

## **FEASTS OF THE GLUTTONOUS.**

**EDWARDS**, protagonist and spy.

**THISTLEWOOD**, leader of the Cato street conspirators.

**CLEEVES**, fictional. Ex conspirator.

**BRUNT**, shoemaker and conspirator.

**HARRISON**, ex-lifeguard, conspirator

**DAVIDSON**, ex cabinet maker for Lord Harrowby, conspirator.

**OFFICERS**, non speaking.

**MOLLY**, Adams' wife.

**ADAMS**, Mollys' husband, conspirator.

This play takes place in London 1820, following the death of King George III. At the end of the 18th century and in the first three decades of the 19th, Britain was still predominantly agricultural. But society was changing. Rural living was giving way to industrialisation and urbanisation. To add to these upheavals, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars - which had lasted for more than two decades - unemployed soldiers and sailors began to flood the labour market.

This newly industrialised world produced inflation, food shortages and new patterns of factory employment, and it was during this time of social change that a climate of discontent and radicalism developed. A series of riots and industrial unrest occurred. The government responded with a series of repressive measures, including the Combination Acts of 1799, which forbade the gathering of working men with a common purpose.

In 1820, a small group led by Arthur Thistlewood, a prominent radical in London, protested against the harshness of these measures. The group became known as the Cato Street conspirators, after the street near Edgware Road, London, where they last met. Thistlewood's group aimed to overthrow the government by assassinating the entire Cabinet while they were dining at Lord Harrowby's home in Grosvenor Square.

-The National Archives

*The stage is divided into two platforms. The lower platform is on a periaktos which is used to show the change of set quickly.*

## **SCENE 1 - WHITE HART**

*Stage right, Public House.*

*The room is filled with wooden tables and benches scattered in front of a fireplace.*

*Men and women fill the house.*

*A group of men sitting downstage right makes most of the commotion.*

*We see **ADAMS** downstage left, he is leaning against the bar reading the daily newspaper.*

**DAVIES** You still working Robert or you wanting a drink?

**ADAMS** *keeps his eyes on the newspaper, he is making notes on the pages.*

**ADAMS** That's alright thanks John, I'm waiting on someone

**EDWARDS** *enters.*

*Ah, here he is now*

**ADAMS** *folds up his newspaper and stuffs into his belt as he greets **EDWARDS***

**EDWARDS** Ah Adams there you are!, how are you?

**ADAMS** Just happy to be out

**EDWARDS** I honestly didn't expect you to keep the date

**ADAMS** Neither did I but here I am

**EDWARDS** Here you are!, Come on, I'll introduce you

***ADAMS** follows **EDWARDS** as he walks towards the table of men.*

**EDWARDS** Good evening gentlemen, This is Robert Adams, the man I was telling you about

***HARRISON** stands and shake hands*

**HARRISON** You were once in the Life Guards?

**ADAMS** No, I was not, but I originally belonged to the Blues

***THISTLEWOOD** shakes **ADAMS** hand*

**THISTLEWOOD** I presume you are a good swordsman?

**ADAMS** I could use a sword to defend myself, but I can not say I am as good a swordsman as I was some years ago, I haven't used a sword or other arms for quite some time.

***EDWARDS** scans the table that is full of empty glasses*

**EDWARDS** Another round?

***THISTLEWOOD** signals to **EDWARDS** to buy more drinks, **EDWARDS** walks towards the bar*

**BRUNT** Myself and Adams have met before, I didn't know you knew Edwards.

**THISTLEWOOD** to **ADAMS**

Please sit

***ADAMS** takes a seat.*

**ADAMS** Yes well I met him when I was handing out pamphlets last month. I was meant to meet him for a drink to talk more about them

**BRUNT** Adams here has just spent a month inside

**DAVIDSON** Oh yeah? What was that for?

**ADAMS** Debt

*The men let out various groans.*

How is it you all know one another?

**DAVIDSON** Through Brunt mostly, in his trade he meets a lot of new people

**ADAMS** Oh yes, I'm a shoemaker myself

**DAVIDSON** Oh a shoe and pamphlet maker? Yes well, we were all pretty much introduced through Brunt, I'm a cabinet maker, Harrison here is a baker and ex-lifeguard and Edwards, well Edwards just turned up one day

**HARRISON** Yeah, you should have seen him when we first met, penniless and dressed like a poor man, now look at him

**THISTLEWOOD** You have no complaints when it comes to him bringing in the rounds Harrison

**HARRISON** Well no, if we could all inherit our money I'd have no quarrels

**ADAMS** *to THISTLEWOOD* And yourself?

**THISTLEWOOD** Well/

*/EDWARDS returns with the drinks*

**EDWARDS** I say we make a toast

*EDWARDS lifts his glass up*

To the death of the King

**HARRISON** Oh I will drink to that!

*The rest of the men lift their glasses and drink*