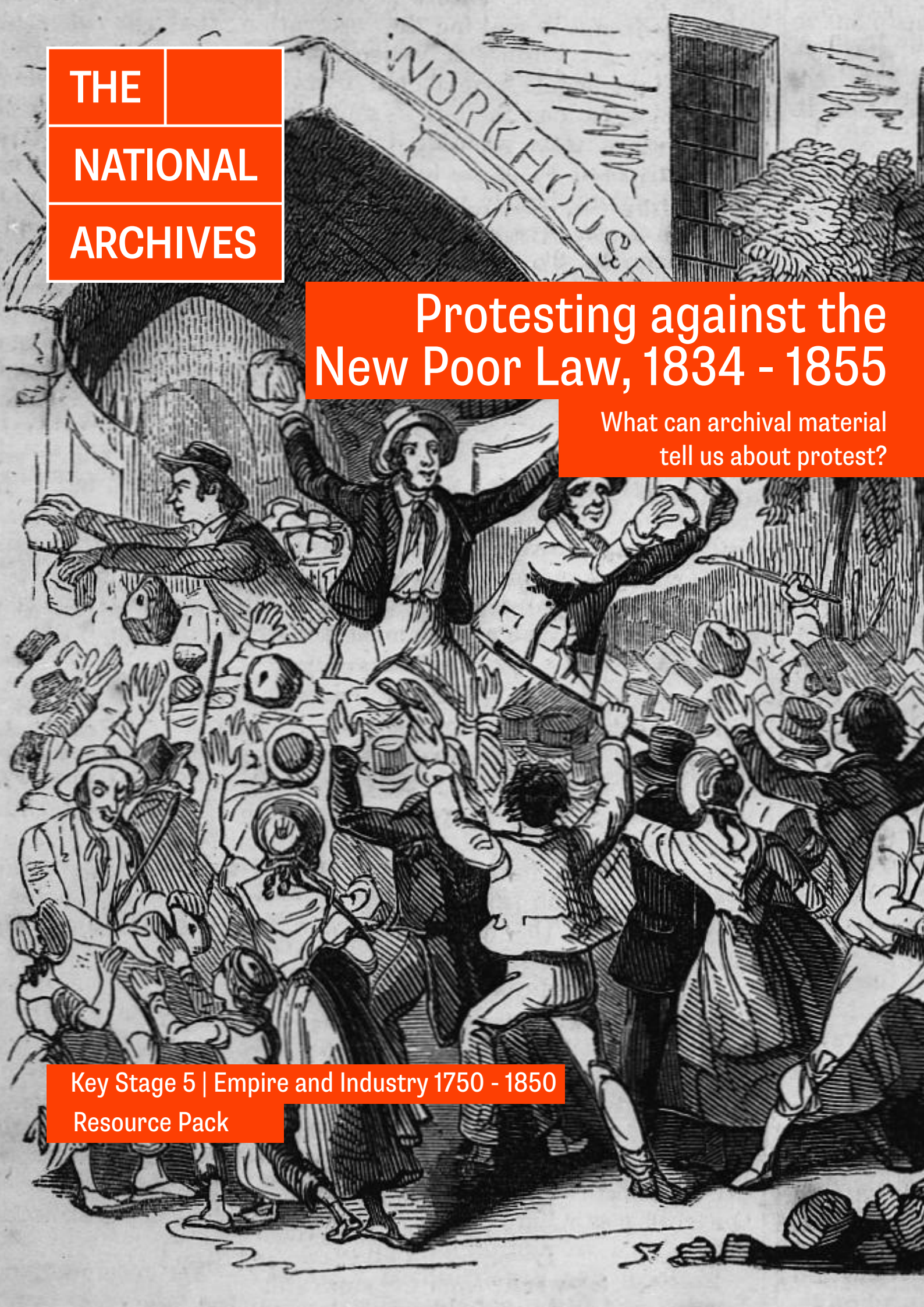
THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Protesting against the New Poor Law, 1834 - 1855

What can archival material tell us about protest?



Key Stage 5 | Empire and Industry 1750 - 1850

Resource Pack

Teacher's Notes

This document pack and associated activity are designed to support students with their depth study of Poverty, Public Health and the State in Britain c1780 - 1939. The period of 1834-55 has been chosen to allow focus on the Poor Law Amendment Act and its impact on society.

The letters provided in this pack are largely from paupers or interested parties writing to the Poor Law Commision, the Poor Law Board or local authorities in regards to the act, as such they offer genuine contemporary reactions to the Act.

The letters have been presented as photographs with transcripts available (printed on the reverse if this pack is printed double-sided). An accompanying powerpoint has been provided which can be edited to suit your needs. Teachers notes have been provided within the powerpoint with suggested activity instructions.

This lesson was created as part of the Teaching the Voices of the Victorian Poor Teacher Scholar Programme.

Suitable for:

KS5

Time period:

Empire and Industry 1750 - 1850

Connections to the Curriculum:

Edexcel A Level History: Poverty, Public Health and the state in Britain, c.1780-1939

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Protesting the New Poor Law, 1834-55

You are going to investigate the opposition to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 through the use of archival material. The MH12 collection from the National Archives consists of correspondence of the Poor Law Commission, the Poor Law Board and the Local Government Board with Poor Law Unions and other Local Authorities. Your task is to piece together information from some of the letters within this collection to determine the reasons for, nature of, extent and effectiveness of the opposition to the Poor Law Amendment Act.

Why did people oppose the New Poor Law? i.e. fears/rumours/morality	What was the nature of the opposition? i.e. Who? Why? Actions taken?
What was the extent of opposition? i.e. geographical spread, size of protest	What was the aim of the opposition? What did they want?

Tasks

Starter:
Ask students to come up with a definition of 'protest' in pairs. Then, discuss the different types of protest; think about methods, nature, intentions etc.
Allow class 5- 10 minutes to discuss and feedback.
Teacher can facilitate discussion by giving examples of protests, either from History or more recent examples. Be prepared to discuss the merits of peaceful vs. violent protest, as well as the different methods including petitions, marches, letter writing, lobbying, riots, strikes etc.

Main Document task:
Ask students to work in groups to find evidence within the document pack and complete the table provided. Students should use specific examples from the document content and context. Students may wish to use highlighters to colour code information relevant to the four key areas of investigation: reasons, nature, extent and effectiveness. In groups of four each student can focus their reading on a particular area i.e. student 1 looks for reasons for protest, student 2 looks for the nature of protest etc.

Final task:
Ask students to write a paragraph answering the question:

- How would you characterize the actions of protest taken against the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 – are they more moral or political? Is this a useful distinction?

Students should refer to their previous studies as well as the documents in this lesson to answer.

They may also like to use our interactive map to explore the geographical spread of protest in the MH12 collection across the 3200+ letters displayed within our maps.

Document One (Letter)

Catalogue Ref: MH 12/9356/98

Mansfield Union — 337

Doncaster July 21st 1837

My Dear Sir

In my letter of yesterday I stated that I was going to attend Mansfield Board — I went there accompanied by Mr Cooke the Magistrate, whom you know of about to attach — On our entering the room, where only a few of the Guardians had yet arrived — the Guardian and Overseer of Mansfield and the Relieving Officer told us that it would not be safe for me to remain — for that a large body of the men were coming down at 12 — & that if they knew that I was there, they feared violence would ensue — On inquiring into the cause of this fear — I found that during the week considerable disorder had taken place — particularly among the workmen, who with their families had been fed — On the Board day of last week — the Officers were directed to feed these 70 men & their families — They were to have three meals a day — the same food as the Workhouse diet — which I may remark is not a diet under Peal — for as the new Workhouse is not ready — they have been allowed to go on with the same diet table as that in use at Mansfield before the Union took place — 85 men, 55 women & 142 Children — have

RECEIVED 24 JUL 1837

been fed three times a day — and each man in addition was ordered 5s a day or 2s 6d a week in money — with which to buy coals or other further necessaries — It appears that this pay did not satisfy them — they became tumultuous — and by threats and intimidation extorted double pay from the Relieving Officer — viz 10s a day or 3s 6d a week in addition to the food for all the family — There is no police of any kind at Mansfield — so that the Officer considered that the only mode of making their violence — Threats were held out during the week against me — & there arose the fears which they stated — By the time this explanation was entered into, Mr Unwin — a Magistrate and several other Guardians had arrived and considering the threats as idle I of course determined to remain — During the next hour various reports came into the room by one or other — but no notice was taken of them — Your letter as to the stocking making was read and of course excited great discussion — Whilst this was going on — the crowd outside the Room began to collect — The Board room is next the Street, into which it opens directly and the Window is also to the Street into which the people outside can look — I was soon pointed out — and heard all kinds of low observations & threats of which I took no notice — The crowd now became a mob — and I think perhaps 200 or 300 hundred persons had collected — (some say many more — but I do

not believe it) — Mr Unwin went out to them — and told them to disperse — they insisted upon coming in & seeing or speaking to me — He succeeded in quieting them for a time — and I was then asked to see a deputation from the people — I agreed to do so after the business then before the Board was disposed of —

The Stocking making was ordered to be discontinued, as the work was finished — a Committee was formed to take measures for the employment of the people, at cutting down a hill near the Town — and another Committee to assist the Officers in making the necessary preparations for feeding the people and all their families — three times a day — in the same manner & to the same extent as those who had already been fed — This being settled and arranged — & the mob outside being very perpetual we consented to see a deputation of six — They came in — & very well behaved — intelligent men they were — The two spokesmen were not paupers — they said they were labouring artisans — who had contrived to keep off the Parish — The Poor Law in all its bearings was greatly and bitterly discussed — many misapprehensions were admitted by the men to be removed — and it is well worthy of remark that these spokesmen — clever artisans — said that they were delegated to the Committee "to most heartily approve of the putting a stop to the Stocking making" — They most fully understood the true bearing of this matter — they said it tended to glut the market — to reduce wages — to take away from the poor man that opportunity which was his right — of making the best of his labour when demand arose — they in fact read the Board of Guardians a better lecture on this point than had been enabled to do — during the discussion upon the subject — the mere wire depot of frames — shewed that the perpetuation of frames meant paupering at the expence of the poor Ratepayers — and most completely at all the fallacious reasonings of those Guardians who approved this Parish manufacture — They particularly enquired in what the people were to be relieved & in what way set to work — and in the end the conclusion to which the Board of Guardians had arrived — expressed themselves satisfied — and said "we have met with a very different reception from Mr Gulson to what we expected — & we thank him for it" — Not an angry word — or improper expression escaped from any party during this discussion which lasted I think nearly an hour — The mob outside had become noisy — threatening & vociferous — so much so — that on the deputation going out — it was found necessary to adjourn — On going out arm in arm between the two Magistrates — and surrounded by the Guardians — yells & groans — & such like indications assailed us — The Inn was not far off — but the purpose increased — a great stone flew by to my head — and quite an attack was made upon us as I entered the yard — The Inn is most inconvenient — the yard is open at both ends — to go from one room to another you have to go out into the open yard — and I had only got into a down stairs room, when it became evident that an attack upon me was intended — The Magistrate having no assistant at hand strongly advised me of propriety to get out of sight — The yard was full — particularly of the very lowest men & women — who were very violent — The windows were filled by way of searching for me — and I was only able to avoid an attack by getting into a small passage between two rooms — A third Magistrate

(112)

the Vice Chairman of Workhouse Union — by this time came to me and urged me not to move or show myself — The other Magistrates endeavoured by all means in their power to induce the people to disperse — and certainly exerted themselves most cordially and most kindly in rendering me every assistance and support in their power — A guard was on the other side of the Inn — into which some of the Windows looked — but even this yard was searched for me — and I heard threats of no pleasant nature from this side — I was thus kept a prisoner for two hours at least — tho' I would willingly have faced the people if I could in any way have done so with a chance of being heard —

At the end of about two hours — perhaps more — the Magistrates came to me & said that the crowd had so far dispersed — they were of opinion I could with safety leave into a chaise — They therefore assembled a number of the respectable people as a guard around the Vehicle — & I went out between Mr Unwin & Mr Mason — & tho' the crowd made very uncivil & would evidently have in a minute or two been more than uncivil — I succeeded in driving off — & escaped without molestation —

I have thus particularly detailed all that I know — because I consider it important that you should be made acquainted with this affair in order to enable you to judge of the future — though as regards me personally it is a matter of little moment — since I am in no way the worse —

Any 20 good policemen would easily have prevented

all this unpleasantness — If any proof were wanting of the necessity of an efficient Police — this affair is a most striking instance of the effects of a want of such a force — What might have happened if any force had been known to exist this could have been brought forward at the moment —

As regards the Future — protection must be given to the Board of Guardians — As the Stocking frames go out of work — the numbers of these men will increase — instead of 85 — they will be 185 — and as it is said that the Duke of Newcastle's Committee will also stop the frames in Sutton — where 200 men are employed — & of a notoriously desperate character — when it is known that the Rates cannot guarantee the loss upon the Sutton manufacture — we shall have a body of 500 or 600 men who with their families will have to secure relief in food — and as threats and violence from 100 have already extorted double pay — of course we must expect still greater excesses from this greatly increased number — unless some force either civil or military be brought to the spot — The Guardians will not be able of themselves to withstand the purpose — some of them are alarmed already — and the Guardian and Overseer of Mansfield — who has hitherto given out the work to the Stocking makers — is so indiscreet (& I think wanting in firmness) that

he will be driven away — Some of the frames will be out of work on Tuesday — & by the end of the week most of them —

There is a regiment of Soldiers at Nottingham — and a troop of them might easily be quartered in Mansfield — This appears to me to be easier & less costly than any other mode — but I merely wish to lay the necessity before you — & leave to your better judgment the instructions for the future —

I must decidedly state that we should never have been in this situation at Mansfield — except for the wrong course which the Guardians suddenly and without conferring with me, adopted — It is so much easier to keep right — than to get into the proper course — when wrong has been done —

The Guardians will meet — & Mr Unwin — the Magistrate — a determined man will take the lead — They are not a body that will be as a whole easily intimidated — but I am confident that they will never be able properly to withstand the purpose — unless a moral effect be produced by having an efficient force on the spot — They cordially wish to carry out your instructions — they with the best feeling, adopt very expensive — we may in every way depend upon them as far as their ability — but the purpose will be overwhelming — if they are left to themselves —

Whatever the purpose may be, I am also equally certain that it will be of short duration — The Mansfield subscription — the mode of its expenditure — and this stocking making — have each & all greatly — enormously — conduced to increase the evil — and by preventing men from seeking employment — abroad

by inducing men to leave half work — and in various other ways which you will understand — have given growth to the purpose which it has been intended to alleviate — A few weeks from will put this matter in its true position — Hay making — Harvest work — field work are all abundant — In many parishes men are not to be had to the required extent — in Collingham the mowers turned out when earning 4s 6d a day — the haymakers refuse work at 2s 6d a day — and all the Lowery trade is likely to continue in a depressed state for 3 or 4 months — yet I am very confident that one half of the purpose will find vent in a legitimate way — if we so proceed, as to place matters on their true and natural state —

I need not I am sure enlarge upon this part of the question — I have given you all the particulars — & shall be glad to hear from you — I will attend at Mansfield again next week if necessary — tho' I am engaged to attend Brigg Meeting on that day — at any rate I shall attend again on Thursday week —

I long to hear testimony both to the cordial and energetic assistance — and to the great personal kindness of each of the Magistrates — it could not be exceeded —

A Magistrate I learn a Guardian of one of the Mansfield Unions — now a Magistrate in Belper Union (Mr Nightingale) was present as a Visitor — witnessed everything from beginning to end — and was greatly interested by the proceedings of the Board — the deputation especially — I have heard that the deputation afterwards addressed the mob —

I am my Dear Sir Yours very truly E Gulson

Document One - Transcript

The first item is a catalogue entry detailing the contents of a lengthy letter from the Poor Law Commissioner, referring to the threat of violence and an angry mob complaining about the new way relief would be offered:

Archive reference: MH 12/9356/98.
Date of Letter: 21 July 1837
Poor Law Union: Mansfield Poor Law Union

21 July 1837
Letter from Edward Gulson, Poor Law Commissioner, to the Poor Law Commission. He attended the Mansfield board meeting where he met with the threat of violence and an angry mob. During the preceding week considerable disorder had taken place among the workmen. At the previous board meeting the officers were directed to feed these 70 men and their families, three meals a day, the same as the workhouse diet. He reports that 85 men, 55 women and 142 children have been fed three times a day and each man ordered 5d a day or 2/6 a week with which to buy coats or other necessities. This did not satisfy the men who through threats of violence extorted double pay from the relieving officer. A committee has been formed to take measures for the employment of the people at cutting down a hill near the town and another committee to assist in feeding the people. During the meeting a mob of about 200 to 300 people collected outside. He met with a deputation from the mob and discussed the Poor Law, the need to stop stocking making in return for relief as it reduced wages, and how the people were to be relived and in what way set to work. He goes on to describe an attempted attack on him by the mob when he left the meeting. He recommends that the guardians be offered protection because as the stocking frames go out of work, the number of men to be relieved will rise from 85 to 365 and as the Duke of Portland's committee stops the frames in Sutton this will create a body of 500 or 600 men, who with their families will require relief. He suggests the use of a regiment of soldiers at Nottingham who might be quartered in Mansfield to help the guardians maintain order. He notes that some of the pressure may be alleviated if the men move into hay making, harness work and field work.

Document Two (a)

Catalogue Ref: MH 12/11198/83

Wolstanton and Burslem Union. (31) 415/10

S. Cheell Workhouse,

December, 30, 1848.

147/49

RECEIVED P.L.B. JAN. 2 1849

To The Poor Law Board

Gentlemen,

I am desirous of directing your attention to the following report of the conduct of the Baker of this union, whose name is William Stubbs:— as follows.

Whereas, on the 15. instant the said William Stubbs, did in the most outrageously insulting manner, threaten, suiting the action to the words, to "knock my bloody head off;" the Governor being present, and but for his (the Governors) influence would unquestionably have put his savage threat into execution. As a matter of course the case as been laid before the Guardians, on the 19, instant. And on the following day, to my astonishment the decision of the Guardians, has reported to me, by the Governor, was "That they (the Guardians) did not consider the case of sufficient importance to be investigated." On this ground, and viewing such decision as wholly unsatisfactory, I appeal to your superior judgement, trusting you will forthwith institute such inquiry into this matter as will lead to more satisfactory results. I am, Gentlemen,

your very obedient and very devoted servant,

John Cartwright. Inmate

Document Two (a) - Transcript

Two letters, the first a complaint from an inmate of the Wolstanton and Burslem Poor Law Union workhouse, the second a response to that complaint:

Archive reference: MH 12/11198/83.
Date of Letter: 30 December 1848
Poor Law Union: Wolstanton and Burslem Poor Law Union

Chell Workhouse
December, 30, 1848.
Gentlemen
I am desirous of directing your attention to the following report of the conduct of the Baker of this union, whose name is William Stubbs:- as follows
Whereas on the 15 instant the said William Stubbs, did in the most outrageously insulting manner, threaten, suiting the action to the words, to "Knock my bloody head off"; the Governor being present, and but for his (The Governors) influence would unquestionably have put his savage threat into execution. As a matter of course the case as been laid before The Guardians, on the 19 instant. And on the following day to my astonishment the decision of the Guardians has reported to me by the Governor that they (The Guardians) "did not consider the case of sufficient importance to be investigated". On this ground, and viewing such decision as wholly unsatisfactory, I appeal to your superior judgement, trusting you will forthwith institute such inquiry into this matter as will [had] to more satisfactory results
I am Gentlemen Your very Obedient and very devoted Servant,
John Cartwright. Inmate

Document Two (b)

Catalogue Ref: MH 12/11198/92

WOLSTANTON AND BURSLEM UNION, STAFFORDSHIRE.

415/10

143

NEXT MEETING, ~~WEDNESDAY~~ Tuesday, 23 Day of January 1849, at Ten o'Clock, A.M.

MEETINGS, ~~WEDNESDAY~~ Tuesday FORTNIGHTLY.

CLERK'S ADDRESS, Wolstanton, near Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Wolstanton, 15 January 1849.

RECEIVED JAN 15 1849

124/49

RECEIVED JAN 20 1849

re Complaint of John Cartwright as to the conduct of the Baker at the Union Workhouse

Gentlemen

I am directed by the Board of Guardians of this Union to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 11 January instant No 147/49 forwarding Copy of a Letter addressed to you by John Cartwright an Inmate of the Workhouse complaining of the conduct of the Baker and requesting the observations of the Guardians thereon.

I have now to inform you that the Guardians had their attention drawn to the matter by the report of the Master of the Workhouse, ~~and~~ but as no assault was committed, and the language of Cartwright to a Paid Officer (although a subordinate one) was insulting they did not deem it necessary further to notice the complaint, than to direct the removal of Cartwright and Hawley from the Workhouse.

I &c

To
The Poor Law Board
Somerset House
London.

The Guardians now instruct me to transmit to you herewith copies of the Statements of Mr Charles William the Master of the Workhouse, John Cartwright the Complainant, and William Shutt the Baker, for your consideration.

I have the honor to be
Gentlemen
Your most Obedient Servant
Joseph Sowerbutts
Clerk to the Guardians

Document Two (b) - Transcript

Two letters, the first a complaint from an inmate of the Wolstanton and Burslem Poor Law Union workhouse, the second a response to that complaint described in the catalogue entry below:

Archive reference: MH 12/11198/92.
Date of Letter: 30 December 1849
Poor Law Union: Wolstanton and Burslem Poor Law Union

12 Jan 1849.
Letter from Joseph Lowndes, Clerk to the Guardians of the Wolstanton and Burslem Union, to the Poor Law Board in reply to their letter of 4 January 1849 enclosing a copy of a letter from John Cartwright, an inmate of the union workhouse, complaining about the baker and asking for the guardians' observations.
The guardians regard the matter as closed now that Cartwright and [John] Hawley, an inmate of the union workhouse, have been removed from the bakehouse. He encloses copies of statements from Charles Wellum, the Master of the Workhouse, John Cartwright, the complainant and William Stubbs, the Baker. Stubbs regards Cartwright as a 'scoundrel' constantly abusing those in authority and 'of thorough Chartist principles and a dangerous man'. Cartwright accuses Stubbs of threatening violence to him, and Wellum has no doubt that the principal reason for Stubbs's complaint was to get Cartwright out of the Bakehouse, regarding him as dangerous and a Chartist.
Annotated: by H B Farnall [Poor Law Inspector], that he visited the workhouse on 16 January 1849 and recommends the matter be permitted to rest.

Document Three

Catalogue Ref: MH12/14674

RECEIVED 5 FEB NOV. 7 1840

7014 582 11

Sheffield 30 May 1840

My Lord & Gentlemen, I shall receive your Lordships & Gentlemen's letter of the 28th inst. Poor Mrs Mirie of the 18th inst. Poor Mrs Mitchell comes to me and Sam Forrest to see that "hope deferred makes the heart sick." He went bitterly this morning and said the feared her brother would not live many days and then, said she, "he will death of their way; they will have finished him". He heard a few days ago that he was very ill; unfortunate except by his poor neighbours who were in his house expecting his death. – He has 2 of his children as I have before informed you and the state of mind he was in when I last saw him. Poor man may not be aware that the Centralizing Legislation with a most perfect horror. I do not believe in hell worse to have to see the poor boy starved to death by law. This can is not likely to open my heart, or cause me to see any thing like moral responsibility on the part of the central authorities, I should be wicked to view centralization with more favour, but there is nothing of the kind. I think it is a perfect cause and effect reasoning is all that is ever employed of. For instance – you have acted in this case, Lorain would be built day the same, if the Board of Guardians at Barnsley, they first letter to Lorain was on the 18th Jany.

Any finish to your work on the 14th March, the poor wretch died all the time, – more than 16 weeks.

You breakfast every morning and dinner your Lordship will be perfect conversant that you will also shine in the course. Not so the poor who have not sufficient interest to appeal to you. Those who have shown what a they understand. Cripple is not for wrong in the description of which Rad to be found in Sowing N. Good Reasons than Schedules at the Colt Forest Office see to fish in which Governs (?) this country. Yours faithfully The Poor Law Board, Face Yorkshire

Document Three - Transcript

A letter written by Isaac Ironside, who wrote a number of letters as an advocate for the Poor. Isaac Ironside was an English Chartist and socialist politician, whose activities were centred in Sheffield:

Archive reference: MH12/14674.
Date of Letter: 6 May 1850
Poor Law Union: Sheffield Poor Law Union

Sheffield 1850 May 6th
My Lords and Gentlemen I duly received yours of 23rd ult in reply to mine of the 18th ult. Poor Mrs Mitchell came to me and I am forced to see that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick". She wept bitterly this morning, and said she feared her brother will not live many days and then, said she "he will be out of their way, they will have finished him". She heard a few days ago that he was very ill: unattended except by his poor neighbours who were in his house expecting his death. – She has 2 of his children as I before informed you, and she still [prides/provides] herself and them and struggles, but it is very hard.
You may not be aware that [I] hate the centralizing tendency with a most perfect hatred. I do not believe in [Malthus] nor do I wish to see the poor people starved to death by law. This case is not likely to lessen my hatred. If I could see anything like moral responsibility on the part of the central authorities, I should be inclined to view centralization with more favour. But there is nothing of the kind. Stump orators make perfect laws, and legal response is all that is ever thought of. For instance, you have acted legally I suppose in this case. Lorimer would no doubt say the same, Ditto the Board of Guardians at Barnsley. My first letter to Lorimer was on the 18th Jany. my first letter to you was on the 1st of March, the poor wretch starving all the time – more than 16 weeks.
You breakfast every morning and transact your business with the perfect consciousness that you will also dine in due course. Not so the poor who have not sufficient interest to get an appeal to you. Those who have discover what a task they undertake. Carlisle is not far wrong in his description of what has to be done in Downing St.
Good heavens how I shudder at the cold hearted official red tapism which governs (?) this country.
Yours faithfully Isaac Ironside

Document Four

Catalogue Ref: MH12/1527/32

9181.

RECEIVED P.L.C. AUG. 17 1835

80/22 69 57

Mr E Chadwick

Sir

I humbly Supplicate you of your goodness, to convey me, those documents, I enclosed in a letter some time since, addressed to the Commissioners, as they may be to me of material consequence, I once more beg to inform the Board that since my arrival from Penzance Dispensary about a month since, I received on the Parish account, one pound and half of dry bread alone and that quantity, but for one week, during that time, the Select Vestry assembled yesterday. It actuated them, to only to assist me to a few shillings, to again go to the Penzance Dispensary but they would not rather give me a farthing and admit me to the Workhouse, last Evening a humane person represented my Condition at the house of the overseer, but to no purpose, so in order to prevent Starvation, and an increase of disease, I must and do intend this day to break the windows of the Overseer, Mr Hicks, if I do so he says, he will immediately, write your Honour, and Endeavour to get me Transported what I can assure your Honours, a life of banishment, would be preferable to perishing in the Streets, I believe the Law does not allow any one to Die for want, if they are able to work and refuse so to do, they have no more to do, but to make a complaint to a Magistrate as, the Justices, have previously, told them, and then commit, me to prison, for refusing to be employed, if they would do this I would break no glass, but no they will not do it, they well knows, by undergoing an examination from the Surgeon of the County would prove me to be a disabled person

I am Sir

Your Most Obedient

Humble Servant

John Ford

Truro Postoffice August 14th 1835

P.S. To prove Gentlemen that it is alone for want, I violated or must violate the Laws of my Country, I told the overseer what I intend doing, and have also, allowed this Letter to be read, by Mr Rowe Constable, opposite the House of Mr Hicks, he certainly advises me not to do it but cannot tell, how I may get cured of my disease, or relieved of my wants, he says he will speak to the Reper of the Town Prison, to let me lie, there, (in Prison) rather than I shode remain at night in the Streets

Copied Mark

Document Four - Transcript

A letter from a pauper in Truro, Cornwall, to Edwin Chadwick, expressing his intention to commit individual acts of vandalism in protest at his treatment under the New Poor Law. This was the 3rd letter that Mr Ford wrote about his relief:

Archive reference: MH12/1527/32
Date of Letter: 14 August 1835
Poor Law Union: Truro Poor Law Union

Mr E Chadwick
Sir
I humbly supplicate you of your goodness, to convey me, those documents, I enclosed in a letter some time Since, addressed to the Commissioners, as they may be to me of material consequence, I once more beg to inform the Board that since my arrival from Penzance Dispensary about a month since, I received on the Parish account, one pound and half of dry bread alone and that quantity, but for one week, during that time, they Select Vestry assembled yesterday. I [n]<entreated> them, to only to assist me to a few Shillings, to again go to the Penzance Dispensary but they would ^not^ neither give me a farthing nor admit me to the Work House, last Evening a Humane person represented my Condition at the house of the overseer, but to no purpose, so in order to prevent starvation and an increase of disease, I must and do intend this day to break the windows of the Overseer, Mr Hicks, if I do so he says, he will immediately, write your Honour and Endeavour to get me Transported which I can assure your Honour ^that^ a life of banishment, would be preferable to perishing in the Streets, I believe the Law does not allow any one to Die for want, if they are able to work and refuse so to do, they have no more to do, but to make a complaint to a Magistrate as [if] the Justices, have previously, told them, and then commit, me to prison, for refusing to be employed, if they would do this I would break no Glass, but no, they will not do it, they well knows, by undergoing an examination [from] the Surgeon of the County would pronounce me to be a disabled person
I am Sir
Your Most Obedient
Humble Servant
John Ford

Truro Post Office
August 14th 1835

PS, To prove Gentlemen that it is alone for want, I violated or must violate the Laws of my Country, I told the Overseer what I intended Doing, and have also, allowed this Letter to be read, by Mr Rowe Constable,, opposite the House of Mr Hicks, he certainly advises me not to do so but cannot tell, how I may get cured of my disease, or relieved of my wants, he says he will speak to the Keeper of the Town Prison. To let me lie there, in Prison, rather than I shall remain at night in the streets

Document Five (a)

Catalogue Ref: MH12/9361/231

369

(Copy)

Private.

Mansfield Workhouse
2d March 1846

My dear Sir,

Three tramps have just been brought before me charged with breaking the lamps in the town street and windows in the Workhouse at Mansfield. I have committed them to the House of Correction at Southwell for various terms: this I have done in obedience to the strict letter of the law. I feel however very dissatisfied with the position in which the acts of the Board of Guardians and their employés so frequently place me. The above tramps in their defence stated as follows. – that they applied at the Workhouse on Saturday for admission, that it was refused – that they went to the Police Office – that they were there told they must go to the Overseer – that he turned them out of his shop & told them they must go to the Workhouse – that they again went there, were refused admittance, and that they then broke the lamps &c. so as to secure themselves a night's lodging and some food. The Porter of the Workhouse and Police corroborated the foregoing statement, the former saying the Board had ordered him not to admit any able bodied tramps &c. &c.

Will you have the kindness to enquire into the case, for if the Guardians have stretched their authority too far, I should not wish to lose any time in obtaining an order for the release of the prisoners. I will grant that the men have the appearance of professional tramps, and I have no doubt that one or two of them have been at Mansfield before this time; but still I think that the men have a case against the Board of Guardians which will not bear the light. I had written thus far when Winter called with a copy of the Board's resolution as to refusing admittance to any but the really destitute and infirm. Truly I think the order at variance with the spirit of the Poor Law Amendment Act.

Having only returned from London (after an absence from home of a month) late on Saturday evening, I write in great haste and perhaps somewhat confusedly, but I trust you will be able to arrive at the sense of my letter, and

Believe me to be
Very faithfully yours
(Signed) E. T. Coke

Robert Weale Esqre

Document Five (a) - Transcript

This letter shows a Mansfield magistrate questioning the strict application of the law in regards to the treatment of tramps:

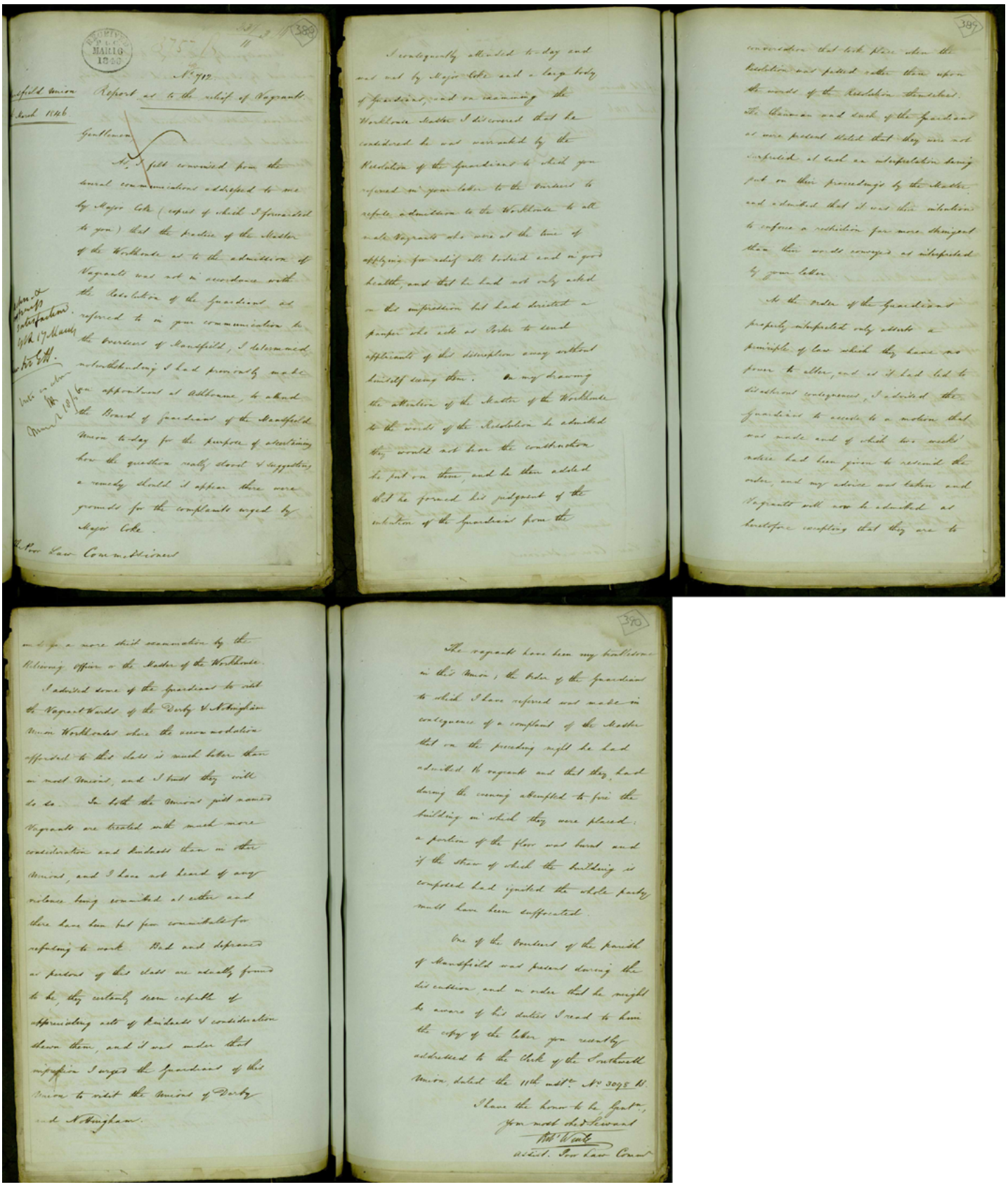
Archive reference: MH12/9361/231
Date of Letter: 2 March 1846
Poor Law Union: Truro Poor Law Union

2 March 1846

My dear Sir,
Three tramps have just been brought before me charged with breaking the lamps in the town street and windows in the Workhouse of Mansfield. I have committed them to the House Of Correction at Southwell for various terms: this I have done in obedience to the strict letter of the law. I feel however very dissatisfied with the position in which the acts of the Board of Guardians and their employee's so frequently place me. The above tramps in their defence stated as follows:- that they applied at the Workhouse on Saturday for admission, that it was refused – that they went to the Police Office – that they were there told they must go to the Overseer – that he turned them out of his shop & told them they must go to the Workhouse – that they again went there, were refused admittance, and that they then broke the lamps so as to secure themselves a night's lodging and some food. The Porter of the Workhouse and Police corroborated the foregoing statement, the former saying the Board had ordered him not to admit any able bodied tramps. Will you have the kindness to enquire into the case, for if the Guardians have stretched their authority too far, I should not wish to lose any time in obtaining an order for the release of the prisoners. I will grant that the men have the appearance of professional tramps, and I have no doubt that one or two of them have been at Mansfield before this time; but still I think that the men have a case against the Board of Guardians which will not bear the light. I had written thus far when Winter called with a copy of the Board's resolution as to refusing admittance to any but the really destitute and infirm. Truly I think the order at variance with the spirit of the Poor Law Amendment Act. Having only returned from London (after an absence from home of a month) late on Saturday evening, I write in great haste and perhaps somewhat confusedly, but I trust you will be able to arrive at the sense of my letter, and Believe me to be Very faithfully yours (Signed) E J Coke

Document Five (b)

Catalogue Ref: MH12/9361/243



Mansfield Union
Received 18th

No. 712.

Report as to the relief of Vagrants.

Gentlemen,

As I felt convinced from the several communications addressed to me by Major Cole (copies of which I forwarded to you) that the practice of the Master of the Workhouse as to the admission of Vagrants was not in accordance with the Resolution of the Guardians as referred to in your communication to the Overseers of Mansfield, I determined notwithstanding I had previously made an appointment at Ashbourne, to attend the Board of Guardians of the Mansfield Union to-day for the purpose of ascertaining how the question really stood & suggesting a remedy should it appear there were grounds for the complaints urged by Major Cole.

Poor Law Commissioners

I consequently attended to-day and was met by Major Cole and a large body of Guardians, and on examining the Workhouse Master I discovered that he considered he was warranted by the Resolution of the Guardians to which you referred in your letter to the Overseers to refuse admission to the Workhouse to all male Vagrants who were at the time of applying for relief able bodied and in good health, and that he had not only acted on the supposition but had directed a pauper who acts as Porter to send applicants of this description away without himself seeing them. On my drawing the attention of the Master of the Workhouse to the words of the Resolution he admitted they would not bear the construction he put on them, and he then added that he formed his judgment of the intention of the Guardians from the

conversation that took place when the Resolution was passed rather than upon the words of the Resolution themselves. The Chairman and Clerk of the Guardians at once protested against that they were not responsible for such an interpretation being put on their proceedings by the Master, and admitted that it was their intention to enforce a resolution far more stringent than this would convey as interpreted by your letter.

As the order of the Guardians properly interpreted only adopts a principle of law which they have no power to alter, and as if had led to disastrous consequences, I advised the Guardians to accede to a motion that was made and of which two weeks' notice had been given to rescind the order, and my advice was taken and Vagrants will now be admitted as heretofore excepting that they are to

and to a more strict examination by the Relieving Officer & the Master of the Workhouse.

I advised some of the Guardians to visit the Vagrant Wards of the Derby & Nottingham Union Workhouses where the accommodation afforded to this class is much better than in most Unions, and I trust they will do so. In both the Unions just named Vagrants are treated with much more consideration and kindness than in other Unions, and I have not heard of any violence being committed at either and there have been but few committals for refusing to work. Bad and depraved as persons of this class are usually found to be, they certainly seem capable of appreciating acts of kindness & consideration shown them, and I was under that impression I urged the Guardians of this Union to visit the Unions of Derby and Nottingham.

The vagrants have been very troublesome in this Union; the Order of the Guardians to which I have referred was made in consequence of a complaint of the Master that on the preceding night he had admitted 16 vagrants and that they had during the evening attempted to fire the building in which they were placed; a portion of the floor was burnt and if the straw of which the bedding is composed had ignited the whole party must have been suffocated.

One of the Overseers of the parish of Mansfield was present during the discussion, and in order that he might be aware of his duties I read to him the copy of the letter you recently addressed to the Clerk of the Southwell Union, dated the 11th inst. No. 3095 H.

I have the honor to be Gentn,
Your most obedt Servant
Robt Weale
Assist. Poor Law Comm.

Document Five (b) - Transcript

After a series of letters back and forth about the matter of vagrants in Mansfield, Robert Weale, the Assistant Poor Law Commissioner visited the union and met with the guardians to address the problem. The following is the catalogue entry concerning their meeting:

Archive reference: MH12/9361/231
Date of Letter: 2 March 1846
Poor Law Union: Truro Poor Law Union

Report from Robert Weale, [Assistant Poor Law Commissioner], to the Poor Law Commission. Today he attended a meeting of the Guardians of the Mansfield Poor Law Union to suggest a remedy to complaints made by Major Coke [E T Coke, Magistrate], concerning admission of vagrants to the workhouse. The master believed that he was to refuse all able bodied male vagrants in good health, but now accepts that this was a misunderstanding. The order was originally made because vagrants had attempted to set fire to the building in which they were housed. The guardians have agreed to rescind the order and vagrants will be admitted as previously, after a strict examination. It was suggested that the guardians should visit the vagrant wards of Derby Poor Law Union and Nottingham Poor Law Union Workhouses where the accommodation is much better than in most unions. 'Bad and depraved as persons of this class are usually found to be, they certainly seem capable of appreciating acts of kindness & consideration shewn them'. One of the overseers was present and so that he was aware of his duties, Weale read out a letter the Commission recently addressed to the Clerk of the Southwell Poor Law Union, 11 March 1846

Document Six

Catalogue Ref: MH12/15467

JUST PUBLISHED,

PRICE ONE PENNY,

THE

CASE OF

WM. WHITAKER,

THE LUNATIC PAUPER,

WHO

Perished in the Sheffield Union Workhouse, as Related by his Widow.

RECEIVED P. L. C. AUG 24 1844

RECEIVED P. L. C. AUG 21 1844

The above Case has been offered to the Editors of each of the three Sheffield Newspapers for insertion, and has been rejected by all of them.——Why?

NO POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS!!

BRITONS WILL NOT BE SLAVES!!

Men of Sheffield, what are you about?

FORM AT ONCE AN ANTI NEW POOR LAW COMMITTEE!

Under that Law you have Paid more than £100,000 beyond what the Old Law would have required, while the Poor have been ten times more oppressed.

"Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth that his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—1st. JOHN, iii. 17.

"He that hideth his eyes from the Poor, shall have many a *Curse*."—PROVERBS xxviii. 27.

Sold by WM. FORD, Printer, York-Street, Sheffield.

Document Six - Transcript

A handbill advertising a pamphlet by Samuel Roberts from Sheffield. He was successful manufacturer of silver and plated goods and who took up a number of benevolent causes. Having been an overseer of the poor under the Old Poor Law he became very opposed to the New Poor Law. The text is a transcript of annotations from the document:

Archive reference: MH12/15467
Date of Letter (in which the handbill was enclosed): 15 March 1846
Poor Law Union: Sheffield Poor Law Union

If we commence to notice this man's publications we shall have enough to do. It will be observed that there has been an Inquest and that none of the Newspapers of wh. there are 3 in Sheffield wd. give insertion to the article. No date is given so it may have taken place some time ago.

Handbill: [Stamp: Received P.L.C. Aug 24 1844] [Stamp: Received P.L.C. Aug 21 1844]

Just published. Price one penny.
The case of WM. Whitaker, The Lunatic pauper,
who perished in the Sheffield Union Workhouse, as related by his widow.

The above case has been offered to the editors of each of the three Sheffield Newspapers for insertion, and has been rejected by all of them - why?

No Poor Law Commissioners!!
Britons will not be slaves!!

Men of Sheffield, what are you about?
Form at once an anti new poor law committee!
Under the law you have Paid more than £100,000 beyond what the Old Law would have required, while the Poor have been ten times more oppressed.

"Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth that his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" - 1st John, iii. 17.
"He that hideth his eyes from the Poor, shall have many a curse." - Proverbs xxviii, 27.

Sold by W.M.Ford, Printer, York-Street, Sheffield.

Document Seven (a)

Catalogue Ref: MH12/15158/140

Document Seven (a) - Transcript

A letter sent to Edwin Chadwick, discussing the Keighley Poor Law Union, whose rate payers elected a Board of Guardians who were anti-poor law in 1842. This could be seen as an act of protest in itself:

Archive reference: MH12/15158/140
Date of Letter: 6 April 1842
Poor Law Union: Keighley Poor Law Union

Castlefields nr Bingley Yorkshire
April 6th 1842
To E Chadwick Esqr
Sir
The Board of Guardians recently Elected for the whole of the Kighley Union are I fear, (with one or two exceptions) opposed to the New Poor Law. I attended with a Brother Magistrate, Mr Edwin Greenwood, the first Meeting of the New Board on Wednesday last. Having acted for two years on the first establishment of the union, as chairman of the Board I was able to inform the New Board upon one or two important points & that appeared to me to be necessary to be known. Having other public engagements to attend to did not stay till the Board broke up. Happens that after I left an order was made on the Motion of Mr Richard Metcalfe (solicitor) and Mr Josa Cowling, calling an extraordinary Meeting of the Guardians on the 2nd of April to read over all the orders and instructions & Rules received from the poor Law Commissioners from the establishment of the Union – such was the substance. I have thought it my duty to send a letter to the Board this day of which you have a copy on the other side. I Enclose also two documents recently issued – one written by myself – In the present distressed state of this union, for want of Employment to withhold out Door Relief would produce the most deplorable distress – the workhouses at Kighley & Bingley being full to overflowing
I remain Sir
Your Mo obSt
Wm Ellis

Document Seven (b)

Catalogue Ref: MH12/15158/140

GLORIOUS DEFEAT

Of the FRIENDS of the

NEW POOR LAW

IN THE

KEIGHLEY UNION.

The Board of Guardians have this Day decided to Petition Parliament for the REPEAL of this unjust and tyrannical Law by a Majority of 10 to 5.

For the Repeal.

W. Busfeild Ferrand } *Ex officio Guardians.*
Joseph Greenwood }
John Wright, *Vice Chairman.*
James Hulbert.
James Greenwood.
Isaac Skirrow Smith.
James Berwick.
George Feather.
Robert Murgatroyd.
Joseph Heaton.

Against the Repeal.

William Ellis, } *Ex officio Guardians.*
Frederick Greenwood, }
Edwin Greenwood, }
Rodger Shackleton.
Samuel Smith.

Keighley, Feb. 2nd, 1842.

J. & R. AKED, PRINTERS AND STATIONERS, LOW-STREET, KEIGHLEY

Document Seven (b) - Transcript

This poster is related to the letter- take note of the names against the repeal of the New Poor Law and compare to the author of the letter.

Archive reference: MH 12/15158/140, 4050/B/1842

Glorious defeat of the friends of the New Poor Law in the Keighley Union.

The Board of Guardians have this Day decided to Petition Parliament for the REPEAL of this unjust and tyrannical Law by a Majority of 10 to 5.

For the repeal.
W Busfeild Ferrand } Ex officio Guardians
Joseph Greenwood }
John Wright, Vice Chairman.
James Hulbert.
James Greenwood.
Isaac Skirrow Smith.
James Berwick.
George Feather.
Robert Murgatroyd.
Joseph Heaton.

Against the repeal.
William Ellis. } Ex officio Guardians.
Frederick Greenwood, }
Edwin Greenwood, }
Rodger Shackleton.
Samuel Smith.

Keighley, Feb 2nd, 1842.

J. & R. Aked, Printers and Stationers, Low-Street, Keighley.

Document Eight

Catalogue Ref: MH12/6039

Mr. Oastler was received with enthusiastic cheering. When the applause had subsided, in a most solemn and emphatic tone he spoke as follows:—Mr. Chairman and fellow-countrymen,—In appearing before you on this occasion, I beg that you will consider that you are listening to a man who may not, perhaps, very often have again to address his fellow-subjects at public meetings on any occasion. I beg, therefore, that you will be kind enough to be attentive to what I say, because I do know that the government of this country is now thirsting for my blood, and I do know that I will not run out of the cause.—(Hear, hear.) The expressions which I have made use of with reference to the new poor-law, and with reference to the factory question, have alarmed men in high places; and they have thought that I have been the organ of incendiarism—that I have been the promoter of assassination. They have thought it to be their duty, in accordance with the oaths which they have sworn to her majesty the queen—they have thought it to be their duty, in season and out of season, to put down such a turbulent wretch as myself. They have descended even to the meanness of employing a spy to watch my motions; and, if I mistake not, to offer me money—to offer me money—if I would give him money to assassinate one of my neighbours.—(Shame, shame!) They have employed their feelers of the press—I mention no names; I only hint at the servile, mercenary wretches that would accept the price of blood—they have employed the mercenary and bloody press to put out their feelers, and ascertain whether the people of England would allow them to take me contrary to law or not.—(Loud cries of "No, no—never.") Gentlemen, they have done more than all this; for, in the presence of her majesty's secretary for Ireland, I have seen a band of bought and bloody assassins, with bludgeons in their hands, bought to assassinate myself and my Huddersfield friend.—("Shame, shame!" "It's like them.") They *did* destroy poor Carter, but *I* was left still—left still, to defy them and their mercenary and bloody tools to do their very worst.—(Loud cheers.) I am not about to-night to give you my opinion of the particular clauses of the new poor-law, or to lay before you any of the particular hardships which many poor persons have suffered under that law. It is not my business to-night with you to carry you in idea to the lone cot, without a chair, without a bed, without food, and almost without clothes, but crowded with a family of Christian Englishmen, all of them liege subjects of Victoria their queen, whom she will very soon be required in mercy to protect. No; for the present I will speak of matters between the government and ourselves in Huddersfield: for you must know that I come from the field of battle—(hear, hear)—and thank God—not an opponent,—thank God—not the government,—thank God—not the friend of the new poor-law,—although it was a field of battle, still it was a bloodless one. Trains were laid for us; but God, in his infinite mercy—by his own wisdom, and his own guidance—last Monday saved Huddersfield from being the scene of a bloody slaughter.—(Hear, hear.) You remember what sort of a day it was; it was exceedingly snowy, and I know that the friends of the new poor-law in Huddersfield did intend to contrive that there should be a riot by beginning to throw snow-balls. I have had it expressed to me by the whigs of Huddersfield since then, that they did expect to have a good snow-balling that day. Now it shows you how God himself protects me; for if I did not believe that I was supported by His almighty arm, I never could sustain the struggle which I have to maintain. I was on the Sunday night with a soldier. He said to me, "Now, Mr. Oastler, we do not want to do any harm to the people; you have a great deal of influence with them; and do persuade them not to snow-ball us! We cannot stand it; and our horses cannot stand snow-balling." I smiled, and thought nothing of it; but I exhorted the people not to throw snow-balls, and told them if any man did throw a single snow-ball that day, that man would be an enemy to the poor. Now, I ask any man living if that was not being guided by Providence? Ay, they intended to begin a bloody row; they knew that nothing would insult the soldiers more than snow-balling; they knew that there would be a fight between her majesty's loyal troops and her majesty's loyal subjects; but the people were protected, and they were sorry for it. Yes; they intended that I should not sleep in Huddersfield that night, unless I had been in the arms of death. Oh! the cautions I had from different quarters that day, not to go to that meeting. The government were determined that day to take me, and I said I was resolved that when I was taken, I should not be taken as a rioter—that I should not be taken either as breaking the peace, or encouraging any other person to break the peace; that, if I was taken, I would be taken because I believed the Word of God to be true, because I believed the new poor-law to be a lie.—(Loud cheers.) Yes, gentlemen, it is time that we now look about us; it is high time that we begin to inquire how these things should be. It may suit the organs of the press which support the new poor-law to represent me as an incendiary and as a fool; it matters not to me what they say of me, if they won't commend me. Should they ever speak well of me, I should think that I was doing wrong; and when I hear that they revile me, it is only so much encouragement to proceed, because I know that I am right. But these gentlemen—who are the best instructors of the people—who profess to have all wisdom locked up in their *craniums*, and who think that all persons who have a different opinion from them are knaves or fools; it would be well if they looked about the corners of their own household (politically speaking, I mean), and saw, before they maligned their neighbours, and charged them with folly and madness, what wisdom has designed, what wisdom has executed, what wisdom is now endeavouring to establish, the new poor-law. I ask these gentlemen, is it wise in the house of lords and in the house of commons, to pass a law avowedly founded upon a new system of population, which has been kept secret since the world began, until one Malthus discovered that the whole of nature, and that the whole of the revealed will of the God of nature, was a lie? Is it wise that they should thus roll back into the corners of rubbish, under the name of folly, the wisdom of all the great and all the holy men that the world ever saw, and discovered that nature had never provided a seat at her feast, except for those human beings who came into the world with silver spoons in their mouths?—(laughter and cheers);—for that is the Alpha and the Omega of the wisdom which has devised and contrived the new poor-law." The speaker then continued in the same strain, observing that God had said nothing about silver spoons, but had declared that all should be fed; that Malthus had discovered, in the 19th century, that God's truth was a lie of the devil, and that no man had a right to live except he had property. The people of Huddersfield, the clergy

and with one unanimous shout assured the house of commons that they would not have this law. Over and over again had they done this, ay, in the teeth of the soldiery, with drawn swords and pistols and carbines, and he knew not what. In all their public meetings there had never been but one hand held up in favour of the new poor-law. The chairman, at the last meeting, said "I think I saw a hand; do let me see it again;" and the people said, "He's ashamed of himself, and has run away." He stated that Lord Brougham, in answer to a question from the Bishop of Exeter, or Lord Eldon, had distinctly stated that it was not intended, under the new poor-law, to separate man and wife; that the law gave no such power; and that no man in his senses would ever have thought of such inhuman cruelty. He then repeated his statements as to the London police at Huddersfield; talked of "Billy Moore," the postmaster, as a government spy, employed to watch his motions; and said that that gentleman ought to have been hung long ago. He declared that the people of Huddersfield were more determined than ever to resist this law. They would not quarrel with the soldiers, though the whigs wanted them to do so. One of the officers had told him, that he never saw a more peaceable people than those of Huddersfield; and the private soldiers had said to him, that the poor people wanted bread, not lead or steel. He believed that nothing more could be done in Huddersfield with reference to the new poor-law, excepting the apprehension of himself, and that event he earnestly hoped might very soon take place. It was his opinion, that the whigs would drive the people of England mad.—("Ay, to be sure they will.") He knew that hunger and insult blended together, would, if they were allowed time to operate, be parents of daggers and of torches.—("Time it was begun.") The people of England were not such fools as to think of fighting the army; but he feared they might be so mad as to copy after the ministers of her majesty, and privately lie in wait for the oppressors.—(Loud cries of "Hear, hear.") The people ought to tell her majesty, that they no longer had any confidence in her ministers, and would not have confidence in any ministers friendly to the new poor-law bill. I know, said he, in conclusion, that the oppression of this accursed law is handed over to us on the bayonets and sabres of the soldiery. I know that this horrible oppression is now sinking deep into the heart of Britain; and though the lion may have been sleeping under the laudanum of reform, they know that he now begins to feel his limbs quivering;—they see him, in imagination, rising from his lethargy; and I know that when the men of wealth,—I know that when the ministers of her majesty look at him—for he is their master—they will feel that if he does rise in the majesty of his strength, they will be as chaff before the wind."—(Great cheering.)

Document Eight - Transcript

An extract from a transcription of a newspaper report from Manchester of an “anti-poor law convention” involving various speakers including famous names in the anti-poor law movement such as Richard Oastler and Feargus O’Connor (the Chartist leader).

Archive reference: MH12/6039
Date of Letter: February 1839
Poor Law Union: Keighley Poor Law Union

Mr. OASTLER was received with enthusiastic cheering. When the applause had subsided, in a most solemn and emphatic tone he spoke as follows: - Mr Chairman and fellow-countrymen, - In appearing before you on this occasion, I beg that you will consider that you are listening to a man who may not, perhaps, very often have again to address his fellow-subjects at public meetings on any occasion. I beg, therefore, that you will be attentive to what I say, because I do know that the government of this country is now thirsting for my blood, and I do know that I will not run out of the cause. – (Hear, hear.) The expressions which I have made use of with reference to the new poor-law, and with reference to the factory question, have alarmed men in high places; and they thought that I have been the organ of incendiarism – that I have been the promoter of assassination. They have thought it to be their duty, in accordance with the oaths which they have sworn to her majesty the queen – they have thought it to be their duty, in season and out of season, to put down such a turbulent wretch as myself..... The people ought to tell her majesty, that they no longer had any confidence in her ministers friendly to the new poor-bill. I know, said he, in conclusion, that the oppression of this accursed law is handed over to us on the bayonets and sabres of the soldiery. I know that this horrible oppression is now sinking deep into the heart of Britain; and though the lion may have been sleeping under the laudanum of reform, they know that he now begins to feel his limbs quivering - they see him, in imagination, rising from his lethargy; and I know that when the men of wealth,- I know that when the ministers of her majesty look at him - for he is their master – they will feel that if he does rise in the majesty of his strength, they will be as burned tow in his paws, - ay, “will be as chaff before the wind.” – (Great cheering.)