

# ◆ Thirty something

## THOMAS PAINE AT BULL HOUSE IN LEWES 1768–74 — SIX FORMATIVE YEARS

by Colin Brent

*In spring 2008 the Sussex Archaeological Society completed a thorough repair of Bull House as a prelude to welcoming visitors at regular intervals. And in July 2009 Lewes celebrated the two-hundredth anniversary of Thomas Paine's death at Greenwich near New York. So it seems timely to ponder the six years passed at Lewes by that 'Citizen of the World', arguably the most influential 'English' pamphleteer, herald of American Independence, father of British Radicalism, prophet of an 'Age of Reason'. And indeed, there is evidence that these years as an excise officer, shopkeeper and householder, as an assiduous jurymen and vestryman, in a thriving county town and contentious parliamentary borough, did expose him to what he later identified in *Rights of Man* as 'republican' elements in English government and society. Moreover, during these years, his literary output, in verse and prose, seems already tinged with 'radical' sentiment, clearly and trenchantly expressed.*

Paine was born at Thetford in Norfolk in 1737. His father was a master corset-maker, a Quaker and a freeman of that borough. His Anglican mother was the daughter of its town clerk. After pursuing a commercial course at the grammar

school, he served a seven-year apprenticeship with his father. Removing to London, he spent six months on a licensed privateer, the *King of Prussia*, and was able to live off his prize money in the capital during the winter of 1757–8, attending lectures on astronomy, physics and mechanics given by Thomas Martin and James Ferguson, two persuasive disciples of Isaac Newton. Then, after working briefly in Dover, early in 1759 he set up as a master corset-maker at Sandwich and married a respectable servant girl. But the business quickly failed and his wife died in childbirth. He returned home to his parents at Thetford in 1761 and joined the excise service in Lincolnshire in 1762, gauging brewers' casks at Grantham, before promotion in 1764 to Alford, a market town near the coast. He was dismissed a year later, allegedly for neglecting his paperwork. After a spell as a journeyman corset-maker at Diss in Norfolk, he was re-admitted to the excise service in July 1766. He declined a post at remote Grampound in Cornwall, and taught English at private schools in London instead. But he accepted another as a riding officer at Lewes in February 1768 with a salary of £50 a year.<sup>1</sup>

Arriving in March, he remained till April or May 1774. He joined a supervisor and nine other excise men whose official base was the *White Hart* in the High Street. But he also blossomed as a grocer and tobacconist, a husband and householder. So, after a decade of drift and failure, these six years in Lewes gave him time to consolidate. And indeed, soon

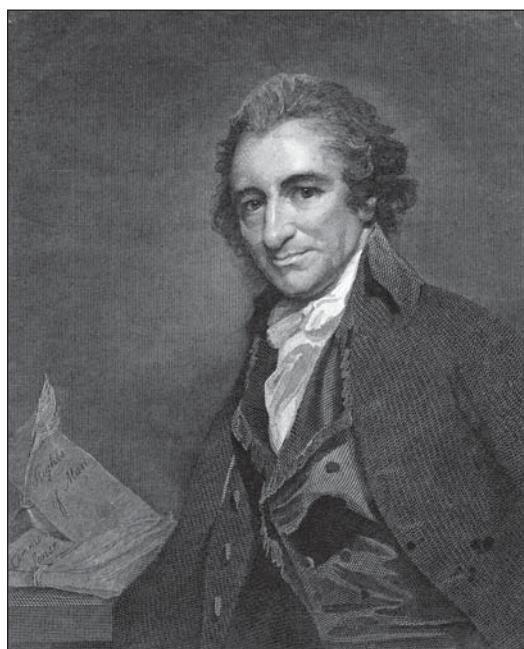


Fig. 1. A portrait of Thomas Paine. Engraved by William Sharp in 1793, after a painting by George Romney. (Sussex Archaeological Society LEWSA VR:2309.)

after sailing in September 1774 from London to Philadelphia, he became editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* and wrote the pamphlet *Common Sense*, which in January 1776, in his fortieth year, brought him instant 'Continental' fame.

Nonetheless, evaluation of Paine's time in Lewes must always be tentative, for subsequently he seldom mentioned his early years in England. But he did recall a pregnant remark by a 'Mr Verril' after a game of bowls at Lewes (see below), and in June 1792, amid a government witch hunt when *Rights of Man* came out, he sent a letter to a Lewes meeting in the Town Hall alluding to the 'exceeding candour, and even tenderness' he showed while an excise officer there. His name was 'not to be found in the records of the Lewes' justices, in any act of contention with, or severity ... toward, the persons whom he surveyed'. Paine's reticence is the more regrettable because the main source for these years in England is a short hostile biography by a government agent, using the pseudonym Francis Oldys, published in 1791 to destroy Paine's character. Moreover, for these early years the applauding *Life* issued in 1819 by the Lewes-born Thomas 'Clio' Rickman, his friend and legatee, is sketchy in the extreme. And suspect, because self-promoting, were anecdotes emanating from William Lee junior, editor of the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser*. As to local official records, Paine's signature shows him attending town meetings and St Michael's vestry, serving as a jurymen at the manorial court of Lewes Burgus, and marrying Elizabeth Ollive. Two letters he wrote as a tenant of Bull House, to the trustees of Westgate chapel, survive, and the deeds of Bull House throw light on his separation from Elizabeth. Notices in the *Advertiser* announced the launch, and the collapse, of their joint business venture.<sup>2</sup>

It seems, though, that Paine's decision, in March 1768, to lodge with Samuel Ollive at Bull House in St Michael's parish near the west gate eased the integration into Lewes life of a childless widower, far from his Norfolk roots, pursuing an often unpopular calling. His landlord was an 'eminent' grocer and tobacconist in his late sixties, whose two elder sons, John and Samuel, born to his deceased wife Elizabeth, were both master watchmakers living away from Lewes. A sister Elizabeth, born in 1749, remained at home, along with Ollive's second wife Esther. Their son Thomas, born in 1753, was also training as a watchmaker.

Indeed, with no son to help run his business, the elderly Ollive perhaps hoped to profit from his new lodger's knowledge and energy. Certainly in July 1768 Paine was the sole witness to an agreement his landlord made with the Westgate chapel trustees, whose premises structurally interlocked with Bull House — indeed they needed access to it to wind up the chapel clock.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps Ollive also appraised Paine as a suitable son-in-law. His daughter was attractive and intelligent. Indeed in January 1769 the *Advertiser* announced that:

'Elizabeth Ollive, late teacher to Mrs Ridge, who lately declined the Business on Account of her Health, hath opened a BOARDING SCHOOL for young LADIES, at Mr Feron's, two doors above Verral's Coffee-House [in Lewes High Street]; where all those who shall please to favour her with their Children, may depend upon having the greatest Care taken of them.'

Did Paine perhaps encourage this ambitious venture? After arriving at Philadelphia in 1774 'his design was to open a school for the instruction of young ladies in several branches of knowledge, which, at that time, were seldom taught'. Nothing more is heard of Elizabeth's school. But she was also an heiress. Her paternal grandfather, John, the pastor of the Dissenting congregation at Westgate from 1711 to 1742, had bought the freehold of both Bull House with its stable and garden, and also of 'Gallybird Hall', a Wealden copyhold farm of 24 acres at nearby Barcombe, a parish popular with Lewes property investors. Her father owned both premises and his intention, expressed in his will, was that Elizabeth and her three brothers, subject to his wife Esther's life-interest, should 'share and share alike' the patrimony — a provision which in 1800 brought her almost £200.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover landlord and lodger perhaps shared some religious beliefs. Paine had been a Methodist lay preacher in Kent, and more recently at Moorfields in London, expounding Wesley's 'Arminian' message that Christ's saving grace was open to all — a form of spiritual democracy. At Lewes there was no established Wesleyan mission, and Paine did not, it seems, launch one — maybe because 'field' preachers rather incensed local 'Bonfire boys'. On 5 November 1769 they menaced the residence on School Hill of widow Norton for letting the house next door to an itinerant Methodist



Fig. 2. Bull House, the approach to Westgate Chapel, and Westgate House, c 1871. (Reeves Box 3/8. By kind permission of E. Reeves, Lewes.)

preacher — albeit a Calvinistic one. Samuel Ollive was a member of Westgate, his father's chapel. His children were baptized there. In April 1769 his executors were both members — one of them, John Ridge, indeed, was the pastor's brother-in-law. And maybe Paine found it doctrinally congenial, for it seems opinions there were 'very much mixed'. The chapel's trust deed merely required it be used by Protestant Dissenters worshipping Almighty God. Ebenezer Johnston, its pastor since 1742,

had trained at Northampton theological academy where the curriculum embraced mathematics, physics, astronomy and Lockean psychology, as well as Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Its principal, Philip Doddridge, whose writings had immense influence, taught a 'practical' Christianity, based on relaxed doctrinal debate. Johnston bought his books on pastoral practice and probably shared his liberal views. So Paine, the 'Arminian' preacher, perhaps approved of Westgate chapel, and indeed

of its erudite pastor, who imported sugar from Barbados as a sideline. Moreover, Samuel Ollive himself subscribed to Doddridge's most popular work, *The Family Expositor, or A Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament*.<sup>5</sup>

As for Paine's politics while at Lewes, Rickman commented that he was 'a Whig'. And Samuel Ollive, like other members of Westgate chapel, supported the Whig patron of Lewes, the duke of Newcastle, whose Pelham ancestors in eastern Sussex had championed that 'Glorious Revolution' which all Dissenters believed had secured them the religious freedom they so cherished. Moreover, Ollive's resolve that his children should 'share and share alike' their patrimony suggests a 'radical' man who spurned the practice of primogeniture which Paine later denounced as the taproot of hereditary tyranny. And usefully for Paine, his landlord was immersed in the civic life of Lewes borough which united the four parishes of All Saints, St Michael, St John and St Anne. But unlike Thetford, Lewes was not a corporate borough with a royal charter, a mayor, aldermen and freemen, a coroner and court of record. Legal cases were referred to magistrates at petty or quarter sessions. Till 1663 Lewes did have a Society of Twelve, a self-selecting set of usually affluent townsmen. They chose from their ranks two High Constables, who appointed two headboroughs to detain malefactors in a bastion of the west gate. To the Twelve also accrued certain trust funds, a town crier, a meadow, a Hangman's Acre, a wharf, a market clock, and another clock with a curfew bell in a town tower. But from 1663 the Society was discontinued. It had proved too 'radical' during the Civil War and Interregnum. Thereafter the High Constables were chosen by jurymen at the court leet of 'the manor of Lewes borough', and the jury's composition could be manipulated by the steward there, to suit his paymaster, the current lord of the manor. This mattered because the Constables were the returning officers at the election of the borough's two members of parliament. Their judgement of 'doubtful' votes could be crucial. As it happened, Ollive was chosen Senior Constable in October 1767 and presided at a confused, contentious general election in March 1768, the very month Paine arrived.<sup>6</sup>

Paine's landlord died in July 1769, leaving his widow Esther £10 for 'mourning', also household stuff not exceeding £20 in value, and a life-interest

in Bull House, subject to a mortgage held by John Ridge's brother, William. After she died in 1800 the premises sold for £505, £106 10s. being due to William. Ollive's other assets were auctioned and the cash divided among his children. On 11 September the *Advertiser* announced a three-day sale of his effects, books, and stock-in-trade. Meanwhile, William Ridge bought his Barcombe copyhold. So, despite the hostile Oldys claiming Ollive died 'rather in bad circumstances', it seems that Elizabeth and her brothers received useful legacies. Oldys also asserted that an executor turned Paine out of Bull House for 'attempting to retain' some of Ollive's effects, implying 'distrust of his integrity'. But this hardly squares with the *Advertiser* announcement on 11 September that Thomas Paine and Elizabeth Ollive were to continue selling in her father's former shop 'all sorts of Tobacco, Snuff, Cheese, Butter and Home-made Bacon, with every Article of Grocery, (Tea excepted) Wholesale and Retail, at the lowest Prices'. Possibly their venture drew on Elizabeth's legacy. They also retained a 'Horse Tobacco-mill' originally included in Ollive's auction. He had made a large entrance 'door' from the approach to Westgate chapel, 'to get a horse down to work his tobacco engine' in the basement of Bull House. A small millstone, perhaps forming part of it, now rests in an open hearth there.<sup>7</sup>

Paine's reputation for 'integrity', moreover, was sufficient for him in October 1769 to be among 19 townsmen forming the jury of the court leet. He also attended a St Michael's vestry meeting in April 1770, so he was certainly a ratepayer there, possibly in respect of Bull House. His local integration was completed in March 1771 when he married Elizabeth at St Michael's, witnessed by her stepbrother Thomas, now a qualified watchmaker, and by Henry Verral, the coffee-house proprietor. (Paine, a widower, declared himself a bachelor, much to the subsequent delight of Oldys.) He now became his mother-in-law's tenant at Bull House, a status he meticulously invoked in July 1772 in a letter to the trustees of Westgate chapel which structurally adjoined it:

'As I am only Tenant in the House, I cannot think myself empowered to give any answers concerning the filling up of the door way which you complain of. It is no repair ... As I have not the Right of objecting should Mrs Ollive fill it up immediately, I cannot have



Fig. 3 The partly demolished south bastion of the west gate. The entrance doors of the approach to the chapel and the western wall of Bull House: a watercolour view by James Lambert junior, drawn in 1772, signed and finished in 1779. (Sussex Archaeological Society, LEWSA VR 3169.)

any power to give any kind of Answer in a Case which is entirely her's, not mine.'

With a touch of humour he signed himself their 'Obliged Humble Servant', 'on account of the other proposal'. This was his agreement, signed the same day, that he was under an obligation to pay them a shilling a year: 'an Acknowledgement for their suffering the droppings of Rain which fall from a New Building lately erected by me, to fall into a Yard belonging and adjoining to the North side' of the Meeting House. Presumably the yard was the broad approach from the High Street to the chapel, and Paine's building stood just west of the entrance, in the detached garden of Bull House, behind the bastion of the west gate.<sup>8</sup>

His rapid integration into Lewes's commercial life doubtless sharpened Paine's attack in *Rights of Man* on boroughs like Thetford where a royal charter gave to the freemen the sole right to trade there:

'In these chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy ... And within these monopolies are still others. A man even of the same town, whose parents were not in circumstances to give him an occupation, is debarred, in many cases, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or industry what it may.'

Paine could see that Lewes's scant municipal structure offered no such regally bestowed barrier to incoming talent and investment. Indeed, its affluent electorate testified to its success as a thriving focus of regional trade, also promoted by 'a navigable river' and a 'plentiful surrounding country', advantages noted by Paine in *Rights of Man*.<sup>9</sup>

Paine also attended meetings of St Michael's vestry, in April, June and August 1772 and July 1773. Every Easter Monday the actions and accounts of the outgoing churchwardens and overseers of the poor

were examined; new parish rates were fixed, and churchwardens and overseers chosen for the coming year. Rents were received from a house by the steeple and for sheep being grazed in the churchyard. Besides repairing the Poor House on Keere Street, the overseers doled out money, medicine and coal, mostly to widows and their children. They also funded apprenticeships and removed to other parishes persons not legally settled in St Michael's — a pregnant single woman was despatched to Isfield. These Easter vestry meetings, and 'Special' ones, amounted to grass-roots democracy, albeit confined to solvent male householders — part of what Paine identified in *Rights of Man* as the 'republican' base of British civil government, 'executed by the people of every town and county, by means of parish officers, magistrates, quarterly sessions, juries, and assize', with little reference to hereditary monarchs or aristocrats.<sup>10</sup>

But though vestry meetings in St Michael's were apparently well conducted, they presumably sharpened Paine's insight into the inadequacies of poor relief, which prompted ground-breaking proposals in *Rights of Man* for child benefits and old-age pensions. He also demanded payment of 'the funeral expenses of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends', so that 'the dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish'. A victim of this practice was his neighbour William Weston, a journeyman whitesmith, aged 35, buried on 8 October 1773 at St Michael's. A letter to the *Advertiser*, penned by HUMANUS on 9 October, denounced this needless death:

'If to endanger a sick man's life (which I fear is but too often the case, to save a trifling expense) in removing him a distance from the parish in which he sickened, though he had not gained a legal settlement there, is consistent with the laws of this Realm, I am sure it is acting in direct opposition to the laws of God and Nature; and shall ever insist upon it, that when such an instance happens, and the removed object dies on his journey, or immediately after, the person instrumental to his removal, is guilty of Murder, and ought not to escape with impunity, even though it were the act of an unfeeling CIVIL TYRANT. Sometimes in a case of this kind, it may justly be alleged, that the greatest care imaginable was taken of the deceased, during the course

of his journey. What then? It may extenuate, but cannot exculpate. The above may appear presumptuous from an individual, but the assertion is hazarded.'

After this appeal to the laws of God and Nature, HUMANUS descended to harrowing detail:

'I was led to this Reflection, Mr Printer [William Lee], by seeing a poor, dying man (whose name I shall forbear mentioning) brought to your parish on Wednesday evening last, in a small, open cart, having nothing to shelter him from the inclement weather, but a little straw, lightly strewed over him, and in which shameful manner it appeared, he had been passed on the Vagrant Act, from a parish in Yorkshire, where he was taken ill, to the parish of St Michael, Lewes, Sussex; an act of cruelty, at the bare thought of which, human nature shudders with Abhorrence! Such an act can admit of no palliation; then to the eternal disgrace of the Authors of such barbarous cruelty be it published, how every person present at the removal of the straw, was struck with horror and amazement, when the shocking spectacle was displayed to their view, emaciated, and unable to move himself, with little other cover than what Nature had given him, except (if I may be allowed the expression) a coat of Vermin, which was eagerly devouring him alive. 'Tis horrid to relate, and a melancholy fact that cannot be controverted. In such a state of torment had this poor miserable creature lain for thirty-six days as appears by the date of his DEATH WARRANT. Good God! How could he survive? 'Twas sure a peculiar act of thy all-ruling Providence to bring him, in his last hour, to excite compassion in his friends, that they might raise the Iron Hand of JUSTICE to avenge the untimely blow; for he had not been long conveyed to a comfortable apartment, when death snatched him from his miseries and the world; and he was on Friday last interred, without the Coroner's Inquest sitting on his body.'

HUMANUS concluded:

'But I hope the relation of so melancholy a fact, will stimulate some humane person, in whose power it is, to make Inquisition into this more than brutal transaction; when I fear it will appear too plain to admit a doubt,

that the inexpressible suffering of the above unfortunate young man was the consequence of timely assistance being denied him by — What name can we find suitable to them? Or what do they deserve? — Hanging of Men I was ever averse to, but could exult in seeing that punishment hourly inflicted in ridding the world of MONSTERS.'

Did Paine witness the arrival of his emaciated vermin-covered neighbour on that quiet autumnal evening? Did the memory burn into a page of *Rights of Man*? Did he pen the extraordinary letter? Being in part raised a Quaker, he was perhaps averse to hanging, but in his *Case of the Officers of Excise*, written a year earlier, he argued 'he who robs [a well-stored larder] from luxury of appetite deserves a gibbet', and in *Common Sense* he advocated decapitating American Tories fighting for Britain.<sup>11</sup>

Another letter signed HUMANUS appeared in the *Advertiser* in June 1772, describing 'a machine lately invented for the preservation of lives by fire'. Paine of course was an inventor, designing in 1786 a wrought-iron, single-span bridge to cross the Schuylkill in Philadelphia. He too, perhaps, wrote the account of mathematical tile, 'a new method of building frame houses in England' — quite common in and around Lewes — published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in April 1775. As for the fire escape:

'An iron, about a foot long, is driven into the wall on the outside of the house, near to one of the second story windows ... it is turned up at the end, to prevent slipping off, on which is put a piece of leather, with an iron arm, in which are rollers. On this leather, about a foot asunder, are holes cut to admit a hook. The person on the inside, about to descend, has a leather, so contrived, that two strops proceed from it, or only one, one of which hooks under the hams, the other round the waist, so that the person sits as if in a chair. This hook is in the form of the letter T, which hooks by putting it in any one of the holes of the leather before described, and clearing yourself from the window, you go down with all the safety in the world, either by laying hold or not, which is performed in a quarter of a minute. This invention far excels the rope-ladders, as by them sick persons cannot descend, but by this they may, with the greatest safety.'

As in the Weston letter HUMANUS unites details with general principles:

'A fire in any great city is certainly the most alarming accident that such a place is liable to ... How often, to persons of a timorous disposition, does the very alarm of fire cause them to drop from windows, &c without waiting to hear how near it is to them? ... In such unhappy circumstances, the more mild and serene a man is, the better chance he has to save his effects, as well as his life, and here let it be recommended to those who shall experience such unhappy misfortunes, not to put themselves in hurries, but let Reason go on in its proper course.'<sup>12</sup>

Besides being a vestryman, Paine was a juryman at all five annual meetings of the Lewes court leet held between October 1769 and October 1773. Such a steady thirst for municipal experience was subsequently matched by only four of the 19 jurymen present in 1769. One was Thomas Scrase, the landlord of the *White Hart*, and another, Henry Verral, the keeper of the coffee-house. The expenses of the High Constables submitted to each jury reveal how limited was their authority: repairs to the town hall, the market clock, the town wharf, the lock-up at the west gate; a new hat for the town crier; cleaning the fire engine; letting the town meadow; reporting Nuisances; billeting soldiers; detaining malefactors. Hardly a vibrant civic life! Indeed in 1761 the High Constables had seen fit to demolish the town tower, displacing the town clock and Gabriel, the town bell. Yet, diluted though this civic life might be, in March 1771 86 householders, including Paine, attended a town meeting to authorise the High Constables' rate, and in July 1772 he and 114 neighbours also demanded that no wheel barrow or sledge be allowed on foot pavements.<sup>13</sup>

Because Lewes was the county town of eastern Sussex, Paine also observed the crucial role of jurymen and witnesses at quarterly meetings of justices of the peace and at the summer assizes — another 'republican' element in English government. But doubtless he noted too the sort of pompous legal logic-chopping satirized in his *Farmer Short's Dog Porter*, a poem he wrote at Lewes. Targeted in it too were the detested Game Laws which forbade a countryman with an income below £100 a year to own a gun or keep a hunting dog. One such was farmer Short, and

three magistrates summoned him from Shoreham because his dog did:

*'Pursue, and take, and kill a hare;  
Which treason was, or some such thing,  
Against our SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING.'*

But farmer Short being away, his dog, Porter, was arrested instead. Then 'a curious quibble rose':

*'For it was proved, and rightly too,  
That he, the dog, did not pursue  
The hare, with any ill intent,  
But only followed by the scent;  
And she, the hare, by running hard,  
Thro' hedge and ditch, without regard,  
Plunged in a pond, and there was drown'd,  
And by a neighbouring justice found;  
Wherefore, though he the hare annoy'd,  
It can't be said that he destroy'd.'*

Yet one magistrate, 'more learned than the rest', used absurd 'logic, rhetoric and wit' to prove the dog was guilty of murder, so:

*'.... Porter, though unheard, was cast,  
And in a halter breathed his last.'*<sup>14</sup>

Paine, the budding democrat, also observed the parliamentary politics of Lewes borough which returned two MPs. In his home town of Thetford the electorate was confined to its 'Corporation', to its mayor, ten aldermen and twenty freemen. At Lewes in stark contrast the voters included all male householders 'of known ability', or who rented property for £10 or more a year, not a large sum — those paying the poor rate in fact. In 1734 156 householders turned out to vote, 271 in 1741. And both elections were bitterly contested. At Thetford the 'Corporation' docilely returned as MPs two men nominated by their potent Godfather, the duke of Grafton, who controlled recruitment to the Corporation, besides governing vast estates from nearby Euston Hall. At Lewes the duke of Newcastle controlled both seats, but they demanded endless cosetting. He had only modest estates locally, and despite buying up houses in the borough and scattering government jobs and funds there, he still depended on his Pelham cousins at Stanmer, and on allies among the local gentry — the Hampdens at Glynde, the Hays at Glyndebourne, the Gages at Firle, the Pooleys and the Shelleys in Lewes itself. They helped him patronise and sweeten the 'picksome' electorate — the lawyers, doctors, vintners, grocers, mercers, masons, maltsters, drapers, tailors, printers and innkeepers, whose proud table-tombs still cram the churchyards of

All Saints and St Michael's. Newcastle's bugbear in 1734 and 1741 was a wealthy Tory candidate, Thomas Sergison at Cuckfield Park. A truce, however, allowed him a seat in 1747 and relative calm ensued till the general election in March 1768, the month Paine arrived.<sup>15</sup>

That month Newcastle's machine, ceaselessly oiled for 50 years, broke down. As Samuel Ollive, the senior returning officer, doubtless explained to his new lodger, the duke had endorsed two well-regarded local candidates, Thomas Hampden from Glynde and Thomas Hay from Glyndebourne. But the elderly duke suddenly ditched Hay in favour of a 'stranger' from western Sussex, Sir Thomas Miller. So Hay stood as an independent. Amid much confusion Hampden polled 115 votes, Hay 110 and Miller 92. Some 184 electors voted. Others, including Ollive, diplomatically abstained. The election proved a turning-point in Lewes politics. The duke, who was to die in November, was stunned by such 'base and ungrateful behaviour'. He threatened to punish the town: he would give no plate to the races; provide no entertainments; withdraw the assizes; evict erring tenants; boycott erring tradesmen. But his Pelham cousins at Stanmer, who were to inherit his 'influence' in the borough, dissuaded him. At the next general election, in October 1774, they secured Miller's return, but never thereafter sought to control the second seat.<sup>16</sup>

While Paine observed the fractious aftermath of this local convulsion, Westminster witnessed the tussle between George III's ministers and supporters of the flamboyant John Wilkes, already a popular hero for his skilled defence of civil liberties. In March 1768 he was elected an MP by the turbulent freeholders of Middlesex, who doggedly re-elected him after the government majority expelled him. His immense support in Lewes became apparent in August 1770 when the *Advertiser* described the welcome given there to 'a gentleman so highly deserving the public Regard'. One Wednesday evening he arrived at the *Star* from Tunbridge Wells:

*'The bells in our several churches were immediately rung, and vast crowds of people assembled to see the great patriot, at whom they expressed their pleasure by joyful acclamations.'*

Next morning he visited the castle, 'at which he expressed a satisfaction'. The inhabitants 'again thronged in prodigious numbers to behold the

object of their adoration', and then proceeded him, on horseback, to Brighton where 'the bells were likewise rung, and other marks of pleasure shown on the joyous occasion'. Indeed 'every mark of real esteem was shown him by the inhabitants of this town'. Years later, William Wisdom of Glynde recalled 'When I was a Boy and went to school in Lewes, then all the Cry was Wilkes & Liberty'. Robert Baldy of Cliffe bequeathed the patriot £100 in 1774. Wilkes returned to dine at the *Star* in 1773 and 1774, and with Mr Mercer, surgeon and apothecary, in 1775.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile Thomas Hay and Thomas Hampden steadily voted with the opposition in support of Wilkes. Hay was a graduate of Göttingen and a retired lieutenant-colonel, 'a modest, virtuous, respectable and sensible man'. His crippled father William, a former MP for Seaford, had written an *Essay on Deformity* and proposed a radical reform of the Poor Law, much applauded later by Beatrice and Sidney Webb. Thomas Hampden united support for Wilkes with opposition to the Royal Marriage Bill, a measure cherished by George III. As it happened, their anti-Court stance had deep roots. Hampden was descended from the hero of Ship Money, Hay from Anthony Stapley, Lewes's regicide MP. Their politics were much endorsed by the *Advertiser*, owned, edited and printed by William Lee (c. 1713–86). A neighbour of Paine, he moved his press from Keere Street to [64] High Street in 1772. His intrepid newsmen trudged across Sussex laden with pamphlets, stationery, spectacles, fiddle strings, elixirs, tinctures and cordials. Progressively Whig, his *Advertiser* published the letters of Junius between 1769 and 1772, along with approving reports of Wilkes's seditious career.<sup>18</sup>

Arguably, therefore, Paine's experience at Lewes of a robust electorate, two talented 'independent' MPs, a progressive local newspaper and a populace adoring a 'great patriot', strengthened the conviction, which he published to great effect in 1776 in Philadelphia, that English colonists could confidently establish a republic based on discussion and consent.

Clearly this conviction survived any brush he may have had in 1770 with the politics of New Shoreham. A syndicate of voters there, the 'Christian Society', was accustomed to sell its two parliamentary seats to the highest bidder. At a by-election in 1770 he proved to be Thomas Rumbold, a wealthy nabob just back from Bengal. His

opponent, John Purling, was also a pillar of the East India Company. According to Oldys, Paine earned three guineas for a 'song' supporting Rumbold. The 'song' has not survived. But perhaps experience of Shoreham's contending nabobs prompted the bitterly hostile *Reflections on the Life and Death of Lord Clive* which Paine published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in March 1775. The following October his *Magazine* also carried *A Whimsical Anecdote* about the late duke of Newcastle promising to a Lewes elector the reversion of a place in the local excise, which gently satirized him as a querulous but kind-hearted grandee. The Duke of Richmond at Goodwood, however, was instanced in *Rights of Man* as an aristocrat whose government sinecure 'would maintain two thousand poor and aged persons'. And maybe a memory of Lewes castle spiced his remark in *Common Sense* on William the Conqueror: 'A French bastard landing with an armed banditti ... is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original ... It certainly hath no divinity in it'.<sup>19</sup>

Besides garnering politically charged experience, Paine honed his debating skills at Lewes. He was a 'jolly fellow' there, Oldys conceded, and Rickman in his *Life* claimed:

'he lived several years in habits of intimacy with a very respectable, sensible and convivial set of acquaintance, who were entertained with his witty sallies, and informed by his more serious conversations.'

Indeed, he was:

'notorious for that quality which has been defined perseverance in a good cause and obstinacy in a bad one. He was tenacious of his opinions, which were bold, acute, and independent, and which he maintained with ardour, elegance and argument.'

Rickman, of course, had no personal experience of this. Born in 1761 at Cliffe, the fourth son of John, a Quaker who owned the *Bear* and the brewery by the bridge, Thomas was educated at Coggeshall in Essex and apprenticed to his brother Joseph, a surgeon at Maidenhead. But becoming addicted to versifying and Voltaire, he drifted back to Cliffe in 1779, unqualified, and dabbled in commerce, perhaps replacing his brother Samuel who drowned in a vessel off Newhaven. However, in 1780 he still managed to libel in rhyme Mrs Eleanor Plumer, a resident in St Anne's. Convicted in the Court of King's Bench, he duly apologized in

the *Advertiser*. So when he married an Anglican girl at Cliffe in 1783, the local Quakers were perhaps glad to disown him. Undeterred, in 1785 he sailed from Newhaven on board the *Susannah* bound for Barcelona, to trade tin plate and watches supplied by the Harbens in Cliffe. Thereafter he became a London bookseller. Paine lodged with him in 1792 while penning the second part of *Rights of Man*. His host later affixed to the table a brass plate celebrating that seminal event.<sup>20</sup>

Rickman also wrote that in Paine's time 'the White Hart evening club' was:

'the resort of a social and intelligent circle who, out of fun, seeing that disputes often ran very warm and high, frequently had what they called the 'Headstrong Book'. This was no other than an old Greek Homer which was sent the morning after a debate vehemently maintained, to the most obstinate haranguer of the Club; this book had the following title, as implying that Mr Paine the best deserved and the most frequently obtained it. The HEADSTRONG BOOK or ORIGINAL BOOK OF OBSTINACY, written by \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* OF LEWES, IN SUSSEX, and revised and corrected by THOMAS PAYNE.'

The volume survived till at least 1806, for in October 1811 Henry Verral wrote to the *Advertiser* from Newick to enquire: 'Who, in your town, since the death of Mr. A. V. holds the Obstinate Book?' Araunah Verral (1744–1806) was a High Street bookseller and stationer.<sup>21</sup>

Rickman also included in his *Life a EULOGY ON PAYNE* sent him in 1810 'by his friend, Mr Lee of Lewes', who assured him, 'This was manufactured nearly forty years ago, as applicable to Mr. Paine, and I believe you will allow, however indifferent the manner, that I did not very erroneously anticipate his future celebrity':

*'Immortal PAYNE, while mighty reasoners jar,  
We crown thee General of the Headstrong War;  
Thy logic vanquish'd error, and thy mind  
No bounds, but those of right and truth, confined.  
Thy soul of fire must sure ascend the sky,  
Immortal PAYNE, thy fame can never die;  
For men like thee their names must ever save  
From the black edicts of the tyrant grave.'*

But did William Lee (1747–1830), who in 1787 succeeded his father William as owner, editor and printer of the *Advertiser*, really pen so prescient a eulogy? Rather less gushingly in 1794 he had assured

his readers that Paine while at Lewes, though 'a shrewd and sensible fellow', showed none 'of that depth of political knowledge, which has since rendered him so conspicuous to the eyes of nations'. Rather 'He was vain, dogmatical, and vindictive'. In 1825, still hot-air ballooning and fossil-hunting, his grey hair streaked mahogany by Atkin's Tyrian Dye, Lee reverted to the Headstrong Book:

'from which we well remember the late Tom Pain was in the habit of taking lessons, and applying them to the support of arguments which his own conviction told him to be fallacious, a practice that occasionally provoked us to the interruption of jogging Tom's elbow and whispering in his ear, *adversus solem ne loquitur.*'

But had such intimacy existed? Lee's intellect was somewhat volatile. His *Advertiser* reported wild ducks nesting in the Shelleys' rookery, a mushroom on Plumpton Plain thirteen inches wide and a well-attested description of MERMAIDS OR SEA-WOMEN. Gideon Mantell dismissed him as 'an antiquist, fond of collecting old things, without understanding them'. Indeed Lee's claim in 1799 that the jurymen at the court leet were the modern 'Representatives' of the Twelve, can still mislead historians, though his civic zeal did prompt the building of the town tower where the clock and Gabriel still reside.<sup>22</sup>

Paine's friendship with Henry Verral (1713–94), assiduous fellow juryman and witness to his wedding, suggests he was well-regarded socially, for Verral was 'agreeable to the generality of the town'. He had managed the coffee house since 1742 and the associated assembly room since 1764, 'with an equal share of respectability and profit'. He was indeed Lewes's Beau Nash. William, his brother, while landlord of the *White Hart*, wrote a celebrated *Complete System of Cookery*. And was Henry the 'Mr Verril' at Lewes, who, Paine later reminisced to Thomas Cheetham, 'first turned his thoughts to government'? After playing bowls and retiring to drink some punch, he heard one of the bowlers, 'Mr Verril', remark, alluding to the wars of Frederick the Great, that 'the king of Prussia was the best fellow in the world for a king, he had so much of the devil in him'. This caused Paine to reflect that 'if it were necessary for a king to have so much of the devil in him, kings might very beneficially be dispensed with' — a step beyond his current Whig assumptions. (Coincidentally his

stint on the privateer, the *King of Prussia*, funded Paine's enlightening contact with Martin and Ferguson in 1757–8). Paine's sporting zeal was also condescendingly recalled by Lee in 1794:

'He was very fond of amusing himself, and others, in skating parties on the ice, where, from his intrepid spirit in exploring the slippery surface, he was distinguished by the title of Commodore. Tom was likewise the hero of our Bowling-green, where he observed much more exactness with the measuring-stick, than he was accustomed to be at the beer-barrel with his dipping-rule.'<sup>23</sup>

According to Rickman Paine enlivened social life at Lewes by writing 'several excellent little pieces in prose and verse'. He cited the *Trial of the dog Porter*, 'a work of exquisite wit and humour', and 'the celebrated song on the death of General Wolfe', published in March 1775 in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*:

*'In a mouldering cave where the wretched retreat,  
Britannia sate wasted with care;  
She mourned for her Wolfe, and exclaim'd  
against fate  
And gave herself up to despair.  
The walls of her cell she had sculptured around  
With feats of her favourite son;  
And even the dust, as it lay on the ground,  
Was engraved with the deeds he had done.*

*The sire of the Gods, from his crystalline throne,  
Beheld the disconsolate dame,  
And moved with her tears, he sent Mercury down,  
And these were the tidings that came:  
'Britannia forbear, not a sigh nor a tear,  
For thy Wolfe so deservedly loved,  
Your tears shall be changed into triumphs of joy,  
For thy Wolfe is not dead but removed.*

*The sons of the East, the proud giants of old,  
Have crept from their darksome abodes,  
And this is the news as in Heaven it was told,  
They were marching to war with the Gods;  
A Council was held in the chambers of Jove,  
And this was their final decree,  
That Wolfe should be called to the armies above,  
And the charge was entrusted to me.*

*To the plains of Quebec with the orders I flew,  
He begg'd for a moment's delay;  
He cry'd "Oh! forbear, let me victory hear,  
And then thy command I'll obey."*

*With a darksome thick film I encompass'd his eyes,  
And bore him away in an urn,  
Lest the fondness he bore to his own native shore,  
Should induce him again to return.'*

Clearly this was no orthodox eulogy of the general whose gallant death on the Heights of Abraham had secured French Canada for George II. Rather it seems a robust send-up of the stilted Heroic clichés of an outworn Augustan classicism — Paine at Lewes already expressing confident contempt for an inert aristocratic culture soaked in the idiom of Imperial Rome. William Hogarth's prints delivered the same message.<sup>24</sup>

However, it was Paine's *The Case of the Officers of Excise* that proved his most ambitious composition while at Lewes. The division there was manned by a supervisor and nine officers. Two worked in Lewes, one in Brighton, and six, including Paine, fanned out from Lewes in separate 'rides'. By 1737 the Excise Board had fixed on the *White Hart* as the division's official headquarters. To it the traders brought their cash and the officers their accounts. Once checked, the collector for Sussex rode away with the money. In this 'Journal Office' the officers might store confidential paperwork, and also relax after an often tiresome day's work, swelling maybe attendance at the 'evening club'.<sup>25</sup>

According to Rickman, Paine while at Lewes received several letters from 'Mr Jenner, principal clerk in the Excise Office, London', thanking him for 'his assiduity in his profession and for his information and calculations forwarded to the office'. Possibly this professional zeal explains his inclusion in 1772 among eight excise officers who were 'Deputed by the whole Body' of their colleagues in England and Wales — nearly 2800 strong — to draft a petition for a salary increase. Three were based in London, the others at Newcastle, Nottingham, Salisbury, Rochester and Lewes. The petition outlined a case which Paine's own pamphlet brilliantly expanded. Indeed, perhaps the fluency of Paine, the committee-man, clinched his being chosen to write the *Case*. Oldys's account is non-committal:

'Paine had risen, by superior energy, more than by greater honesty, to be a chief among the excisemen. They had long seen, that whatever increase there had been in private wealth or in public revenue, no increase came to them ... A design was thus formed ... to apply to parliament for a consideration

of the state of their salaries. A common contribution was made for the common benefit. And our author engaged to write their *Case*, which he produced, after many months labour, in 1772.'

Paine himself, when sending the pamphlet to the playwright Oliver Goldsmith, an 'entire stranger', claimed to be 'the principal promoter' of the plan to apply to Parliament. He added that each officer had subscribed three shillings to meet campaign expenses and to print 4000 copies of the *Case*. He added that, having 'some few questions to trouble' Goldsmith with, he would 'esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine'.<sup>26</sup>

But crucially, in this letter, penned at the Excise Coffee House in Broad Street — probably the London headquarters of the eight-man committee — Paine also claimed that he wrote the *Case* because he was 'particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office'. Perhaps Mr Jenner was among them. Yet it seems the nine members of the Excise Board were themselves sympathetic, for on 5 February 1773, when forwarding a copy of the petition to the Treasury, they confirmed it had been signed by all their excise officers and conceded its 'Object' to be 'of great and extensive importance'. The Board's tacit approval could explain why Paine's colleagues, though rigidly segregated in their divisions and subject to near-arbitrary dismissal, were willing to sign the petition and subscribe to the pamphlet, also the apparent ease with which so complex a nationwide campaign was conducted — a campaign indeed without precedent, but anticipating those that helped abolish the slave trade, rotten boroughs and the corn laws.

The *Case* itself, an octavo pamphlet of 21 pages, handsomely printed at Lewes by William Lee — who was never paid, according to Oldys — is as remarkable as the campaign that launched it. The inadequacy of the salary is succinctly stated. 'Where facts are sufficient, Arguments are useless'. The daily pittance of a riding officer, was 'one shilling and nine pence farthing', after expenses were met. Impoverishing too were the costs of 'frequent Removals', the absence of 'Perquisites annexed to the Employment', the distance from 'natural Friends and Relations', the constant 'Labour and Fatigue' — and helpless exposure to price inflation. 'No Increase comes to them — They are shut out from the general Blessing — They behold

it like a Map of Peru'. Paine then deployed some candid, tough-minded 'Thoughts' on the 'evils arising to the Revenue' itself. Men in positions of trust should be paid enough to set them above temptation, 'to make it....worth their while to be honest'. 'True Honesty is sentimental, and the Practice of it dependent on Circumstances', on avoiding 'the cold Regions of Want, the Circle of Polar Poverty'. Inevitably some officers resorted to 'fraudulent and collusive Proceedings', receiving 'Treats' from local traders, which harmed 'the Welfare of the fair Trader and the Security of the Revenue'. The poor pay also induced 'Negligence', another source of 'perpetual Leakage in the Revenue', and it resulted in the recruitment of so many 'ill qualified Persons' that 'the Office is not only become contemptible, but the Revenue insecure'. The better qualified often switched to a counting-house or classroom.<sup>27</sup>

Paine ended with a vision-statement:

'With an Addition of Salary, the Excise would wear a new Aspect, and recover its former Constitution. Languor and Neglect would give Place to Care and Cheerfulness. Men of Reputation and Abilities would seek after it, and finding a comfortable Maintenance, would stick to it. The unworthy and the incapable would be rejected; the Power of Superiors be re-established; and Laws and Instructions receive new Force. The Officers would be secured from the Temptations of Poverty, and the Revenue from the Evils of it; the Cure would be extensive as the Complaint; and new Health out-root the present Corruption.'

No wonder perhaps the Excise Board seemed sympathetic, beset as it was by internal reports of mounting corruption. But Paine's vision, though embodied later in the Home and Imperial Civil Service fashioned by the Victorians, was way ahead of its time. The petition was rejected at the Treasury on 9 February 1773 and the *Case* inspired no action in parliament.<sup>28</sup>

More mysterious, if the campaign had been sanctioned by the Excise Board, and if, according to Oldys, the *Case* was admired by a senior commissioner, George Lewis Scott, was Paine's discharge from his post on 8 April 1774. The official minute stated that he had quitted his duties without the Board's leave, and 'gone off on Account of the Debts which he hath contracted'.

Yet his absences in London had been on campaign business. More darkly, Oldys claimed that 'his superiors had for some time beheld him dealing as a grocer in excisable articles, as a grinder of snuff, buying smuggled tobacco; at others conniving, in order to conceal himself'. Rickman, too, gave this as the 'ostensible' reason for dismissal, blandly remarking that smuggling 'was the universal custom along the coast' among 'all ranks of people...from ministers and magistrates, down to the cottager and labourer'.<sup>29</sup>

Whether deeply in debt or not, on Thursday 14 April, within days of his dismissal, an auction was held of all Paine's household furniture and stock-in-trade as a grocer and tobacconist, 'along with a horse tobacco and snuff mill, utensils for cutting tobacco and grinding snuff, and two unopened crates of cream-colour stone-ware'. In June the horse mill, 'very convenient for grinding malt', and some small cogged wheels useful to millwrights, were still on offer, 'very cheap'. Maybe Paine had little aptitude for commerce. In America his finances were always somewhat tangled. Certainly Oldys exulted in Paine's business failure. 'His inattention to his shop, ere long left him without a shop to attend' — promoting his *Case*, he had 'bustled in London, through the winter of 1773'. The proceeds of the auction, Oldys added, had been claimed by Thomas Whitfield, a 'reputable' High Street grocer and Paine's 'principal creditor'. (William Wisdom saw him often at 'Brett and Whitfield'. Perhaps he was buying stock, rather than inspecting.) Once other creditors realized Paine's position, Oldys added, he was forced to hide from their agents in 'the cock-loft' of the *White Hart*, 'till Sunday set him free'. Besides the auction, the *Advertiser* announced that 'the dwelling-house, with a good warehouse, stable and pleasant garden, was to be let and entered on immediately'.<sup>30</sup>

That Paine's household was also dissolving is clear from letters in Rickman's possession, dated 16 and 18 April, between lawyers in Lewes and London discussing a legal separation of Paine from his wife on grounds of non-consummation. Oldys alleged that Elizabeth revealed his abstinence to friends when complaining to them of 'his repeated beatings'. Rickman denied any such cruelty, asserting that Paine 'always spoke tenderly and respectfully of his wife' and sent her money several times, anonymously. Others also testified

that in later life she 'could not bear to hear him spoken ill of'. Oldys further specified that Paine was examined by Dr (Henry) Manning who reported 'apparent ability'. William Lee recalled the event when the High Street surgery was demolished in 1827. So did William Carver, an apprentice blacksmith baptized at Southover in 1755, who 'went to school with Miss Ollive' — perhaps as her pupil — and also knew Paine in America. He remembered hearing that Manning was assisted by Dr Ridge and Dr Turner, and that Paine remarked about his abstinence, 'it was no body's business but his own; that he had cause for it, but that he would not name it to anyone'. William Lee's version, published in 1793, was: 'He married for prudential reasons, and abstained for prudential reasons'.<sup>31</sup>

According to Oldys the articles of separation, drawn up by Josias Smith, a future bishop's registrar, and signed on 24 May, required Elizabeth to pay her husband £35; in return he was not to claim any part of whatsoever goods she might gain in future. By then she was no longer residing in Lewes, but with a 'benevolent brother'. But Paine, from 'the obscurities of London', chose to dispute the articles, which were redrawn and agreed on 4 June. Their text partly survives. Elizabeth was to live separate from him; to carry on such trade or business as she thought fit, as if she was a *feme sole*, and to keep her share of the money once Bull House was sold. William Lee reported in 1793 that she had 'a good livelihood' as a mantua-maker, near London. (Had she already acquired this skill when living with Paine the former corset-maker, a complementary craft?) When her stepmother died at Cranbrook in 1800, her quarter-share, and another bequeathed her by her brother John, brought her almost £200 from the sale of Bull House to the sitting tenant, the grocer Francis Mitchener. By then she also lived at Cranbrook, near her stepbrother Thomas, dying there on 17 July 1808. As for Paine, in September 1774 he boarded the *London Packet* bound for Philadelphia, with a recommendation from 'the great and good' Benjamin Franklin, a contact he possibly owed to George Lewis Scott.<sup>32</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The decision of Paine the excise officer to lodge at Bull House with Samuel Ollive shaped his integration into Lewes society as a shopkeeper and

married householder. His landlord moreover, the son of a former pastor at Westgate, was a subscriber to the works of Philip Doddridge; a Whig deeply versed in local civic life, and a father anxious his children should 'share and share alike' his legacy. His daughter Elizabeth, Paine's future wife, was intelligent and attractive, a schoolteacher and later on a skilled mantua-maker.

Lewes itself was an assize and quarter sessions town, a thriving market for mid-Sussex, and a parliamentary, but not a chartered, borough, with a large and affluent electorate, two 'independent' MPs, a lively local newspaper and a debating club at the *White Hart*. This community, vibrant with self-help and assurance, which feted John Wilkes as a 'great patriot', surely fed Paine's conviction, published in January 1776, that English colonists could govern themselves. Moreover, as a vestryman and a remarkably assiduous juryman, he participated in elements of English self-government which he later identified as 'republican'.

His literary output while at Bull House also suggests a great radical pamphleteer in the making. *The Case* is precise, tough-minded and pragmatic. *Farmer Short's Dog Porter* cleverly lampoons lawyerly logic-chopping and the Game Laws. *The Death of*

*General Wolfe* parodies the threadbare forms of a redundant classicism. And a letter to the *Advertiser*, surely his, vividly describes with measured fury the lingering 'murder' of a near neighbour by the machinery of the Poor Law.

## POSTSCRIPT

In June 1892 the Council of the Sussex Archaeological Society accepted, by 5 to 4 votes, a bust of Thomas Paine offered by Mr A. Forbes Sievking. But in December 1893 the curator of the museum at Barbican House was sorry to report that the bust, from 'some inexplicable cause', had been 'found broken on the floor, during the absence of any visitors, or the Warder's wife'. The damage was beyond repair.<sup>33</sup>

### Acknowledgements

Besides their stimulating discussion and general help with sources, I wish to thank Dr Seth Gopin of Rutgers University for American references to William Carver, Paul Myles of Radical Lewes Promotions Ltd for retrieving unpublished work by George Hindmarch, and Christopher Whittick of East Sussex Record Office for finding material on 'Clio' Rickman. Pam Combes of the Barcombe-Hamsey project supplied data on 'Gallybird Hall', Ian Hilder on Samuel Ollive's subscription to *The Family Expositor* and John Farrant on the troubling fate of Paine's bust.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life* (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), 1–62; George Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine: the Case of the King of England and his Officers of Excise* (published privately 1998).

<sup>2</sup> James Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine* (New York, 1809), 32; Philip S. Foner, *Complete Writings of Thomas Paine* (New York, 1945) 2, 1325–6; Francis Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain* (London, 1791); Thomas Clio Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine* (London, 1819).

<sup>3</sup> *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* (hereafter SWA) 3 July 1769; East Sussex Record Office (hereafter ESRO) NU1/1/1, 3/3, PAR 414/1/1/3.

<sup>4</sup> Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 24; SWA 30 Jan. 1769; Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 34; J. M. Connell, *The Story of an Old Meeting House* (London, 1935), 48–9; ESRO ADA, 176–7; ESRO WA/62/59, SAT/228.

<sup>5</sup> Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life*, 61–2; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 21; Colin Brent, *Georgian Lewes* (Lewes, 1993), 157; D. Ridge, *A Sussex Family: the Family of Ridge* (Chichester, 1975); Connell, *The Story of an Old Meeting House*, 68; Jeremy Goring, *Burn Holy Fire* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2003), 80–84; Isabel Rivers, 'Philip Doddridge (1702–1751)', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online version).

<sup>6</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 38; Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 168–76, 202–4.

<sup>7</sup> ESRO WA/62/59, SAT/228; SWA 11 Sep. 1769; ESRO ADA 176–7; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 23; ESRO NU1/9/5; W. H. Godfrey, 'At the Sign of the Bull, Lewes', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter SAC) 98 (1960), 9.

<sup>8</sup> Verena Smith (ed.), *The Town Book of Lewes 1702–1837*, *Sussex Record Society* (hereafter SRS) 69, 58; ESRO PAR 414/12/1, 9/1/3, 1/1/4, NU1/3/4–5, 9/1/2. Paine's 'New Building' has been interpreted as a strong room for confidential excise paperwork (Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine*, 57).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Foot & Isaac Kramnick (eds.), *The Thomas Paine Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), 224, 318.

<sup>10</sup> ESRO PAR 414/12/1, 9/1/3; Foot & Kramnick, *The Thomas Paine Reader*, 251, 293.

<sup>11</sup> Foot & Kramnick, *The Thomas Paine Reader*, 47, 107, 341; ESRO PAR 414/1/1/3, 32/3/12; SWA 11 Oct. 1773.

<sup>12</sup> SWA 1 June 1772; Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life*, 268–70; *The Pennsylvania Magazine; or, American Monthly Museum*, April 1775.

<sup>13</sup> SRS 69, 58–62; ESRO LEW/C2/1/2; Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 109.

<sup>14</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 40, 278; *Pennsylvania Magazine*, July 1775.

- <sup>15</sup> Sir Lewis Namier & J. Brooke, *The History of Parliament 1754–90* (1985) 1, 342–3; Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 167–81.
- <sup>16</sup> Namier & Brooke, *History of Parliament* 1, 26.
- <sup>17</sup> SWA 27 Aug. 1770, 9 Aug. 1773, 17 Jan. 1774, 29 Aug. 1774, 12 Sept. 1775; ESRO PAR 347/7/1.
- <sup>18</sup> Namier & Brooke, *History of Parliament* 2, 575–6, 601; Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 66, 124–5; Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life*, 67.
- <sup>19</sup> Namier & Brooke, *History of Parliament* 1, 396–9; 3, 343–4; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 26–7; *Pennsylvania Magazine*, March 1775, October 1775; Foot & Kramnick, *The Thomas Paine Reader*, 76, 323.
- <sup>20</sup> Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 22; Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 38; R. Dighton, *A Citizen of the World* (London, 1806); Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 183, 189.
- <sup>21</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 38–9; SWA 17 Oct. 1811; Perceval Lucas, 'The Verrall family of Lewes', SAC 58, 96.
- <sup>22</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 39–40; Brent, *Georgian Lewes*, 125; SWA 13 Jan 1794, 22 Aug. 1825; E. Cecil Curwen (ed.), *The Journal of Gideon Mantell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), 88; SRS 69, 73, 103.
- <sup>23</sup> Lucas, 'The Verrall family of Lewes', 99–101, 104–7; Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 32; SWA 13 Jan. 1794.
- <sup>24</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 40; *Pennsylvania Magazine*, March 1775.
- <sup>25</sup> Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine*, 49, 56–7; also 'Lewes: the second excise period', being chapter eight of his unfinished biography of Paine, a typescript (ESRO ACC 10140).
- <sup>26</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 45; Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine*, 40–41, 46; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 27–8.
- <sup>27</sup> Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine*, 74–7.
- <sup>28</sup> Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 29–30, 36–7; Foot & Kramnick, *The Thomas Paine Reader*, 39–51; Hindmarch, *Thomas Paine*, 76–7.
- <sup>29</sup> Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 32–3; Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life*, 75; Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 41–2.
- <sup>30</sup> SWA 11 Apr., 13 June 1774; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 30–31; ESRO PAR 347/7/1. William Wisdom also described Paine: 'about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches. A round Hat. Bushy Wig and Oval face. straight made. Bat legs and Thighs'.
- <sup>31</sup> Rickman, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 45–7; Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 33–4; SWA 4 Feb. 1793, 19 Mar. 1827; Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, 30–31. Apparently Carver also 'cleaned the stable and brushed the mane and coat of Paine's horse' (Keane, *Tom Paine a Political Life*, 507).
- <sup>32</sup> Oldys, *The Life of Thomas Pain*, 34–7; ESRO SAT/228; SWA 8 July 1793; Christopher Rumsey, 'The wife of a revolutionary', *The Bulletin of the Thomas Paine Society* 4 no. 2 (1999), 14–22.
- <sup>33</sup> ESRO SAS/2/1/5.

