedom. Issue was joined, and the case came on for trial in the King's Bench on 1 July. At this point, the guilds decided to intervene, for they recognised that the action between Bennet and the corporation was essentially a bogus affair in which the corporation, while nominally against Bennet, was in reality seeking a collusive judgement against the rights of the guilds. Seeking to prevent this, the guilds successfully applied to the court to delay the hearing and to be admitted as a party to the action on behalf of the corporation. The trials were eventually held on 7 December, with Erskine as counsel for the guilds. In essence, the

arguments were the same as those used before the committees of the Commons in 1786 and 1787. Bennet's counsel argued that the requirement of prior membership of a guild rested on no higher authority than by-laws which had been repealed in 1784; Erskine contended that it was based on the customary usage of Carlisle, which was evidence of its foundation in an ancient charter which could not be overridden by by-laws. The judge, Lord Kenyon, summed up in favour of Bennet, and the jury concurred by finding verdicts for him and his associates.²⁴

Although the decision had merely established the corporation's right to confer the freedom on sons of freemen who had not joined a guild, Lonsdale chose to interpret it more broadly as confirmation of its right to confer freedoms on anyone, specifically the mushrooms, none of whom was the son of a Carlisle freeman. He assiduously fostered the impression that the verdicts were a complete vindication of his cause, and held a grand celebratory dinner in London. Independent observers certainly thought that this was the case; *The Times* reported that the verdicts meant that Lonsdale would capture both Carlisle seats at the next election, and that Curwen and Stephenson, aghast at the outcome, would not seek re-election.²⁵

The Blue party responded with its own legal move, for on 27 January 1790 *quo warranto* informations were issued by the King's Bench against six prominent mushrooms, commanding them to show by what right they claimed to be freemen. The person eventually singled out for prosecution was George Wheatley, Lonsdale's chief steward, who had become an alderman in 1788 — ironically, in place of the ousted Thomas Whelpdale. The case was due for hearing at Cumberland assizes in August 1790, but at the last moment, Wheatley withdrew his plea and a judgement of *ouster* from his honorary freedom and his aldermanship was therefore entered against him. According to one newspaper, the case was abandoned because the select composition of the special jury empanelled to try the cause rendered it impervious to Lonsdale's influence.²⁶

However, even if the case had been heard in August, it would have come too late for the general election of July 1790. In this third mushroom election, the Blue candidates were Curwen and Wilson Braddyll, who was also standing for Horsham on Norfolk's interest; the Yellow candidates were Knubley and James Clarke Satterthwaite of Papcastle. This was the most violent of the three mushroom contests, and was notable for the partial demolition of Lonsdale's house in Fisher Street — "Mushroom Hall" — by a Blue mob. Once more, the Blue candidates each outpolled the Yellows by 394 votes to 126 among the traditional freemen, but because the Mayor also accepted the votes of 377 mushrooms, increasing Knubley's and Satterthwaite's total vote to 503 each, the Yellow candidates were returned on 10 July.

As a preliminary to the Blues' petition against the election, Lonsdale staged another trial in the King's Bench with a view to strengthening the claims of the mushroom electors. Richard Penn, Robert Mackreth and Thomas Garforth, who had each been given honorary freedoms on 30 October 1784, applied to the corporation for permission to take the freeman's oath and be sworn into office of a freeman. The corporation, at Lonsdale's instigation and with the applicants' connivance, refused. Writs of *mandamus* were issued against the corporation, commanding it to swear in the three mushrooms. The corporation replied that membership of a guild was a necessary preliminary to the freedom of the city. The resulting trials were held in the King's Bench on 6 December 1790, and to ensure that no defence was offered, the Yellows did not give the guilds sufficient notice to enable them

to intervene. When no defence was therefore offered on behalf of the corporation, the judge, Lord Kenyon, directed the jury to find verdicts for the three plaintiffs, each of whom had damages of one shilling awarded to them. The whole proceedings had an implausible, fraudulent air about them; Kenyon himself remarked, "There is undoubtedly something behind [this] but I don't know what."²⁷ Nevertheless, several newspapers were sufficiently misled by the proceedings to report that the verdicts had established the corporation's right to make honorary freemen. It was left to the *Morning Chronicle* to see through the charade and deny any such inference.²⁸

On 1 December 1790 the Blues' petition against the election was presented to the Commons, and the following February a committee was appointed to hear the case. Unlike its predecessors of 1786 and 1787, the committee of 1791 was able to avail itself of an act of 1788 (28 Geo. III cap. 52) which released subsequent election committees from being bound by the determinations of previous committees – in this case, that of 1712 – and empowered them to make new determinations on the franchise. It therefore invited the contending parties to submit their interpretations of Carlisle's franchise. The counsel for Curwen and Braddyll argued that the freedom of the city could be obtained in three ways: by being born the son of a freeman; by a seven-year apprenticeship to a freeman; or by gift of the corporation with the consent of the guilds. In each case, membership of a guild was a prerequisite of admission to the freedom. The counsel for the sitting members, Knubley and Satterthwaite, agreed that the freedom could be obtained by patrimony or by servitude, but argued that it could also be conferred unilaterally by the corporation, without reference to the guilds. In no case was prior membership of a guild necessary for admission to the freedom.

On 3 March 1791, the committee rejected both sides' interpretations, and in their place it ruled that the right to vote lay with the freemen of Carlisle, "having been previously admitted Brethren of One of the Eight Guilds or Occupations of the said City, and deriving their Title to such Freedom by being Sons of Freemen, or by Service of Seven Years Apprenticeship to a Freeman resident, during such Apprenticeship, within the said City, and in no others."²⁹ In other words, the corporation had no right to create honorary freemen, either with or without the consent of the guilds. Thus, the mushroom voters were formally disfranchised, and Curwen and Braddyll were seated.

In 1792, a petition from twelve inhabitants of Carlisle, both Yellow freemen and mushrooms, was presented to the Commons, appealing against the decision; the appeal was repeated in 1793 and 1794, and finally in 1795 another committee was established to reconsider the case. The committee saw no reason to alter the previous determination, and on 12 March 1795 it reaffirmed the decision of 1791.³⁰

Prohibited from polling his mushroom voters in the election of June 1796, Lonsdale appears to have attempted to confer a spurious legality on them by pressing the guilds into admitting them as members. References in the merchants' guilds records in 1796 to "various attempts [having] been made on this and other guilds to obtain admission to their brotherhood by persons having no claim of title whatever" seem to indicate this.³¹ The attempt was unsuccessful, and deprived of any chance of winning, Lonsdale sought instead to inflict maximum damage on his opponents with a prolonged and expensive contest. On 24 June 1796, Curwen and his partner, Sir Frederick Fletcher Vane, were elected with 399 and 390 votes respectively, the defeated Yellows, Sir James Graham and Knubley, polling 288 and 277 votes respectively. Although some 30 Blue votes had been rejected, this time it

was the turn of the Yellows to appeal against the result, but on 2 March 1797 a committee of MPs confirmed Curwen's and Vane's election.³²

Lonsdale was nothing if not a persevering opponent, for only his death on 24 May 1802 prevented another bitter contest for control of Carlisle in the election of the following July; on his death, nine thousand guineas were found in his bureau in preparation for the anticipated struggle.³³ Lonsdale's death, and his succession by the conciliatory Sir William Lowther, provided the opportunity for a compromise between the two parties to end the debilitating and divisive contests. On Curwen's initiative, an understanding was hastily reached, whereby the Blues would yield one of Carlisle's seats to the Yellows, in return for which the handful of ex-mushroom voters illegally holding corporate offices would resign.³⁴ On 6 July 1802, Curwen and Lowther's nominee, Walter Spencer Stanhope, were returned unopposed for Carlisle;³⁵ in September and October 1803, Lowther delivered his side of the bargain when the three remaining ex-mushroom aldermen, Sir Michael le Fleming, Edmund Wilson, and John Baynes Garforth, resigned their positions.³⁶ Purged of the last traces of the mushrooms, Carlisle now embarked upon a decade of comparative political tranquillity.³⁷

"English history can furnish no parallel to it", was one outraged comment on Lonsdale's creation of the mushroom voters.³⁸ In fact, the manipulation of closed corporations was a time-honoured move in the political game. For example, honorary freemen had been created in Durham in 1761 in order to swamp the guild brothers of the city trading companies. Further, at the same time as Lonsdale was introducing the mushrooms in Carlisle, the corporations of Bedford and Derby were creating faggot voters at the behest, respectively, of the Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire; and the parliamentary reformer, Thomas Oldfield, expressed surprise that what had been declared illegal at Carlisle had been deemed permissible at Bedford and Derby.³⁹

The mushroom elections largely account for the weakness of political radicalism in Carlisle during the 1790s. This was in spite of Norfolk's and Curwen's support of parliamentary reform, and even though Carlisle was then the most important textile centre between Lancashire and Glasgow – both areas of radical activity – with 1,000 calico printers alone in 1794.⁴⁰ Part of the explanation lies in the weakness of religious nonconformity in Carlisle.⁴¹ But more importantly, the very nature of the Blue cause precluded an enthusiastic commitment to radical objectives, for the Blues were the party of the local *status quo*, defending the vested interests of the traditional freemen, while it was Lonsdale who posed as the innovator, overturning ancient rights and prescriptive privileges.⁴² It is interesting to note that William Paley, an influential opponent of parliamentary reform, supported the Blue party, and saw no contradiction between these two positions.⁴³ Further, because the House of Commons upheld the Blue cause on five occasions between 1786 and 1797, demands for the reform of that body commanded little local appeal.⁴⁴ Moreover, the textile workers took little part in the mushroom elections, being mostly Scottish and Irish immigrants who were not eligible for guild membership, and hence not entitled to the freedom. They were not "politicized" by any direct participation in the elections, and concentrated mostly on trade union activities at this period.⁴⁵

What was the result of Lonsdale's intended masterstroke? Among the traditional freemen, the Yellow vote collapsed in all three mushroom elections to less than half its level of 1768, the last straight Yellow *versus* Blue contest. Undoubtedly the creation of the

mushroom voters was as much of an affront to many Yellow freemen as it was to the Blues.⁴⁶ Only in the election of 1796, by which time the mushrooms had been disfranchised, did the numbers of Yellow freemen recover dramatically, but the party was still polling below its historic strength. Hence, Lonsdale's manoeuvre administered a disastrous setback to his fortunes among the Carlisle freemen, and the Yellow party did not fully recover its position during his lifetime.

Notes and References

- ¹ The guilds were medieval relics which had largely lost their powers of economic regulation. A freeman's guild membership did not necessarily correspond with his actual occupation, being the product of family tradition rather than economic function.
- ² This dispute was compounded by two other long-running conflicts: one between the freemen and the corporation over ownership of the Kingmoor estate; the other between the freemen and Lonsdale over fishing rights in the river Eden.
- ³ Lonsdale's party was known as the "Yellow" party.
- ⁴ L. Namier and J. Brooke, *The History of Parliament 1754-1790* (3 vols., London, 1964), I, 245-6; B. Bonsall, *Sir James Lowther and Cumberland and Westmorland Elections 1754-1775* (Manchester, 1960), 87-8.
- ⁵ The Blue leader until 1780 was the Duke of Portland; his influence was thereafter eclipsed by Charles Howard, Earl of Surrey, who became MP for Carlisle in that year: H. K. S. Causton, *The Howard Papers* (London, 1862), 417.
- ⁶ Carlisle Record Office (C.R.O.), Common Council Order Book, CA/2/8; A. Luders, *Reports of the Proceedings in Committees of the House of Commons* (3 vols., London, 1785-90), III, 528. One of the honorary freemen was William Pitt. By January 1785 over 800 mushrooms had been sworn in as freemen.
- ⁷ R. S. Ferguson and W. Nanson (eds), *Some Municipal Records of the City of Carlisle* (London, 1887), 117, 132, 161, 200-1, 255.
- ⁸ C.R.O., Mounsey-Heysham MSS., Affidavit of Thomas Pearson and John Atkinson, 25 June 1789, TL 542/1; CA/2/8; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 11 February 1786.
- ⁹ *Boletarium: or, a Collection of Papers, Squibs, Songs, etc. written on the memorable Mushroom Contest at Carlisle, April, 1786* (Carlisle, 1786), 7-8.
- ¹⁰ C.R.O., Curwen MSS., Bill of Costs, D/Cu/3/11; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 22 April 1786. Curwen's support was strongest in the merchants' and glovers' guilds, and weakest in the smiths' and butchers' guilds. 61 qualified Blues were refused admission to the freedom by the corporation, and were unable to vote for Curwen.
- ¹¹ CA/2/2-8, *passim*.
- ¹² *Commons Journals*, XVII, 106.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, XLI, 662, 737, 866-7; C.R.O., Lonsdale MSS., D/Lons/L, City of Carlisle: historical notes down to 1786; Luders, *op. cit.*, III, 506-83. These arguments were in fact presented in February 1787 to the Commons' committee which considered the second by-election of 1786, but they were undoubtedly similar to those used in connection with the first by-election.
- ¹⁴ *Newcastle Chronicle*, 23 December 1786; Case and legal opinion as to the right to vote in Carlisle, 11 June 1789; Affidavit of Thomas Pearson and John Atkinson, 25 June 1789, TL 542/1. Several prominent mushrooms resigned their honorary freedoms in January 1787 in alarm: CA/2/8.
- ¹⁵ D/Lons/L, City of Carlisle: historical notes down to 1786.
- ¹⁶ Luders, *op. cit.*, III, 562.
- ¹⁷ Yale University, Boswell MSS., Carlisle election 1786, Lg 43, ff. 26-39. Boswell was Recorder of Carlisle, 1788-90.
- ¹⁸ *Supplement to Boletarium: or, a Collection of Papers, Squibs, Songs, etc. written on the second Mushroom Contest at Carlisle, December, 1786* (Carlisle, 1787). Stephenson's support was strongest in the merchants and shoemakers' guilds, and weakest in the smiths' and weavers' guilds.
- ¹⁹ *Commons Journals*, XLII, 277, 405-6. It was rumoured that the Mayor, Sir Joseph Senhouse, would be prosecuted for receiving the mushroom votes: C.R.O., Senhouse MSS., Senhouse to Catherine Senhouse, 11 April 1787, D/Sen/Family Correspondence, Box 2.
- ²⁰ *World*, 28 February 1787.

- ²¹ Brief and Affidavits, D/Lons/L/Legal Papers and Lawsuits, Box 5; Affidavits, CA/2/245; G. Scott and F. A. Pottle (eds), *The Private Papers of James Boswell from Malahide Castle* (18 vols., New York, 1928-34), XVII, 129, 150; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 29 November 1788, 21 February 1789.
- ²² Legal opinion, 15 September 1789, TL 542/1; *The Times*, 28 November 1789, 25, 28 January 1790; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 6 February 1790.
- ²³ Boswell MSS., Informations, Lg 58, 59, 59/1; Scott and Pottle, *op. cit.*, XVIII, 69, 75-7; Quarter Sessions Minute Book, CA/3/66.
- ²⁴ Legal opinion, 11 June 1789, TL 542/1; *The Times*, 3 July, 9 December 1789; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 12 December 1789; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 16 December 1789. See *The Times*, 25 January 1791 for a dispute about defence costs between the corporation and the guilds.
- ²⁵ *The Times*, 8, 17 December 1789; Scott and Pottle, *op. cit.*, XVIII, 9.
- ²⁶ Minute Book of the Court of Aldermen, CA/2/10; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 6 February, 7 August 1790. Solomon Hodgson's *Newcastle Chronicle* was the organ of the Blues until the establishment of Francis Jollie's *Carlisle Journal* in October 1798.
- ²⁷ Minutes of Trial, TL 542/1; *The Times*, 7 December 1790; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 11 December 1790. Penn was MP for Haslemere; Mackreth was MP for Ashburton; Garforth became Recorder of Carlisle in 1796.
- ²⁸ *St. James's Chronicle*, 4-7 December 1790; *Public Advertiser*, 8 December 1790; *Newcastle Chronicle*, 11 December 1790; *Morning Chronicle*, 17 December 1790.
- ²⁹ *Commons Journals*, XLVI, 15, 24, 257-8; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 8 March 1791; Bill of Costs, Arundel Castle MS. MD 365, cited by permission of His Grace the Duke of Norfolk.
- ³⁰ *Commons Journals*, L, 321.
- ³¹ Ferguson and Nanson, *op. cit.*, 122-3, 132, 163, 201, 229; *Carlisle Election for 1816* (Newcastle on Tyne, 1816), iv.
- ³² *Commons Journals*, LII, 39, 357-8.
- ³³ *The Times*, 3 June 1802.
- ³⁴ Lowther to ?, 28 May 1802; Curwen to Lowther, 1, 22 June 1802; Norfolk to Lowther, 7 January 1803, D/Lons/L/Letters/CL, 7, 33.
- ³⁵ *Carlisle Journal*, 10 July 1802.
- ³⁶ CA/2/9.
- ³⁷ The compromise of 1802 "gave great offence" to some Blues, and it was a factor in Curwen's unseating in 1812: F. Jollie (ed), *A Political History of the City of Carlisle* (Carlisle, 1820), 20.
- ³⁸ H. Lonsdale, *The Worthies of Cumberland* (6 vols., London, 1867-75), I, 20.
- ³⁹ W. W. Bean, *The Parliamentary Representation of the Six Northern Counties of England* (Hull, 1890), 131-4; T. H. B. Oldfield, *The History of the Boroughs* (3 vols., London, 1792), I, 202-3.
- ⁴⁰ Hutchinson, II, 664.
- ⁴¹ M. Milner, *The Life of Isaac Milner* (London, 1842), 130. Milner was Dean of Carlisle, 1792-1820.
- ⁴² Mingay, Lonsdale's counsel, said on 7 December 1789 that Norfolk "wished to stand at the door, and to say no man shall be admitted a freeman, but those who are my friends; [Lonsdale] wished the door to stand open, and, that free access should be allowed to all": *The Times*, 9 December 1789.
- ⁴³ Rev. E. Paley, *The Works of William Paley* (London, 1825), 191. Paley was Archdeacon of Carlisle, 1782-1804.
- ⁴⁴ See the admission by the Carlisle loyalist association in December 1792: British Library, Reeves MSS., ADD. MS. 16,931, fol. 38. See also Public Record Office, Greene to Dundas, 29 August 1793, HO 42/26; and *Newcastle Chronicle*, 14 December 1793, concerning the extent of "seditious" activities in Carlisle.
- ⁴⁵ June C. F. Barnes, "The trade union and Radical activities of the Carlisle handloom weavers", CW2, lxxviii, 149-53; Hutchinson, II, 662-4.
- ⁴⁶ R. S. Ferguson, *Cumberland and Westmorland MPs 1660-1867* (London, 1871), 202.