Improving Chiswick
1858-1883

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In loving memory

Grace and Charlie Woolgar

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Tracey Logan,
September, 2016.

Illustrations and Graphs

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Abbreviations

AG	The Acton Gazette
AVM	Acton Vestry Minutes (ELHC)
BHO	British History Online
BNA	British Newspaper Archive
CIC Mins	Minutes of the Chiswick Improvement Commissioners (CLSL)
CLSL	Chiswick Local Studies Library
CVM	Chiswick Vestry Minutes (CLSL)
ELHC	Ealing Local History Centre
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
MOH	Medical Officer of Health
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
TCT	The Chiswick Times
TNA	The National Archives
VCH	The Victoria County History of the Counties of England
WLO	West London Observer

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Chapter 1 Introduction

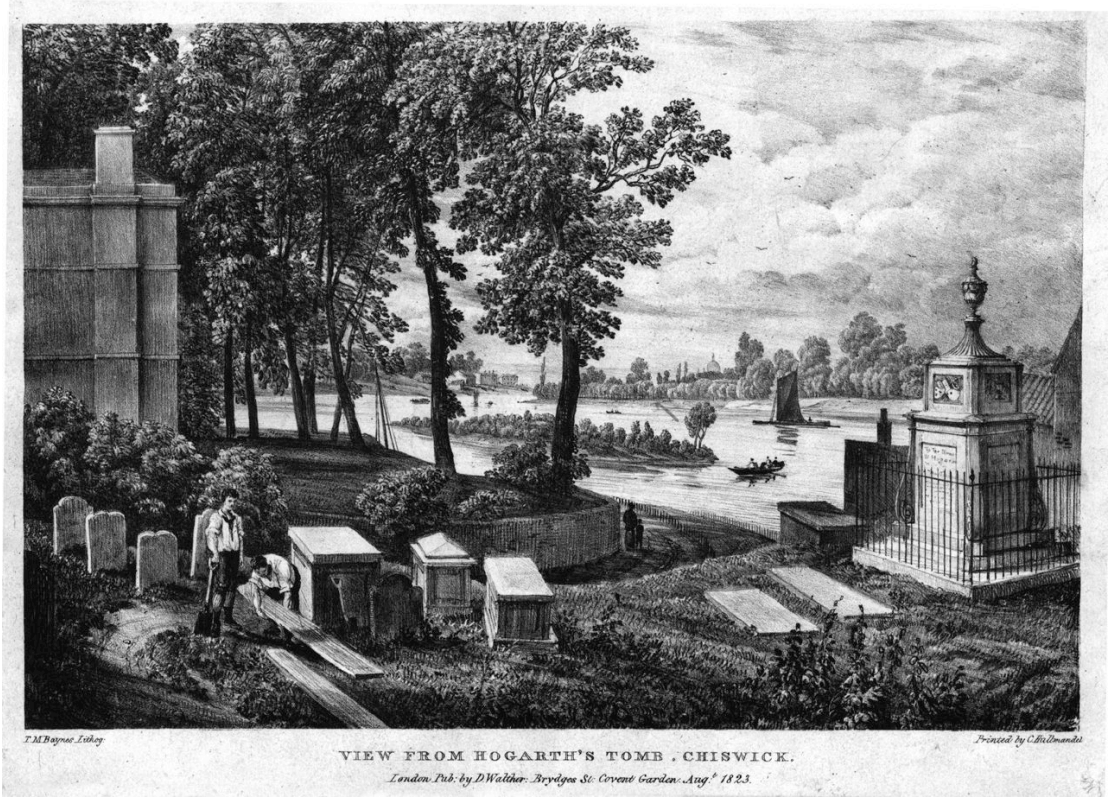

Figure 1 River view from Chiswick church graveyard with ferry, sailing barge, and St Paul's Cathedral on the horizon.

Usually historians look at places like Chiswick from a different perspective. For the great dome of St Paul's cathedral is here barely visible on the horizon, not central to our picture of nineteenth century life in and near the growing Metropolis. Instead, our vantage point is St Nicholas's church graveyard, of Chiswick Eyot and rural river traffic. To the left the vestry wall, behind which so many important decisions were taken that would change the course of parish history, including that creating the Chiswick Improvement Commission. To the right a great artist's tomb draws one's eye, hinting at the richness of Chiswick life of which residents are justly proud. Normally, Chiswick would not really be in the picture of life in or near nineteenth century London, except to describe extravagant parties held at Chiswick

House by the fabulously wealthy 6th 'Bachelor' Duke of Devonshire, or perhaps to discuss the historical significance of the Queen Anne-style Bedford Park Estate, each bookending the Ages of Equipoise and Reform locally with incarnations of 'Grand Whiggery' and 'Garden Suburbanism.'[1] But what of Chiswick in the intervening period, vastly overshadowed and interfered with by that voracious beast, the Metropolis which was, by mid-century, the greatest city in the world?

This essay dwells on a parish which barely registers on the historiographical horizon, taking a different view not merely to buck a trend but to understand something of an increasingly widespread phenomenon in a nation, any nation, that is changing from mainly rural to mainly urban. Overwhelmingly, the biggest thing that happened to parish life in England between 1800 and 1900 was the experience of waves of engulfment, incorporation, assimilation, almost colonization of towns, villages and hamlets near every city, and the demographic, socio-economic, environmental and public health consequences that wrought. Here, in a case study of a small parish connected by trade and free movement of people to a large and powerful place, we will follow a tale of inclusion and resistance, followed by exclusion and resistance (with repercussions), followed by more resistance – this time internal, and of the richness of parish life in a place quite close to the Metropolis.

The Chiswick Improvement Commission was created in 1858 and this thesis will argue that its board members, like the absent Duke of Devonshire's mid-century tenants at Chiswick House, saw their job as nothing more than keeping the place ticking over. It will be shown how, Canute-like, in the 1860s, 1870s and early 1880s, Improvement Commissioners tried

[1] W.L. Burn, *The Age of Equipoise, A study of the mid-Victorian generation*, (London, 1964), pp.1-54, for the age of Reform see Chapter 6.

to hold back the tide of local change but, as across the nation, it roared towards them and they were consumed by it. Their resistance was not so surprising given the circumstances of their creation; in a middle class revolt against an unjust tax levied on the parish by the parasitic (for Chiswick and many other parishes) Metropolitan Board of Works. But as often with protest movements, having gained power Commissioners knew not what to do with it, dithering for decades over how to stem the rising flood of parish faeces.

Here is where the nineteenth century's 'Age of Experts' has a case to answer. In a sense it intimidated local builders into thinking they were incompetent to fix their local sewerage problem. Turning it into water clean enough to meet new Thames anti-pollution standards was certainly a tall order, and by the mid-nineteenth century experts were supremely divided over how best to do it. Ealing got on with it twenty years before Chiswick did, reaping the public health benefits sooner, while exploiting treated Ealing excrement as building cement; waste not, want not.[2] Chiswick did not have Ealing's drive and suffered as a result. The Improvement Commission's failure was in choosing the wrong kind of expert; no trusted technical champion to roll up his sleeves and get things done, and it showed.

So Chiswick's Improvement Commission may have been the first urban form of local government in outer west London, but that really overstates its role. The Commission had no ambitions to improve anything and, for the most part, lived down to those low expectations. It just about kept the parish from ruin by maintaining roads, lighting streets where absolutely necessary, and charging fees to property owners wishing to connect new houses to the parish's decaying drains. Towards the end of its life not only was Chiswick

[2] *Chiswick Improvement Commissioners' Minutes* (hereafter *CIC Mins*), August 21, 1872, Chiswick Local Studies Library (hereafter CLSL).

swimming in sewerage, but so were the Prince of Wales's children; in the ornamental lake at Chiswick house where they were staying.[3]

Ultimately it was social legislation and the assertiveness, and rising community-wide expectations, of the Second Reform period which led the Commission to deliver much needed Chiswick improvements. These gathered pace when low-interest government loans became available for public works and, reluctantly, the Commission borrowed over £80,000. This did not hurt it nearly so much as it hurt Chiswick's ratepayers, who had to pay off the loans and who launched a ratepayer's revolt to bring the Commission down.

Every effort will be made, here, to show where national themes intersect with local events. For example, there are moments in the Improvement Commission's minutes, where democratizing pressures and the voices of previously silent classes of people become discernable. They hint, in ways other commentaries have not, at the profound effect on Chiswick life of new class stratification and working class aspiration. By their final years, Improvement Commissioners were forced to accept their responsibilities towards Chiswick's *residuum*, its very poorest inhabitants. Beyond the provision of Poor Relief this is something that had not concerned them earlier.

The story of the ending of an era is just as important as its beginning. We are blessed, from 1880, with detailed newspaper reports of Improvement Commission meetings and other cultural and political Chiswick affairs. These offer blow-by-blow accounts of the

[3] *CIC Mins*, August 19, 1874.

Commission's demise. Through press reporting we can understand, in ways that Improvement Commission minutes mask, what really happened. And we can begin to understand why it was that some politically, as well as civically-minded, local men survived a cull to serve on Chiswick's new Local Board, when others were retired.

A note on terminology that may surprise some, is needed. This thesis will not describe Chiswick as a suburb. This is because, as Saint has put it, '[E]veryone has an idea of a suburb, can recognise and feel his or her version of the thing. At that point, unanimity ends.'[4] The term is so ill-defined and pregnant with diverse meanings that it is considered to hamper our case study. This is an essay about a specific place across more than half a century. We are going to run sufficiently high risks of generalization and misdirection without willingly taking on more through such an amorphous concept. Chiswick, in the quarter century of the Improvement Commission's incumbency, turned from 'a rich village to one of the poorest,'[5] and a place where riverside engineering works built the world's fastest torpedo ships. No 'Pootervilles' with their leafy Acacia Avenues did that.[6] Chiswick was a filthy, dirty and increasingly noisy place during the Improvement Commission's lifetime, and this was the theatre of its inaction. The fact that the Metropolis was nearby and could not be ignored does not mean that Chiswick's inhabitants felt defined by it.

Little has been published about Chiswick as a whole at any period of its life. It is not a big place, though it has many useful points of interest which can be found in Draper's *Chiswick,*

[4] A. Saint, 'Introduction, the Quality of the London Suburb,' in J. Honer (ed.) *London Suburbs*, (London, 1999).
[5] 'A Brief Biography, Lawford William Torriano Dale,' *The Chiswick Times , hereafter TCT*, May 6 1898, Newspaper Clippings Folder 1[1], p.25, CLSL.
[6] Mr Charles Pooter, the fictional City Clerk, suburban resident and author of G. & W. Grossmith, *The Diary of a Nobody*, (Bristol, 1919), p.15.

[7] and Clegg's *Chiswick Past*.[8] There is also *The Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal,* which abounds with painstakingly-researched and lovingly-crafted articles on the area, some of which are cited here. Finally, and of more use to this essay for their deep research and breadth of scope, are four unpublished Masters theses only one of which, Wisdom's 'The Making of a West London Suburb,' is entirely about Chiswick.[9] It is a work of impressive detail and will be frequently cited, along with Jahn's 'Railways and Suburban Development,' to understand Chiswick's mid-to-late nineteenth century changes.[10] Other theses offer useful geographical and socioeconomic context for contemporary west Middlesex.[11]

Histories of Victorian Chiswick frequently set it in relation to the Metropolis, but is that how the men in St Nicholas's graveyard saw things? Possibly not. So for their sake we will refer to Chiswick as a place, a parish, a village, or a town, and try to judge it on its own terms. And it is to the very particular and unexpected terms on which the Improvement Commission was formed, that we now turn.

[7] W. Draper, *Chiswick; a new edition of the fifty-year-old classic* (London, 1973).
[8] G. Clegg, *Chiswick Past*, (London, 1995).
[9] J. Wisdom, 'The Making of a West London Suburb: Housing in Chiswick 1861-1914,' (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1975-6).
[10] M.A. Jahn, 'Railways and Suburban Development. Outer West London: 1850-1900' (unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of London, 1970).
[11] M. Rees, 'The Economic and Social Development of Extra-Metropolitan Middlesex During the Nineteenth Century (1800-1914)' (unpublished MSc.(Econ) Thesis, London School of Economics, 1954), and D. Chambers, 'The Valley of the Stamford Brook, shaping a peri-urban landscape,' (unpublished MSc Thesis, University of Oxford, 2015).

Chapter 2 Chiswick and the Metropolitan Board of Works, origins of the Improvement Commission.

> '…when the spread of London, octopus-like, had begun to draw Hammersmith and Chiswick into the Great Wen, the rapid building of houses called for a new control. A body of Chiswick Improvement Commissioners, elected by ballot, was set on foot.'
>
> W. Draper, *Chiswick (1923)*[1]

Such has been the mythology surrounding Chiswick's Improvement Commission. Warwick Draper's misguided comments on its history were swallowed and regurgitated by subsequent chroniclers of Chiswick, demonstrating the historiographical hazards of secondary sources.[2] Chiswick's vestry minutes were clear on the Improvement Commission's *raison d'être.* This chapter uses the Clerk's first hand testimony to tell its true creation story, which did not rest on house-building control. [3] The Chiswick Improvement Act was a failed attempt to escape a crippling tax by the Metropolitan Board of Works.[4] Though it professed desires to build a wharf and gas works, these were just smokescreens the Act's true intent:

> '…to release the parish from the debt of £5,344-10-5 and to recover the sum of £1,105-12-11 already paid... This Bill was … opposed on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works… and in consequence of opposition the money clauses were struck out. The Bill was passed with the exception of those Clauses and the Act… came into operation on the 28th day of June 1858.'[5]

It is important to correct this aspect of Chiswick's history to remove Draper's mirage of a

[1] W. Draper, *Chiswick*, p. 168.
[2] e.g. G. Clegg, *Chiswick Past* (London, 1995), p.75.
[3] *Chiswick Vestry Minutes* (hereafter *CVM*), January 27, 1859.
[4] The Board of Works was created under the Metropolis Local Management Act (1855), hereafter (18 & 19 Vict.) c.120, the Chiswick Improvement Act (1858), hereafter (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69. *Justis.com* is the source of all legislation cited herein (URL in Bibliography).
[5] *CVM* August 20 and November 7, 1857.

late-1850s Chiswick housing boom. Wisdom has shown that it started a decade later.[6] It is also important to tell the true story for historians elsewhere in London. Chiswick was not alone in its bruising encounter with the Metropolitan Board of Works. It coloured the development of Chiswick's local government and dominated parish proceedings for years. Other parishes, from Surbiton to Willesden and Camberwell, also reacted in different ways to the challenges posed by the Board of Works.[7] We will focus here on what the dispute cost Chiswick, not only in legal fees but in parish identity, amid the challenges of transition from agricultural to urban life, in the ages of experts, and Reform.

The origins of Chiswick's dispute with the Metropolitan Board of Works lie in its involvement with another, earlier, sewer authority: Edwin Chadwick's Metropolitan Commission of Sewers. On 29th March 1849, it had made Chiswick party to a *grand projet*, to upgrade metropolitan sanitation for nineteenth century needs.[8] But when the Sewers Commission ended in failure and deep debt, the Board of Works forced Chiswick to contribute handsomely to the repayment, though it would not help Chiswick with its drains. Such a 'gross injustice' led Chiswick's ratepayers to revolt, to the passing of the Chiswick Improvement Act and to seven further years of legal wrangling.[9] It was only in 1865, when similar legal action by the parish of Camberwell failed, that Chiswick capitulated.[10] Despite this, it took Chiswick ten more years to pay off its debt. At the heart of this dispute was the issue of inclusion and then exclusion from the Metropolis. So who started it?

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[6] J. Wisdom, 'The Making of a West London Suburb,' p.12.
[7] Surbiton passed an Improvement Act in 1855, (18 & 19 Vict.) c.36. Willesden fought the Board of Works for access to the Ranelagh Sewer, 'Metropolitan Board of Works v Local Board of Willesden,' *Local Board Papers 1874-1883*, Brent Archives, 19792/PRI/3/7, pp.129-136. Camberwell, like Chiswick, challenged the financial demand in: 'Pew v Metropolitan Board of Works,' *CIC Mins* March 22, 1865.
[8] Date given in *CVM* January 27, 1859, see also *Minutes of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers, 17th October 1849-6th December 1850*, p.557, London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA) MCS/483.
[9] *CVM,* August 20, 1857.
[10] *CIC Mins*, March 22, 1865.

Chiswick and the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers (1850-1855)

Edwin Chadwick was not exactly to blame for the Chiswick Improvement Act, but his botched utilitarian scheme to bring modern sanitation to four hundred and fifty square miles of the Thames Valley created the conditions in Chiswick for it. Chadwick, the influential government servant, former Secretary to the Poor Law Commission, was convinced – as were most people in the 1840s and 1850s - that smells, or miasmas, from bad drains not only caused most diseases, including cholera, but social malaise, too. The Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act he crafted and had passed was a precursor to much centralizing government legislation seeking to bring modern governance and health standards to parishes across England and Wales.[11] Much of that legislation was permissive, but this Act was not. It covered not only London's urban centre but:

> '…about 150 separate villages and hamlets… to which the work of improvement is unknown… many of these approach the dimensions and population of not inconsiderable towns… exhibiting conditions of neglect and consequent depravity, and abounding with sources of malaria and disease, which are scarcely to be excelled in the heart of the Metropolis. '[12]

Under Chadwick's new Sewers Commission Chiswick was subsumed, along with parts of Acton, Ealing, Willesden, Fulham and Hammersmith, into a new administrative entity called the Fulham and Hammersmith Sewer District (Figure 2).[13] It charged rates upon member parishes for sanitary improvements.

[11] Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act (1848), hereafter (11 & 12 Vict.) c.112.
[12] 'Report to the Survey Committee on the Extension of the Survey, etc, 18 October, 1848.', *MCS Printed Minutes Book*, Vol 1, LMA/MCS/481.
[13] *Minutes of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers, 17th October 1849-6th December 1850*, p.557.

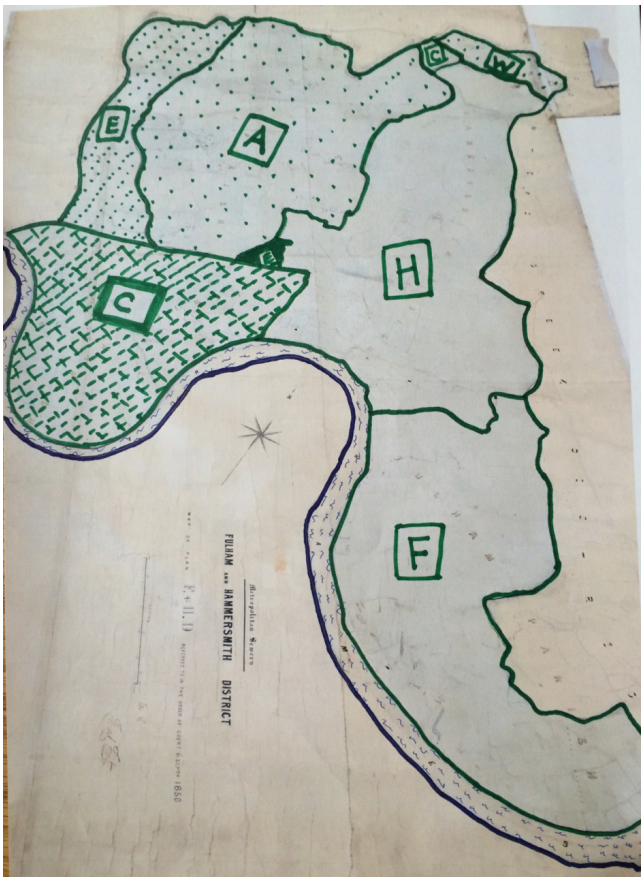

Figure 2 Metropolitan Sewers Fulham and Hammersmith District, highlighting all of Chiswick (crosshatched 'C'), parts of Fulham (F), Hammersmith (H), Ealing (E), Acton (A), a detached portion of Chelsea (C), Willesden (W), and the river Thames.[14]

Chiswick's ratepayers quickly felt short-changed by the Sewers Commission, which spent much money on planning and little on improving their drains. It also spent their rates on drainage in other parishes. Chiswick's were not the only ratepayers with a grievance against the Commission; many others felt similarly.[15] Its systematic approach seemed to lack urgency in the face of repeated and devastating cholera epidemics.[16] The Commission funded a major mapping effort by the Ordnance Survey to produce detailed charts of London, with '[I]ndications of Levels, and Particulars of Sewers and underground Works, and of the

[14] MCS/PR26, LMA.
[15] D. Owen, *The Government of Victorian London 1855-1889, The Metropolitan Board of Works, the Vestries, and the City Corporation*, (Cambridge and London, 1982), p.32.
[16] European cholera pandemics struck Britain in 1830-2, 1847-9, 1853-4 and 1865-6, A. Hardy, 'Cholera, Quarantine and the English Preventive System, 1850-1895,' *Medical History*, 37 (1993), pp. 250-269, p. 250.

Surface'.[17] Figure 3 shows its surveyors charts of Chiswick's Turnham Green Terrace. These would be essential when the difference between a free-flowing or clogged sewer lay in the downward slope of its pipes and the avoidance of subterranean obstructions. But a 'quick and dirty' approach would have suited Chiswick's ratepayers better and they quickly showed their displeasure at the lack of local drainage improvement.

In 1853 and 1855, several leading Chiswick residents defaulted on their rates, including the Churchwarden Jonathan Clark. When they were taken to court over it, the case attracted much interest, according to the *West London Observer*. Counsel for the ratepayers, Mr Serjeant Thomas, summarized their grievance: although the Sewers Commission had levied four rates on the parish totaling £1200 [sic] 'it had done little or nothing for Chiswick… [which] was made part of a District in 1849. Was it that it should be drained properly, or that it should be rated only? '[18] A letter from Mr Clark, the leading *refusenik*, was read to the Court. Two years earlier he had been summonsed for refusing to pay rates because the Sewers Commission had not replaced an inadequate sewer pipe draining the populous working class district of Chiswick New Town. Now, in the shadow of a deadly local Typhus outbreak, ratepayers wanted urgent action. Two sewer outlets into the Thames, one opposite Chiswick Mall, were thought to be responsible. Although, said Clark, the harm was: '… somewhat remedied by your honourable board having caused [one] sewer to be carried out some distance into the river, by means of iron pipes. It was hoped that the same would have been done to the one opposite the vicar's house, but that remains as it was before.'[19] The Sewers' Commission's failure left the vestry's Highway Surveyors with the £50 cost of improving

[17] (11 & 12 Vict.) c.112, S.32.
[18] 'The Commissioner of Sewers v the Inhabitants of Chiswick', *WLO,* December 8, 1855. p.5, British Newspaper Archive, hereafter BNA, (URL in Bibliography). The full sum was £1414, *CVM* January 27, 1859.
[19] Ibid.

those sewers, despite feeling they had already paid the Commission for it. Chiswick ratepayers were very dissatisfied. [20]

The Sewers Commission's response was to state that it would be too expensive to comply with the requests of Chiswick's ratepayers and, anyway, that the money had already been spent elsewhere 'in the Fulham and Hammersmith district, in which the parish of Chiswick is situate...' Three weeks later the Sewers Commission transferred its powers to the new Metropolitan Board of Works.[21] This new body's geographical reach was smaller and it would not be responsible for Chiswick's drains. But if the vestry had expected to escape further metropolitan charges, it was mistaken. Though in 1855 Chiswick's vestry had expressed no desire to pass an Improvement Act, what happened over the following two years made this seem like its only option.

[20] Ibid.
[21] D. Owen, *Government of Victorian London*, p. 32

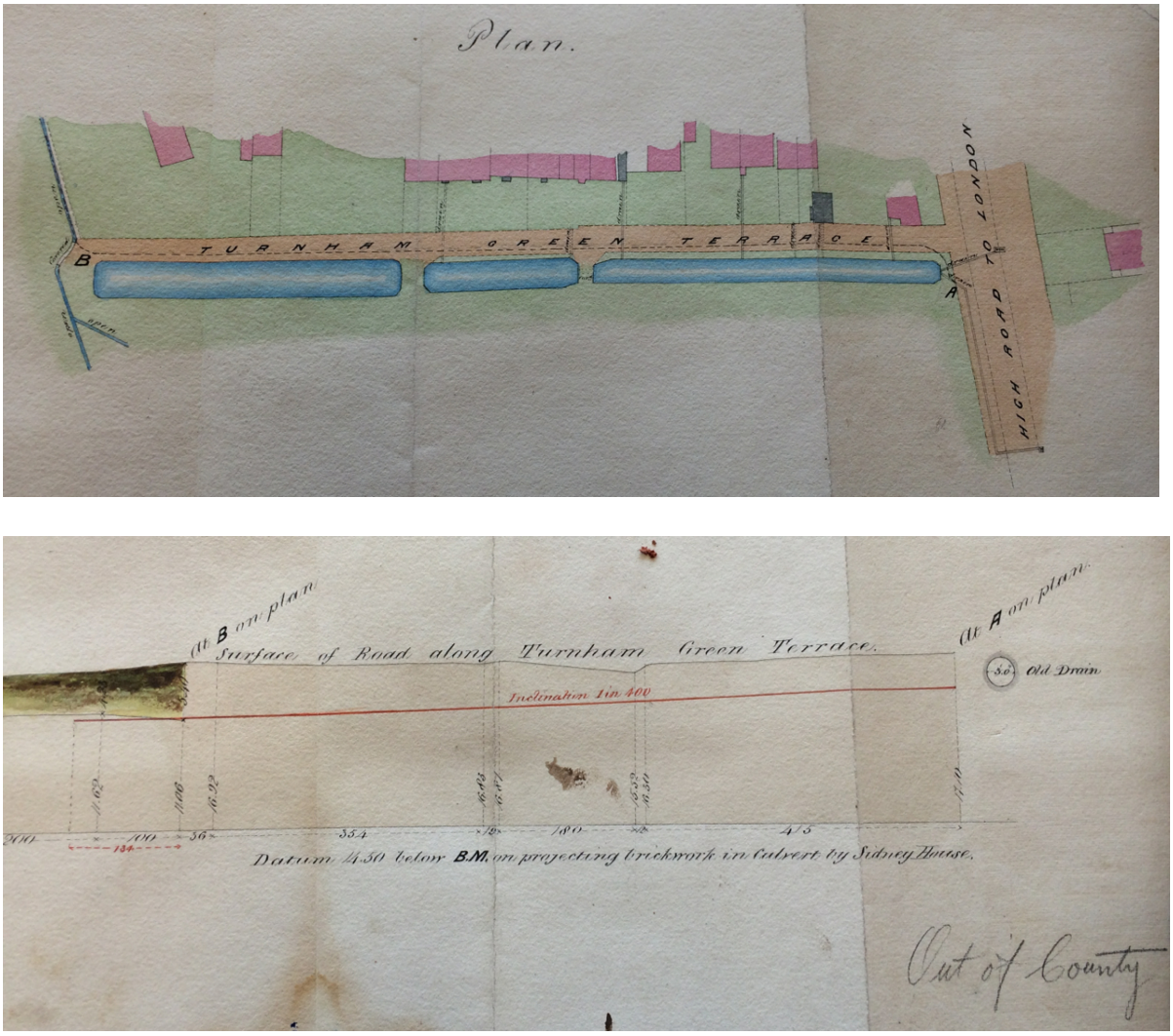

Figure 3 Plan and section of Turnham Green Terrace, Chiswick, showing buildings, roads, ditches, surface terrain, inclination and location of existing drains 'A' and 'B' (October 3, 1850). [22]

Chiswick and the Metropolitan Board of Works

'We are on the eve of great events, as far as Parochial matters are concerned... What the result may be, we cannot for an instant presume to predict.'

West London Observer, October 20, 1855[23]

The Metropolitan Board of Works, whose Chief Engineer Joseph Bazalgette built London's iconic intercepting sewer system, had a clear idea of the population it served and that did

[22] *Contracts Volume 3, Metropolitan Commission of Sewers*, LMA/MCS/202/3/26.
[23] 'Address', *WLO*, October 20, 1855, p.4.

not include Chiswick's. The Board of Works' footprint was just 117 square miles, a third of the size of its predecessor and Figure 4 shows how the metropolitan sewers area shrank as a result. Chiswick was no longer metropolitan Figure 5. [24]

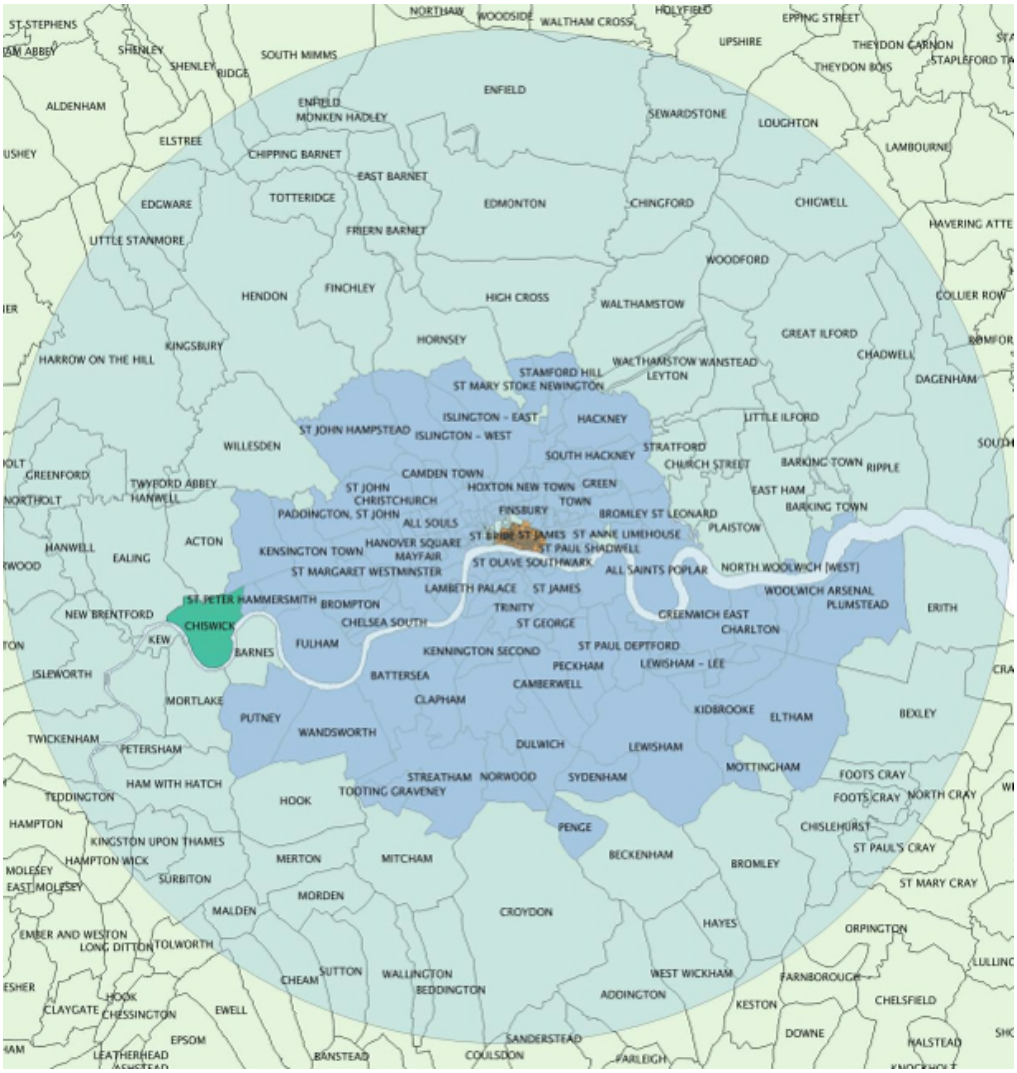

Figure 4 Comparison of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers' remit (pale blue circle) with the Metropolitan Board of Works', 1856-1889 (darker blue patch). Features Chiswick (green), river Thames (white) and City of London (orange) for orientation purposes. [25]

[24] Though still in the Metropolitan Police, which extended to 12 miles from Charing Cross, Metropolitan Police Act (1829), hereafter (10 Geo. 4) c.64, S.34.

[25] The Metropolitan Commission of Sewers' remit was 12 miles from St. Paul's Cathedral, (11 & 12 Vict) c.112, S.1. Metropolitan Board of Works remit is given in (18 & 19 Vict.) c.120, Schedules A, B & C. GIS Maps created by R. Szwagrzak for this thesis, using QGIS, www.QGIS.org, and two data sets: N. Burton, J. Westwood & P. Carter, *GIS of the Ancient Parishes of England and Wales, 1500-1850,* and the gazetteer from R. J. P. Kain & R. R. Oliver, *Historic Parishes of England and Wales: an Electronic Map of Boundaries before 1850 with a Gazetteer and Metadata* (full citations in Bibliography).

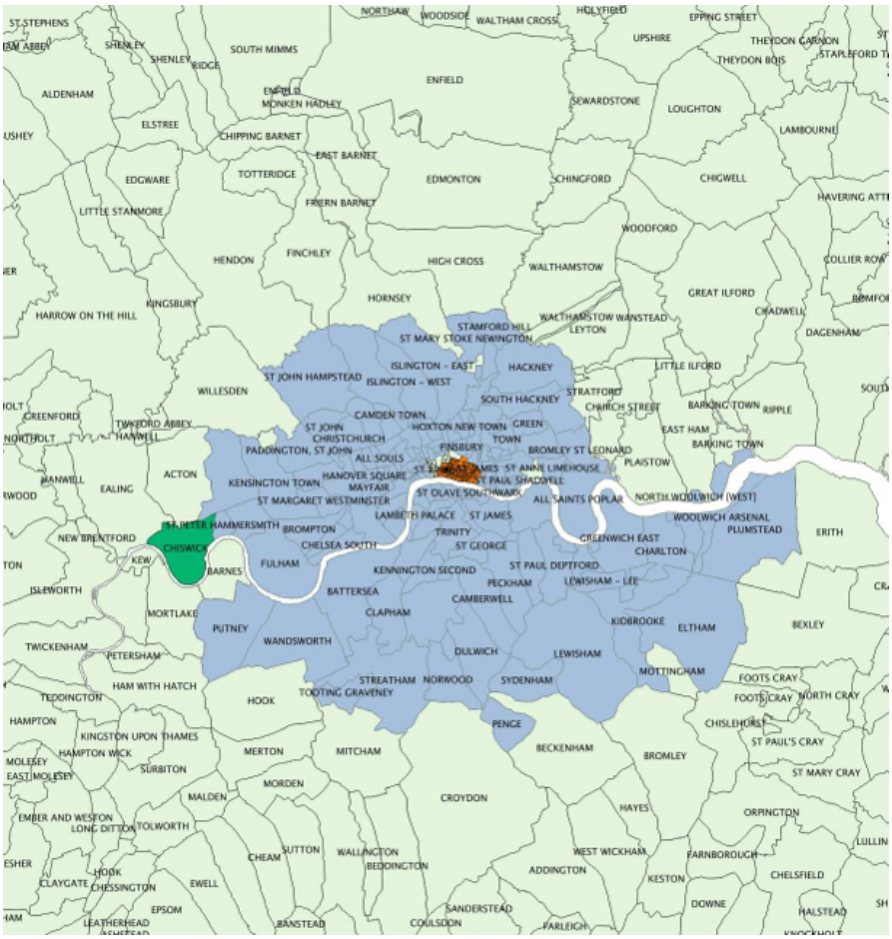

Figure 5 Metropolitan Board of Works remit (blue), with Chiswick (Green), river Thames (white) and City of London (orange). [26]

Chiswick was now a footstep outside the Metropolis, Figure 5, which did not appear to concern its vestry. What did bother it was the large precept (invoice) it received from the Board of Works in March of 1857.[27] It was for £931 17s, the first instalment of a total charge of £5,534 10s 5d. This was twice the amount Chiswick collected in Poor Rates, and an unanticipated liability for part of the Sewers Commission's legacy of debt. Chiswick had to pay simply because it was part of the Fulham and Hammersmith Sewer District, not for work done in the parish.[28] What happened next is detailed in Chiswick's vestry minutes. [29]

[26] Ibid., Metropolitan Commission of Sewers footprint now removed.
[27] *CVM,* March 25, 1857.
[28] Ibid., August 20, 1857.
[29] Ibid., January 27, 1859.

The vestry was convinced that the Board of Works had made a mistake and instead of paying its precept, hoped to have it quashed after explaining its grievance to Sir Benjamin Hall. Hall was the architect of the 1855 Act which brought the Board of Works into being and was now Chief Commissioner of Works. Chiswick's delegation to meet him included its Churchwardens, members of its Highways Board (now responsible for sewerage management), and the Middlesex MP Lord Ebury. Despite their protestations, Sir Benjamin Hall: '… refused to give redress alleging as his reason that we were too late and should have come to him when he was preparing the Act. '[30] Chiswick responded with a decision that would change parish life for decades. It sought a Local Act of Parliament, ostensibly to vest responsibility for Chiswick's drains and sewers in a board of Improvement Commissioners but which was really an instrument of tax evasion. It was hoped, thus, to transfer responsibility for the charges away from the vestry and place its ratepayers beyond the Board of Works' reach. But Board of Works lawyers spotted the ruse and intervened to remove the financial clauses.[31] It then appointed a rate collector to charge ratepayers directly, circumventing Chiswick's obstructive vestry.[32]

Chiswick's Improvement Act was passed towards the end of the era of Local and Private Bills. By 1835 around 300 such Acts had been passed to supplement the powers of existing vestries or town councils.[33] But by the mid-nineteenth century new alternatives were offered by 'permissive' forms of government legislation, offering optional, pre-drafted

[30] *CVM* January 27, 1859.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., also *Rate Book, vol. 94: Chiswick, 9 June 1858,* LMA/MBW/2072.
[33] J.A. Chandler, *Explaining Local Government, Local Government in Britain Since 1800* (Manchester and New York, 2007), pp. 14-15.

clauses which saved vestries the legal costs of bespoke Acts. The permissive Local Government Act of 1858, passed just six weeks after Chiswick's Improvement Act was an example of this.[34]

Seemingly important sections in Chiswick's Improvement Act professed a desire to operate a commercial wharf with draw dock and cranes and to build or lease a gasworks.[35] Yet neither of these things happened. Instead, one of the Improvement Commission's first acts was to negotiate rates for street lighting with the Brentford Gas Company.[36] Then, less than a year later, it decided that:

> 'Upon taking into consideration as to the expediency of exercising the powers contained in the Chiswick Improvement Act, for the purchase of taking on Lease a Gas Works, and for the erection of a Wharf at Chiswick… in the opinion of this Board it is inexpedient at present to exercise such powers.' [37]

Since, from the passing of the Act, Improvement Commissioners had just three years to build a wharf or gasworks, this resolution rendered those clauses obsolete.[38]

Chiswick's ruse had failed and now the parish not only remained in debt, but eighteen of its leading ratepayers were in charge of parish drains, paving and lighting. They were not experts at this sort of thing. They were five brewers, a farmer, two market gardeners, a nurseryman, the new Vicar, three gentlemen *rentiers*, two lawyers, a schoolmaster, a

[34] Local Government Act (1858), hereafter (21 & 22 Vict.) c.98.
[35] Introduction, (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69.
[36] *CIC Mins*, September 8, 1858.
[37] Ibid., October 14, 1859.
[38] (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69, S.18.

contractor for horses, and a 'roads auditor to London'.[39] Additionally, the Duke of Devonshire was granted an *ex officio* nominee on the Board so long as he held over 200 acres of Chiswick lands. He chose his gardener at Chiswick House, Charles Edmonds, who was a fairly mute Commissioner during his twenty year incumbency, largely operating as an observer. [40]

After the Chiswick Improvement Act

Though out-manoeuvred in Parliament, Chiswick's vestry remained responsible to pay off the Board of Works' precept and fought on. It led parish resistance to the Board of Works rate collector, and offered to defend any parishioner pursued by him.[41] Three months later, rates strikers were in court again. It was crowded, said the *West London Observer*, and the proceedings: '… appeared to excite a deep interest amongst a number of parochial gentlemen belonging to the parishes'.[42] The judge adjourned the case, urging compromise. Six weeks later the Board of Works committed to passing an amendment to the 1855 Act, which would allow it to reapportion Sewers Commission debts more equitably, according to the benefits parishes had received from it.[43] Chiswick ratepayers heard of this 'with great satisfaction' and suspended legal proceedings. [44] In the spirit of cooperation, the vestry made a large payment to the Board of Works, hoping to have it refunded after the Bill's passing.[45]

[39] Names given in the Act, (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69, S.7, professions obtained from *CVM* , also Censuses of 1851 and 1861, Ancestry.co.uk (full URLs in Bibliography), and *Nurserygardeners.com, Gardening in Thames-Side Parishes 1650-1850*, http://nurserygardeners.com, [Accessed 29 May, 2016].
[40] *CIC Mins,* July 21, 1858, and *CIC Mins*, January 16, 1878.
[41] Ibid., August 25, 1858, and 'Parish of Chiswick – Sewers,' *WLO*, August 28, 1858, p.4, BNA.
[42] Ibid., 'Hammersmith Court, Monday & Wednesday,' November 6, 1858, p.4, BNA.
[43] *CVM*, August 27, 1859.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

But that never happened and the dispute did not, as British History Online suggests, end there.[46]

A Deal Dissolved

What had seemed a promising deal fell apart when two Board of Works Bills failed to deliver the promised fair reapportionment of Chiswick's debt.[47] In the course of debates over the second of these, there was a surprising intervention against Chiswick's interests from a member of the Devonshire family, the Whig peer Earl Granville. The Tory peer Lord Ravensworth had proposed a supportive amendment, but it was 'negatived' by Earl Granville and the Tory peer Lord Egerton of Tatton.[48] Chiswick's vestry would be forgiven for a sense of betrayal by Granville's intervention, as he had close family ties to the parish. The 6th Duke of Devonshire had been his uncle and, since the Duke's death, Granville's mother had been staying at Chiswick House with Granville's brother and nephew. The previous month, Earl Granville held a fete there in his role as Chairman of the International Exhibition at Kensington.[49] Yet there was to be no special pleading for Chiswick from him. In country parishes, where silence speaks volumes, no mention of Granville's deed appeared in the Improvement Commission's minutes. But they were gushing about Lord Ravensworth.[50]

[46] 'Chiswick: Local government', *British History Online,* hereafter *BHO* (full citation in Bibliography).
[47] The 1859 Bill contained offered no reapportionment of parish debts. Metropolis Local Management Amendment Bill, 1859, Miscellaneous Original Papers, *MBW (Board) 1856-1870,* LMA/MBW 626
[48] *Hansard* 24 July 1862, Clause 5 ('Sums to be assessed by Metropolitan Board'. http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1862/jul/24/bill-no-219-committee [accessed 1st April 2016]
[49] G. Clegg, *Chiswick House and Gardens, A History* (London, 2011), p.68.
[50] *CIC Mins* July 30, 1862.

Chiswick's legal dispute with the Metropolitan Board of Works lasted until March 1865 and the parish did not fully pay off its debts until 1875.[51] Chiswick abandoned its case against the Board of Works following judgment in a similar case, brought by the parish of Camberwell; the Court of Queens Bench deciding that '… the Metropolitan Board of Works were not bound to apportion the Mortgage debts of the late Commissioners of Sewers according to the benefit derived by each parochial Division comprised within a Sewerage District.' [52] Chiswick's eight-year rebellion was ended. Its legal and parliamentary costs were £2,239.[53]

What did Chiswick's neighbours do? Ealing vestry's Overseer quickly made a special sewer rate of 1s 4d in the pound for houses, and 4d in the pound for lands to pay it off. [54] This almost doubled Ealing's Poor Rate at the time. Acton's vestry consulted Chiswick's solicitor Clerk, Robert Finnis, who advised it to appeal, as Chiswick had. [55] When its appeal failed, Acton ignored the charges and obstructed the Board of Works in its many attempts at collection.[56] When the Board of Works took Acton to court, parishioners formed a defence committee funded by subscription. [57] Acton's stonewalling went on for so long that, by 1873, its vestry had forgotten why it was not paying up. *The Acton Gazette* captured the (almost comical) moment, regarding:

> '… the precept from the Metropolitan Board of Works for sewage works carried out about 17 years ago…."
>
> Mr Croxon asked for information upon this matter

[51] *CVM*, May 1, 1875.
[52] *CIC Mins*, March 22, 1865.
[53] *CIC Mins*, May 18 and September 24, 1859, June 25, 1862, July 3 and November 22, 1865.
[54] *Ealing Vestry Minutes*, August 13,1857, p.316, Ealing Local History Centre, hereafter ELHC.
[55] *Acton, Middlesex. Vestry Minute Book 25 March 1857 – 29th October 1868, No. 84/5*, hereafter *Acton Vestry Minutes* or *AVM,* January 15, 1862, ELHC.
[56] Shown by repeated postponements of discussion, e.g: *AVM*, June 4 and 18, July 2 and 9, and August 6, 1857; January 28, November 18 and December 7, 1858; March 10, 1859; June 21, 1860.
[57] *AVM*, January 2, 1862.

> The Chairman said from what he could learn this was a debt incurred by the parish some 18 or 20 years ago in procuring an outfall for the parish drainage. '
>
> Mr Bovey proposed that the overseers be empowered to raise the rate, and to pay it over to the Metropolitan Board, by doing which they would save a considerable sum in the collection.'[58]

Acton's debt, of course, had nothing to do with procuring an outfall for the parish. The Chairman made that up.

Conclusion

Although each parish reacted differently to the Metropolitan Board of Works' precepts, some took legal action. Chiswick's resistance lasted eight years and the parish took seventeen years to pay off the debt. The affair was not 'a disagreeable business' that 'soon subsided', as Owen argued.[59] The Board of Works' original payment deadline was 13 months.[60] The response of Chiswick and others was, in fact, epic.

This story offers a new perspective on the parsimony of Victorian vestrymen; not merely 'penny-pinching' but seeking value for money. When it came to investing in sanitary infrastructure they were not dissimilar to modern middle-class ratepayers, as can be seen in the now decade-long opposition by consumer advocates to plans for a London 'Super Sewer.'[61]

[58] 'Acton Vestry Meeting, Appointment of Overseers,' *The Acton Gazette*, hereafter *AG*, March 29, 1873, p.4.
[59] Owen, D, *The Government of Victorian London,* p.45.
[60] *CVM* March 25,1857.
[61] 'Critics decry costs of London's £4.2bn "super sewer",' *Financial Times*, July 26, 2015, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6c8974ca-31e9-11e5-91ac-a5e17d9b4cff.html#axzz46GM123ql, [Accessed 19 April 2016].

Chiswick's ratepayer's revolt was an early example of middle-class assertiveness following the 1832 Reform Act. Such new class-confidence would grow stronger in Chiswick over coming decades, as the franchise was extended and further democratizing changes occurred. Examples of these will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. Additionally, Chiswick's litigious response to the Board of Works' financial demands reflects the esteem in which its vestrymen held legal expertise. This mirrored a similar rise in the status of experts in government business and the nascent civil service.[62] The impact of this phenomenon on Improvement Commissioners' Chiswick governance will be explored in Chapter 4.

When government created the Metropolitan Board of Works and strictly defined its geographical footprint, it created the conditions for a new and invisible subterranean city wall to be built. Denying access to Metropolitan sanitary standards for those outside, it led to the 'inner' and 'outer' London geographic zones that persist today and whose Victorian development diverged.[63] The maps which first included, then excluded Chiswick and others from the Metropolis bore ideological as well as infrastructural meaning. We will see, in Chapter 5, how this affected news coverage when, quickly after the Board of Works' creation, the *West London Observer* ceased its regular reporting of non-metropolitan (including Chiswick) news. In Chapter 6 we shall see how the metropolitan border between Hammersmith and Chiswick, which had earlier denied Chiswick modern drainage, later denied many Chiswick workers the vote after the 1867 Reform Act.

[62] R. MacLeod, ed., *Government and Expertise, Specialists, administrators and professionals, 1860-1919* (Cambridge, 1988), pp.4-5.
[63] For censuses, surveys and maps as ideologically-grounded representations of modern life, R. Dennis, *Cities in Modernity. Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space 1840-1930*, (Cambridge, 2008), p. 53.

It would be unfair to judge Chadwick's Sewers Commission and Hall's Board of Works too harshly for an over-simplified and authoritarian approach to metropolitan governance. The context for their administrative experiments was unprecedentedly dire and urgent. London, the world's first ever Metropolis, whose population between 1831 and 1851 had mushroomed by 43% from 1.6 to 2.3 million people, had the highest death rate in England.[64] Something had to be done quickly, and they did it. But as has been demonstrated, Chiswick and other similarly-placed parishes felt harmed as a result.

Having established that the Chiswick Improvement Commission was something of a surprise development, even for its own board members, it will help to know something of the society and culture it sprang from. How did Chiswick's vestry, which previously governed paving, lighting and sewering, operate? Were its leading members corrupt or financially incontinent? Did they serve the needs of all classes in the community or just wealthy residents like themselves? Were they Whigs or Tories? And how big a role did the Duke of Devonshire, the largest local landowner, play in parochial life? Answers to these questions will help interpret the Improvement Commission's later decision-making.

[64] D. Owen, *Government of Victorian London*, p. 26.

CHAPTER 3 Chiswick before the Improvement Commissioners: Politics and Public Life 1795-1858.

Figure 6 'View of Hogarth's house in Chiswick, etched by himself.'[1]

Forty years after William Hogarth's widow published this etching, the view was gone. No horizon would then be visible from the figure's vantage point, just the tightly-packed terraces of Chiswick New Town, an agricultural workers' estate.[2] Though by the mid nineteenth century Chiswick's economy was still mainly rural, in other aspects the parish had changed dramatically. In this chapter we will address those changes, the social tensions that emerged, and how they influenced the attitudes of leading vestry men from whom, in 1858, were selected Chiswick's first Improvement Commissioners. From this we

[1] Published in 1781. Second from left on the horizon is Hogarth's house. The large, many-chimneyed house belonged to Sir Stephen Fox and was later called Moreton Hall, V. Bott, 'Hogarth's House as Hogarth saw it,' *The British Art Journal*, VIII (2), pp. 34-38. Publication date given beneath the etching as 1st May, 1781.
[2] Peter Hammond, Chiswick New Town: The Early Years, Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal (9), (2000), http://brentfordandchiswicklhs.org.uk/publications/the-journal/journal-9-2000/chiswick-new-town-the-early-years/, [Accessed 10 September, 2016].

can form a view as to how they would steer the parish through even greater socio-economic changes to come.

We are going to describe Chiswick and its economy, its enclosure Acts and the relationship between the Dukes of Devonshire and the parish vestry which, as elsewhere, was the centre of local government before mid-nineteenth century administrative changes. We will ask about class relations in the post-enclosure, post-war decades of crop failure and agricultural unrest, when Thomas Carlyle raised his 'Condition of England' Question. What evidence is there that Chiswick, shielded from rural depression by the nearby metropolitan market for fresh produce, experienced class tensions?

There is scant documentary evidence on which to base our history of the Improvement Commission's antecedents and their attitudes. No local newspapers covered Chiswick events in the nineteenth century's first half and just one 1802 electoral poll book survives to hint at how leading vestry men voted later. So we must dig deep into primary archival sources for answers to our questions. Were Chiswick's vestry men centralizing Whigs, *laissez faire* liberal reformers or paternalistic Tories by the 1850s? This may help to explain Improvement Commissioners' later decision-making and their shunning of permissive social legislation. We will gain clarity on the, apparently distant, relationship between the vestry and the Dukes of Devonshire. Finally, in analyzing apparent moments of class tension in the vestry, we can understand the later Improvement Commission's failure to focus on working class needs. Where, elsewhere in the 1860s, philanthropic workers' housing initiatives sprang up, in Chiswick, these were left to market forces.

The historiography of Chiswick in this period focuses largely on high and fashionable society: the 6th 'Bachelor' Duke's fabulous parties at Chiswick House, for example, where royals and politicians from across Europe were feted amid exotic flora and fauna in his landscaped gardens and neo-Palladian villa; [3] or the 'ticket-only' fêtes at the Horticultural Society's experimental Chiswick gardens from 1827.[4] The Society occupied land leased from the Duke of Devonshire in 1821, close to many successful and innovative market gardens and nurseries. Richard Williams cultivated the 'Williams Pear' in Chiswick. [5] Local historians have told us much about such things. But far murkier remains the functioning of Chiswick's community and how it resonated with national political trends. For the student of nineteenth century history these are highlights, too.

With nineteenth century urbanization came the threat of engulfment for rural parishes, like Chiswick, near growing cities.[6] Under pressure of legislative, demographic and technological change vestries were being forced to rethink their role. Before exploring the impact of this on Chiswick's community, let us survey its landscape.

Chiswick Land Use 1800-1850

Chiswick inhabitants in 1801 numbered 3,235.[7] Like the Isle of Dogs in London's East End, Chiswick, on its western fringes, is peninsular and mostly lying in a loop in the river Thames. Most of its central landholdings, during the nineteenth century were ducal. In Figure 7,

[3] G. Clegg, *Chiswick House and Gardens, A History* (London, 2011), pp.59-67.
[4] B. Elliott, *The Royal Horticultural Society: A History, 1804-2004* (Chichester, 2004), pp.114-115.
[5] V. Bott, 'The Chiswick Nursery: Scott, Williams, Glendinning,' *Nurserygardeners.com.*
[6] For national urbanisation statistics, see A.S. Wohl, *Endangered Lives, Public Health in Victorian Britain* (London, 1983), p.3.
[7] C.R. Elrington, ed., *Victoria County History of the Counties of England,* 7, (Oxford, 1980), hereafter *VCH 7*, p. 68.

Chiswick's villages are shown and listed anticlockwise. These were: the riverside Chiswick Town, containing the parish Church of St Nicholas, Lamb's and Griffin breweries, [8] the riverside dwellings of Chiswick Mall and, from the mid-1820s, a densely packed workers estate called Chiswick New Town; [9] Turnham Green and Stamford Brook, the commercial heartlands of the parish, beside the main Brentford to London Road; Little Sutton, a small hamlet and historic manor house; Strand on the Green, on the western riverbank close to Kew Bridge, then a residential and fishing hamlet with nearby market gardens.[10]

Figure 7 Thomas Milne's 1800 map of land use in Chiswick.[11]

[8] Lamb's brewery was owned by the local Sich family. In 1845 the Griffin brewery became Fuller, Smith and Turner. http://www.fullers.co.uk/brewery/history-and-heritage, [Accessed 28 May 2016]. Both breweries supplied original Improvement Commissioners.
[9] P. Hammond, 'Chiswick New Town.'
[10] 'Chiswick: Growth,' *BHO* (full URL in Bibliography).
[11] *Milne's Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, circumadjacent Towns and Parishes etc, laid down from a Trigonometrical Survey taken in the years 1795-9*. (Knightsbridge, 1800), CLSL. Legend from G. B. G. Bull, 'Thomas Milne's Land Utilization Map of the London Area in 1800,' *The Geographical Journal*, 122 (1), (Mar., 1956), pp. 25-30, p.25.

Milne's Land Utilization Map shows the basis of Chiswick's economy in 1800. Arable land (a) is here yellow, enclosed meadow and pasture (m) light green, enclosed market gardens (g) blue, orchards and osier beds (o) darker green, 'paddocks or little parks' (p) pink, nurseries (n) are orange, drained marshland pasture (ma) greyish-yellow, grassland strips within common arable fields (caf) are striped brown and green and the position of residences in parklands is shown by a black rectangle. Commons and open spaces are without letter or colour but have the name inserted within the boundary. Congested streets including the Brentford to London Road, running west to east near the top of the map, and the riverside villages of Chiswick Town and Strand-on-the-Green further south, have their buildings densely-ruled.

A tithe assessment of Chiswick parish in 1845 shows the acreage and ownership of Chiswick a decade before the Chiswick Improvement Act was passed. The Duke of Devonshire owned 46.73% (614 acres and 13 perches), the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's 8.94% (117 acres 2 roods and 7 perches), the Vicar owned 1.68% (22 acres and 4 perches) and the remaining 42.65% included houses, river, roads and waste lands. [12] Chiswick was unusual in having one dominant landholder. In neighbouring Acton and Ealing land ownership was more diverse.

Chiswick Society and Politics

What can we learn from Chiswick vestry minutes and what information is missing from the loss of Chiswick vestry minutes between 1817 and 1835? This post-enclosure period spans

[12] F(?) Martin, Report to the Tithe Commissioners, June 23, 1845, Tithe file for Chiswick (parish), Middlesex, The National Archives, hereafter TNA, TNA/IR 18/5467.

a time of agricultural unrest in southern counties, the return of a Whig government after half a century out of office, the passing of the Great Reform Act of 1832, and in 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act. [13] Parish responses to any of these events may have offered insights into contemporary class relations in Chiswick, before management of poor relief was transferred to the new Brentford Poor Law Union. Yet indicative fragments in surviving material remain to enlighten us. There is unsurprising evidence of disregard for working class interests. More novel, though, is the discovery that in 1830 rioting did occur in Middlesex as in other southern agricultural counties. Chiswick archives speak of a parish divided geographically, socially and politically at this time; its permanent inhabitants clustered in four ancient villages whose historic links were eroded by the development of the 6th Duke of Devonshire's central landholdings, including his gated Chiswick House estate, and that of the adjacent Horticultural Society gardens.

It is not surprising to find that, in the wartime and post-war period pre-1830, the relationship between the Dukes of Devonshire and Chiswick's vestry was not close. Then, the Devonshires' conspicuous displays of wealth, cosmopolitan lifestyle and intimate former association with the francophile Whig Party Leader Charles James Fox, left them out of step with the morality and financial rectitude of landed gentry and the rising middle classes. [14] Duchess Georgiana had swapped kisses with butchers and bakers to win votes for Fox, who died in 1806, and such things offended *bourgeois* respectability. [15] But with many Chiswick farmers and market gardeners depending for their livelihood on the

[13] Reform Act (1832) hereafter (2 & 3 Will. 4) c.45, Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) hereafter (4 & 5 Will. 4) c. 76.
[14] P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government in the Age of Reform, Whigs and Liberals, 1830-1852*, (Oxford, 1990), p.16-17.
[15] Ibid., p.48.

extensive ducal landholdings, and with voter preferences publicised before the Ballot Act of 1872, we can expect muted political opposition to Whig, or later Liberal electoral candidates.[16] So what can we really know about Chiswick's social and political cohesiveness then?

Did all sections of the community work together when times were tough? At the start of the nineteenth century, when food scarcity and hardship from high inflation, grain blockades and frequent poor harvests led to the high peak in rate-payer funded poor relief shown in Figure 7, the Devonshires did not help feed Chiswick's poor.

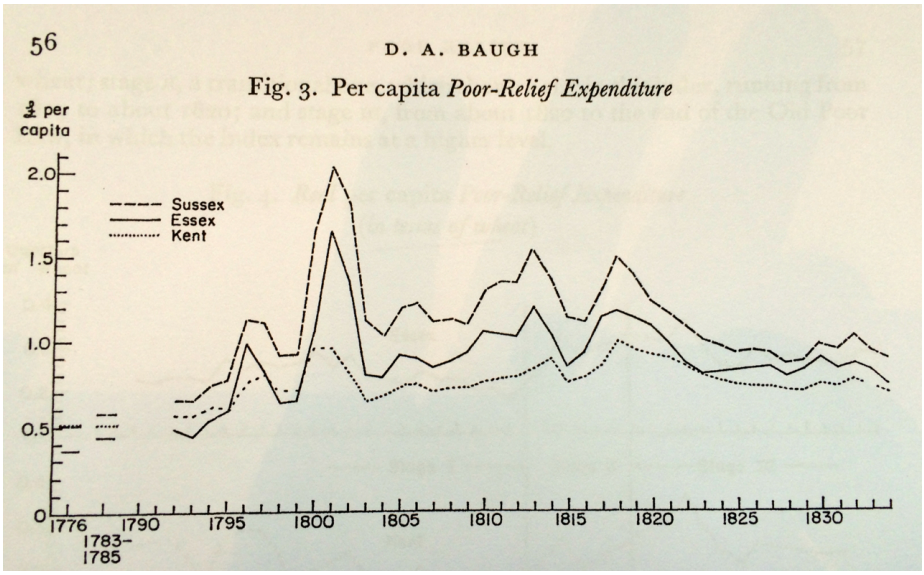

Figure 8 Poor Relief expenditure in three southern agricultural counties (1793-1833).[17]

The massive spike in Baugh's graph followed a Royal Proclamation, by King George III, which urged bread rationing to a 'quartern loaf' per person per week.[18] Chiswick's vestry

[16] Ballot Act (1872), hereafter (35 & 36 Vict.) c.33.
[17] D.A. Baugh, 'The Cost of Poor Relief in South-East England, 1790-1834,' *The Economic History Review*, 28 (1) (Feb., 1975), pp.50-68, p.56. For scandalous 'Grand Whiggery,' P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government*, p.16.
[18] A quartern loaf was made with 3.5lbs of flour. Subsistance wages for agricultural labourers were based on two quartern loaves, per person per day. R.L. Nelson, *The Price of Bread: Poverty, Purchasing Power, and The*

needed land to plant potatoes to supplement paupers' diets, but the 5th Duke of Devonshire did not provide land for this. Instead, the vestry applied to Prebendal Lords of the Manor for 10 acres for the purpose.[19] From this it would seem that the Devonshires were disconnected from the community outside the gates of Chiswick House. A review of the national political landscape may help to explain why.

The Whig party in the first half of the nineteenth century was a coalition of aristocratic, 'High Wig,' interbreeding families (including the Devonshires, Althorps and Spencers), and a new, more diverse grouping of Whig liberals (landed gentry, radicals and non-conformists). 'High', or 'Foxite' Whigs, named after their leader Charles James Fox, saw themselves as the rightful representatives of the people; upholders, on their behalf, of the sovereignty of Parliament and the constitution against Royal incursions. They were out of power for almost 50 years, which included the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Fox did not live to see Whigs return to government from 1830, but his influence lived on. High Whig paternalism led naturally towards a new era of government legislation at a time of great urbanization and demographic change. The Whigs' Great Reform Act of 1832 delivered a limited extension of the franchise, rationalised constituencies and eliminated rotten boroughs to give greater representation to large cities (as in Manchester).[20] It was under their watch (and crafted by the utilitarian Edwin Chadwick), that a new and punitive Poor Law was passed.[21] The General Register Office, which produced mortality statistics

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Victorian Laborer's Standard of Living, Victorian Web, http://www.victorianweb.org/history/work/nelson1.html, [Accessed 1 June 2016].

[19] *CVM*, May 5 and December 16, 1800.

[20] The Great Reform Act (1832), hereafter (2 & 3 Will. 4) c.45.

[21] Poor Law Amendment Act (1834), hereafter (4 & 5 Will. 4) c.76.

and the first accurate surveys of the health of the nation, was also a Whig government initiative. [22]

Tories, though, did not believe it was the government's duty to interfere in people's lives. Mandler recalls that around 1815 the liberal Tory Lord Liverpool liked to quote Samuel Johnson's lines: 'How small, of all that human hearts endure, That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.'[23] 'Church and King' was their philosophy and parish affairs were local, not national concerns. Unlike Foxite Whigs, Tories did not disdain 'dirty commercial considerations'[24] but welcomed urban businessmen and professionals into the government fold to show their worth during the war years. Roger Knight has recently shown how, when the national interest was served by feeding, clothing and transporting troops abroad, as well as building up the nation's defences on an increasingly tight budget, business acumen proved pivotal.[25] As will be shown, Chiswick's vestry would speak with a Tory accent by mid-century.

The Poll Book of 1802 and Chiswick Voting.

Who were Chiswick's voters and how did they vote? Only one poll book survives for Middlesex in the nineteenth century, published after the 1802 election. Just nine Chiswick residents qualified to vote then, by virtue of a Chiswick Freehold or office. Nine out of 3,235 residents is not much of a sample, [26] and for later decades vestry minutes will guide our view of Chiswick politics. But the 1802 wartime poll book is a good place to start as we

[22] Births and Deaths Registration Act (1836) hereafter (6 & 7 Will. 4) c.86.
[23] P Mandler, *Aristocratic Government*, p. 33.
[24] Ibid., p.26.
[25] R. Knight, *Britain Against Napoleon: The Organisation of Victory, 1793-1815*, (London, 2014).
[26] Fn.7.

can assume patriotism ran high and polarised the voting.[27] Were the cosmopolitan, francophile Foxite Whigs then as popular with Chiswick's voters as with their neighbours at Chiswick House? [28]

Three candidates stood in 1802 for the two Middlesex seats. They were: George Boulton Mainwaring (Tory); George Byng, 'Fox's Crony'[29] (Whig); and the popular 'large-acred but dangerous' liberal radical reformer, Sir Francis Burdett (Whig). [30] Five Chiswick votes went to the Tories and four to Whigs, two each to Byng and Burdett. By virtue of their office, the Parish Clerk and Sexton voted for all three candidates between them, thus displaying vestry neutrality. Other voters choices are given in brackets, their professions given if known. Hence: Sir Charles Rouse Boughton, Audit Commissioner and former Tory MP (Tory); John Sich, brewer (Tory, Whig-Byng); Robert Stevenson (Tory, Whig-Byng); Douglas Thompson, brewer (Tory); James Wells (Whig – Burdett); William Wapshott (Whig – Burdett); and Skinner Woodroffe (Tory). Chiswick's voters were thus more Tory than Whig. Joint second for George Byng reveals little local appetite for 'Grand Whiggery'.[31] But apart from politics, did the Dukes of Devonshire and Chiswick's vestry agree on other matters? It seems clear that they did regarding the Chiswick Enclosure Acts. [32]

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[27] Copy of the Poll for the election for Middlesex, July, 1802, *Internet Archive*, https://archive.org/details/copypollforelec00unkngoog, [Accessed 28 May 2016].
[28] P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government*, pp.55-56.
[29] Ibid., p.21 fn.24.
[30] 'Burdett, Sir Francis, fifth baronet (1770–1844)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* hereafter *ODNB* (full citation in Bibliography).
[31] P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government*, p.16.
[32] 'An Act for extinguishing all Right of Common over certain Parcels of Land in the Parish of *Chiswick*, in the County of *Middlesex,'* hereafter (46 Geo.3) c.3. Also 'An Act for inclosing certain Lands in the Parish of *Chiswick*, in the County of *Middlesex*, over which Right of Common hath been extinguished,' hereafter (54 Geo. 3) c.69.

Chiswick's enclosure Acts

The enclosure of Chiswick took place in two stages. First, in 1806, when Lammas grazing rights were extinguished on 100 acres of the Duke of Devonshire's land.[33] Then the 1814 Act set in law the ownership of various Chiswick landholdings.[34] This was towards the end of the peak period of parliamentary land enclosures nationwide whose effects on parish life, especially that of landless poor, have been extensively studied. For the social historian, E. P. Thompson, they marked a turning point in the social history of many English villages, shattering the system of cooperation under the traditional, 'open field system' and driving a wedge between small and large landowners, profiting one at the expense of the other. [35] More recently, Clark and Clark have argued that their impact has been overstated.[36] Their cliometric study posited that by the time of the Chiswick enclosures 'there would be too little common waste per family to allow the landless to keep cows, particularly given the marginal nature of this land.' [37] Yet parish records show this was not true of Chiswick. Its landless poor did graze their cattle, whether or not they had formal Lammas rights.

Chiswick Enclosure Acts: who benefitted, who lost out?

In 1795, on learning of the 5th Duke of Devonshire's plans to restrict common grazing to those with established 'Lammas rights,' Chiswick's vestry supported the move, further

[33] Lammas rights allowed commoners to graze livestock on these lands for half a year from Lammas Day (12 August) 'between the time the crop is carried off ... until the same are sown again', Chiswick Inclosure Act (1806), hereafter (46 Geo 3) c.111, S.1.
[34] Chiswick Inclosure Act (1814), hereafter (54 Geo. 3) c.69.
[35] E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, (London, 1991), p.180.
[36] G. Clark and A. Clark, 'Common Rights to Land in England, 1475-1839,' *The Journal of Economic History*, 61 (4), (Dec. 2001), pp.1009-1036.
[37] Ibid., p.1033.

urging His Grace's agents to '… employ a person to pound all Cattle belonging to persons not having a Right to the Lammas of this Parish… [and furthermore] '… all persons having such Rights are Desired to Give in their Names and Residence and Description of their Cattle to the person Appointed.' [38] Eleven years later, those Lammas rights were not just restricted but extinguished by Act of Parliament, offering no compensation for commoners. Instead the Duke of Devonshire would pay an annual 'Rent Charge' of £107 14s to Churchwardens and Overseers 'for the Relief and maintenance of the Poor.'[39] This demonstrates foreknowledge of impoverishment through the Act, which must also have caused distress, through the loss of family cows, and heightened social tension.[40] How did Chiswick's landless poor respond? In 1807 there were 'frequent disturbances… at the Workhouse,' [41] which may have been a post-enclosure effect. The unfairness of the 'Rent Charge' certainly went down in local history. Seventy seven years later it was raised in a pointed vestry exchange over paying £700 to the Duke of Devonshire for five acres of land for a parish pumping station. Mr Wright, a successful local builder and 'a man very popular in the parish,… as bold as a lion in doing his duty, and yet as gentle as a lamb,'[42] reminded those present that the land was enclosed by the Devonshires for just £1 an acre.[43]

The 6th Duke of Devonshire's enclosure Act went further than his father's by barring public access to 'Waste Lands or Grounds,' which formerly remained accessible. [44] In post-enclosure Chiswick where once smallholders grazed their cows on post-harvest stubble, water-logged meadows or even waste lands, now they could not. Instead the landless poor kept pigs,

[38] *CVM,* September 10, 1795.
[39] (46 Geo 3) c.111, Sections 2 & 5.
[40] Thompson, *Customs in Common*, pp.97-98.
[41] *CVM*, January 11 and 29, and February 19, 1807.
[42] 'Board of Commissioners, Lively Proceedings,' *AG'*, November 6, 1880.
[43] 'Vestry Meeting At Chiswick, Lively Proceedings,' Ibid., May 19, 1883.
[44] (46 Geo 3) c.111, S.6.

which roamed free in the parish and foraged amid brewery, fishing and household waste beside St Nicholas' church on Chiswick Mall.[45] This was evidence of impoverishment. Pig keeping has been linked to changes in nineteenth century country life, low and erratic incomes and the spread of wage earning.[46]

This enclosure Act was recorded in vestry minutes as a *fait accompli.* That does not appear to have troubled the vestry, which readily acceded to a proposed land swap. Things only turned sour when the young Duke appeared to renege on his side of the swap and the vestry took direct action to enforce compliance. It had all started amicably with 'a plan submitted of an alteration in the road from Chiswick to Strand on the Green at the Desire of his Grace the Duke of Devonshire which was cheerfully acceded to, more especially as His Graces Commissioners had promised to set out two Acres of Land which belonged to the Parish in the most obligible Spot Possible.'[47]

The young Duke wanted to use part of a glebe field to divert traffic on Burlington Lane away from Chiswick House and promised land to the Vicar on higher ground, instead of the glebe field's existing flood-prone position. But six months later, no promised lands in an 'obligible Spot' had materialised. Consequently '[i]t appearing that the Two acres of Land for the Poor have not yet been set out according to the promise from His Grace … This Vestry do hereby require the Surveyors to keep open the Old Road in front of his Graces House until the promise be fulfilled.'[48] Two months later the Vicar, Churchwardens, Overseers, Duke of Devonshire's agent and

[45] Complaints rise over stray pigs ten years post-enclosure, e.g. *CVM*, March 10, 1831.
[46] Review by P. Dewey, of R. Malcomson and S. Mastoris, *The English Pig: A History*. (Ohio, 1998), in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 85-86.
[47] *CVM*, October 3, 1814.
[48] Ibid., April 27, 1815.

nineteen others '… superintend[ed] a general survey of this parish.'[49] This, 'beating of the bounds,' was a rare and defensive vestry act. It was proposed later, in 1857, on receipt of a charge on parish poor rates by the Metropolitan Board of Works, [50] and it was done in 1868 to oppose Chiswick's inclusion in the new Borough of Chelsea created by Disraeli's 1867 Reform Act.[51] In the event, the land swap was settled by 1818 and its apportionment is shown in a map of that year.[52]

The enclosures benefitted many of Chiswick's wealthier residents, as well as the Devonshires, to which an extensive 1821 property auction testifies. It offered for sale 'Building Ground at Turnham Green and Chiswick' which, from the associated maps, appears to include enclosed lands.[53] By this time, the 6th Duke of Devonshire had leased 33 acres to the Horticultural Society and was busy entertaining illustrious guests at his newly enlarged Chiswick House and grounds. [54] But the later development of Chiswick was frustrated by the large and central position of the Devonshires' enclosed lands. The 7th Duke built on these slowly, while railway-led housing booms occurred elsewhere in neighbouring Acton and Ealing. [55]

[49] Ibid., June 9 & 16, and November 9, 1815. For the historic significance of 'beating the bounds,' E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, pp.111 and Plate IX.
[50] *CVM*, April 4, 1857 and April 13, 1868.
[51] Reform Act (1867), hereafter (30 & 31 Vict.) c.102, also *CVM* April 4, 1868.
[52] P. Potter, 'A Plan of the Mansion and Estate in Chiswick in the County of *Middlesex,* Belonging to The Most Noble *William Spencer* Duke of Devonshire', (Kentish Town, 1818), Chatsworth House Trust.
[53] 'Freehold and Copyhold Dwelling Houses, Market Gardens and Building Ground at Turnham Green and Chiswick… sold by Messrs. Driver, at the Auction Mart on 25th September, 1821,' Chiswick and Brentford Maps, Class No.912, CLSL. The comparison with enclosed grounds is evident from T. Logan, 'A New Discovery, a Portion of the Lost Chiswick Enclosure Map,' *London Topographical Record*, 31, (2015), pp. 141-150.
[54] Fn.3.
[55] M. A. Jahn, 'Railways and Suburban Development,' pp.21 and 34, and J. Wisdom, 'The Making of a West London Suburb,' p.75.

Petitioning, Representation and Reform

Were Chiswick workers assertive and a force to be reckoned with? If so, what did the vestry think of them? Were their views acknowledged and respected? Or did they come to be feared, as Carlyle suggested they might in his 'Condition of England Question?'[56] Vestry members' attitudes will have informed the Improvement Commission's later governance and its attention to working class needs.

However badly Chiswick's poor felt they were treated under the enclosures, only the brave, foolhardy or anonymous would protest after the Poor Relief Act (1819).[57] Its rules for the management of Select Vestries for pauper administration required Overseers to 'take into Consideration the Character and Conduct of the poor Person to be relieved, and shall be at liberty to distinguish, in the Relief to be granted between the deserving, and the idle, extravagant or profligate Poor.'[58] Yet in following decades workers did speak up across the country, reminding the nation of their revolutionary potential within living memory of the storming of the Bastille. [59] In 1829 and 1830, agricultural unrest spread in southern counties in a reaction to worker-displacing farming machinery. And Chartism grew from working men's sense of betrayal after the 1832 Reform Act.[60] Did any of this touch Chiswick?

Some Chiswick artisans openly supported Reform. In 1831 'the Compositors of the Chiswick Press,' subscribed £1 7s 6d to a 'Loyal and Patriotic Fund for Assisting the Case of Reform'

[56] R. Swift, 'Thomas Carlyle, "Chartism", and the Irish in Early Victorian England,' *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 29, (1), (2001), pp.67-83, p.68.
[57] Thompson, *Customs in Common*, p.66.
[58] Poor Relief Act (1819), hereafter (59 Geo. 3) c.12, S.1.
[59] 'Storming of the Bastille,' Timelines: Sources from History, Learning, British Library, http://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item106472.html, [accessed 13 September, 2016].
[60] 'Captain Swing,' *TNA*, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/politics/g5/, [Accessed 11 September, 2016], and D. Jones, *Chartism and the Chartists*, (London, 1975).

chaired by the former Middlesex MP and radical Whig reformer Sir Francis Burdett MP.[61] A more revolutionary tone was struck in this comment with another donation of £2 6s 6d from '[a] few old files at the Red Lion Parlour, Chiswick, who think the oligarchy want a little rasping,'[62] It has been argued that agricultural regions of extra-metropolitan Middlesex, and thus Chiswick, were protected from the socio-economic tensions felt elsewhere, by proximity to the London market. [63] The small-scale of Chiswick farming, with its emphasis on market gardening and nurseries, may have rendered threshing machinary unnecessary. [64] Yet there is evidence of unrest elsewhere in the Ossulstone Hundred, to which Chiswick belonged, and that the parish felt its impact.[65] In January 1831 vestry minutes note that:

> 'A letter was laid before the meeting… stating that the last Quota of this parish for the County rate at ¾ [3 farthings] in the £ amounts to £45-18-9 but the Treasurer having paid £90 for damages occasioned by riots in the Hundred of Ossulston 5/4 [1 penny and a farthing per £] is added being the proportion for this Parish making a total of £46-4-1'[66]

Since we cannot find signs of agricultural dissent in Chiswick, what can we know about the mood among Chiswick's poor? Were they politicized and a threat to authority, or not? Would the Chiswick Improvement Commission inherit a socially fractured parish? No signs have yet been found of Chiswick Chartism, but there was some worker co-operation and a little petitioning. From the 1840s onwards these were the non-radical extra-parliamentary tools used by workers, in the absence of political power, to better their lot.[67] Though in

[61] *The Morning Advertiser*, May 3, 1831, p.2.
[62] Ibid., May 19, 1831, p.1.
[63] M. Rees, 'The Economic and Social Development of Extra-Metropolitan Middlesex,' p.122.
[64] Around a quarter of Chiswick's agricultural lands, Ibid., p.133.
[65] 'Ossulstone Hundred,' *BHO* (full citation in Bibliography).
[66] *CVM*, January 27, 1831.
[67] N. Kirk, *Change, Continuity and Class*, (Manchester, 1998), p.42.

Chiswick they do not appear to have represented a revolutionary threat, the vestry seemed to experience something akin to 'moral panic' about them.

What worker cooperation and assertiveness existed in Chiswick at this time and did it give Chiswick's vestry cause for anxiety? Local mutualism was actually encouraged by the Vicar, whose 'Turnham Green Clothing Fund' sought to alleviate the winter distress of the poor, '… by encouraging them in efforts to aid themselves.'[68] To the contributions of poor families were added a further 50% from local philanthropists. But as it was managed by 'a Committee of Gentlemen,' and not by the poor themselves, it was a poor relation to the worker-driven mutualism seen elsewhere.[69] And yet, five years later, Chiswick's vestry betrayed signs of concern about worker co-operation. Carlyle had warned, in 1839, that in Britain similar socio-economic changes were taking place to those which caused the French Revolution. History might repeat itself if that lesson was not learned.[70] The following sequence of events suggests that Chiswick's vestry agreed with Carlyle that 'the disposition of the Working Classes [was] a rather ominous matter.' [71] A certain 'John Brown' may have unnerved them.

Petitions to the vestry were not unknown, but this one was unprecedented: 'We the undersigned Parishioners of Chiswick request the Churchwardens to call a Vestry to take into consideration the stopping up of a Free Draw Dock belonging to the Parish commonly called Barker Rails Draw Dock at Strand on the Green. Signed John Brown and Others.' The petitioners' anonymity, except for their leader John Brown, was novel. No other example has been

[68] 'Clothing Fund for the Poor in the District of Turnham Green,' March 25, 1841, *Scrapbook 1 part 1,* CLSL, also R. Robson and C. Hammond, 'The Clothing Club at St Nicholas Church Chiswick,' *Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal*, 21 (2012), pp.10-13.
[69] N. Kirk, *Change, Continuity and Class*, p.42.
[70] R. Swift, 'Thomas Carlyle,' p.69.
[71] Ibid.

found of this in vestry records and it suggests the petitioners were poor, believing their cause to be controversial.[72] When the Duke of Devonshire's agent proved, with maps, that the subject of the petition was not a 'Free Dock' at all, but His Grace's property, the vestry concluded it had '… no Interest or right to interfere in this matter.' [73] The petition was thus dismissed. This was not the way issues were resolved among Chiswick's ruling elite. So who was John Brown? He may have been a 63-year old retired builder living in Strand on the Green.[74] He does not appear in vestry minutes prior to this, and so was either a newcomer or an outsider in some other sense. It has been suggested that he was not, in fact, real, but rather Chiswick's answer to the mythical labourers' champions 'Ned Ludd' or 'Captain Swing.' [75] But his presence in discussions about the petition renders this unlikely. However, the anonymity of his followers may have heightened vestry anxieties about the poor.

Two years later, in the aftermath of France's February Revolution and the Chartist's mass demonstration at Kennington Common, [76] Chiswick's vestry clearly feared local, as well as national, insurrection and employed Special Constables.[77] And in this Year of Revolutions Chiswick's vestry continued to be on their guard, as a loyal address to the Queen demonstrates:

> 'At a time therefore when by intimidation and threatened violence it is sought by some to effect a change we feel it to be our special duty to avow that we will resist such attempts to the utmost of our power – that we will uphold inviolate your Majesty's Crown and Dignity

[72] Fn.41.
[73] *CVM*, August 19 and 28, 1846.
[74] 1841 Census, Ancestry.co.uk (full URL in Bibliography).
[75] For Ned Ludd see Luddites, *TNA*, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/politics/g3/, [Accessed 11 September, 2016].
[76] 'The Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common,' https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/2932484/the-chartist-meeting-on-kennington-common-10-april-1848 [accessed 4 June 2016].
[77] *CVM*, May 2, 1848.

and the authority of Parliament – that we will give our cheerful aid to the maintenance of the Public tranquility and the prevention of all outrage against the persons and property of Your Majesty [sic] Subjects'[78]

More than just professing loyalty to Queen and Country, this pledged Chiswick's vestry itself to resist ascendant revolutionary forces and to resist change. How would it do that? A rifle association had existed in Chiswick since the time of the French Revolution and was succeeded by rifle volunteers from 1804. Local militias existed in Chiswick until at least 1900 and could defend against local insurrection.[79] A decade after the loyal address, a property qualification was set for putative Chiswick Improvement Commissioners so that only wealthy men need apply.[80] That this arose from antipathy to the working classes is suggested by what happened when, in 1850, John Brown appeared again in the vestry, this time as a nominee for 'Parishioners Churchwarden.'[81] A Churchwarden had never been described this way before. John Brown was nominated alongside John Holmes, and defeated. A poll was then demanded on Brown's behalf,[82] which was hastily, and illegally, scheduled with just two, not three days notice. It was set for the following Monday during working hours. Monday was the day labourers sought work for the week, so few working class residents would have voted.[83] In the event, Brown lost again to Holmes. Though the poll was poorly attended

[78] Ibid., also 'Revolutions of 1848, European History,' *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/event/Revolutions-of-1848, [accessed 14 September 2016].
[79] 'Chiswick: Social and cultural activities', *BHO* (full URL in Bibliography).
[80] (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69, S.9.
[81] *CVM,* April 6, 1850.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Scheduling events on Mondays to the detriment of working men was a tactic used elsewhere, e.g. Loughton, Essex, E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, p.102.

a surprisingly large number of votes was cast against Brown.[84] Analysis of the voting rights of those present suggests this was something of a *cause célèbre* and class tensions may have been the cause. Future Improvement Commissioners were among the voters that day: the farmer, Joseph Jessop; the brewer John Sich; and the butcher Thomas Caught.

This apparent antipathy towards the poor and their representative is a greater sign of Tory, than Whig politics.[85] If we still doubted the vestry's then 'Church and Queen' Toryism, another loyal address in 1850 seems to confirm it. On 15th November, vestry tempers boiled over following the Papal Bull of Pius IX which restored the Catholic hierarchy in England: [86] '… we consider it our duty to express to your Majesty our indignant surprise at the insult presumptuously offered by the Bishop of Rome both to your Royal Prerogative and to the Protestant Religion and Church of this Country …. [etc]'[87] What the authors of this address would not have foreseen was that seven years later a new Vicar, the Reverend Lawford William Torriano Dale, would infuse parish services with catholic rituals and welcome other 'ritualists' like himself to serve the parish. Since Dale, with other leading vestry men, became an Improvement Commissioner this caused tensions on its board.

[84] *CVM* April 8, 1850. 125 votes were cast but under (58 Geo. 3) c.69, S.1-4, those present are estimated to have held just 29 votes, so must have voted on others' behalf.
[85] For example, P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government*, pp.7-8.
[86] See editorial in *The Times*, October 22, 1850.
[87] *CVM* November, 9 1850.

Conclusion

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, and this appears true in relation to class antipathy in early-nineteenth century Chiswick. An important nineteen-year gap exists in the vestry archives, which denies us information about parish life at key historical moments. So, for example, though we know that Chiswick's enclosures harmed its poor we do not know what they did about it. Some unrest seems possible from fragmentary evidence in the vestry minutes. It is also clear that the enclosures were largely a joint enterprise between the Devonshire family and the vestry.

This chapter has sought to explain the hitherto unstudied relationship between the Dukes of Devonshire and the parish community. The Devonshires did not operate in Chiswick as benevolent aristocratic landlords. The vestry's strong Tory leanings were at odds with the Devonshire's 'Grand Whiggery' in the century's first half. Parish life went on in parallel to that inside the gates of Chiswick House and only intersected when there was a problem, or opportunity for mutual benefit. Later Improvement Commission minutes confirm that this distant relationship continued under the 7th Duke.

Chiswick's leading inhabitants were wary of the poor and, beyond providing Poor Relief and a little philanthropy, they disregarded working classes needs and persisted in this as Improvement Commissioners. We do not usually hear about the 'Labour Aristocracy' in the early nineteenth century. It is a term usually applied to the century's second half. But the evidence of a pro-Reform group of artisan printers in 1830 Chiswick suggests class fragmentation already present in the parish.

Although evidence of corruption or financial incontinence was sought in the vestry minutes it was not found and so has not been discussed here. Nor have we seen evidence of high borrowing and spending, as elsewhere. [88] Chiswick's vestry minutes suggest a well-ordered and businesslike group of parish leaders, which is evident from their detail and procedural tone and compares well with the documentation of Chiswick's neighbour vestries in Ealing or Acton. We can thus expect the Chiswick Improvement Commission, which took over much local administration, to have operated similarly. Ratepayers' money ought to have been safe with the Chiswick Improvement Commission.

Finally, Chiswick's vestry was governed by a clique of self-selecting officials who spoke with a Tory accent and shunned outsiders, like John Brown. At first the Improvement Commission operated similarly. But from the late 1860s, emboldened by social legislation and Reform and incentivized by the coming of useful railway links to Chiswick, the Commission became more permeable to outsiders. This will be explored in Chapter 6. First we will discuss how the Improvement Commission operated and what expertise it relied upon to carry out its duties. In Chiswick, as nationally, new technical know-how was required to cope with parochial changes that were taking place on all fronts.

[88] As by Ryde Improvement Commissioners, Isle of Wight, J. Prest, *Liberty and locality : parliament, permissive legislation and ratepayers' democracies in the nineteenth century,* (Oxford, 1990), pp.78-79.

Chapter 4 Improving Chiswick in the Age of the Expert

The Chiswick Improvement Commission appeared in a decade opened by Prince Albert's Great Exhibition. Four miles from Chiswick, under the glass and iron shelter of Hyde Park's Crystal Palace (designed by the Duke of Devonshire's gardener Joseph Paxton), masterpieces of manufacturing ingenuity from around the world competed for acclaim and proclaimed the age of science and of progress.[1] To its displays of shiny new machines were added examples of new model housing for the labouring classes, precursors of later philanthropic and speculative initiatives.[2] In the coming half-century those new inventions would evolve and enter into everyday life, delivered by experts of all kinds whose arcane knowledge made it possible. At the same time, progress in government was taking place, too. Assisted by lawyers and thinkers, a new era of centralizing government legislation was underway, whose first permissive then increasingly compulsory Acts of Parliament would legislate for a rapidly urbanising nation. Chiswick's own new local government, its Improvement Commission, would need experts to help it cope with that rush of legislation and also to build a drainage scheme to protect the parish from sanitary 'evils' and disease. This chapter will ask what kind of experts Chiswick's Improvement Commission felt it needed, reflecting on their different status on the 'improvement team.' It will also highlight the harmful role played by external sanitarians with big ideas, whose schemes frequently interfered with and frustrated Chiswick's own plans to the detriment of residents.

[1] *The Great Exhibition*, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-great-exhibition/ [Accessed 9 May 2016].

[2] H. Roberts, 'The Model houses for families, built in connexion with the Great Exhibition of 1851, by command of His Royal Highness the Prince Albert…', https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/1077793/the-model-houses-for-families-built-in-connexion-with-the-great-exhibition-of, [Accessed 4th September, 2016], also J. N. Tarn, *Five Per Cent Philanthropy, An account of housing in urban areas between 1840 and 1914* (London, 1973), pp. 42-66.

The Chiswick Improvement Commission, its experts and their multiplication.

'A Local Board ought to be partly composed of a Civil Engineer, an architect, a professional financier (either banker or accountant), a lawyer and one or two builders. The technical knowledge which such men possess will often keep a Board out of difficulties.'

Emile Cannot to the Chiswick Ratepayers' Defence Association (1882).[3]

Mr Cannot was a Chiswick resident among many who, in the Improvement Commission's final year, argued that it had unwisely spent ratepayers' money on too many, and the wrong kind of, experts. As a barrister he understood the value of legal expertise when new environmental and public health legislation was coming thick and fast. Only in May that year, the Commission had sought Counsel's advice on whether 'tar paving' equalled 'flagging' under Section 152 of the Public Health Act (1875).[4] This apparently esoteric distinction risked costly consequences for road authorities (e.g. the Commission) that got it wrong. But there was a fine line between employing experts to service basic parish needs and giving *carte blanche* to specialists, whose technical knowledge rendered their dealings opaque and susceptible to corruption.[5]

The Improvement Commissioners were business experts: at least two thirds of them - brewers, farmers, lawyers and *rentiers* – would have been adept at sourcing, subcontracting and telling a profit from a loss. Such skills were recently shown to have been key to Britain's success in the Napoleonic wars, in feeding and paying the troops, sourcing their clothing

[3] 'The Chiswick Ratepayers' Defence Association, Important Proceedings as to Improvement Commission Election,' *AG*, October 21, 1882.
[4] Public Health Act (1875, hereafter (38 & 39 Vict.) c.55, *CIC Mins*, May 3, 1882.
[5] See Chapter 8.

and weapons, as well as providing troop transport within budget.[6] One senses that in Chiswick, too, Commissioners were confident in their ability to deliver local governance on a *laissez faire* basis. From the start they devolved their statutory responsibilities, managing goods and service providers as they would in the brewery or among their tenements. From road surfacing granite chips to dust removal and street slopping, they tendered for materials and services and almost invariably chose the lowest bid.[7] This is a risky strategy for the unworldly, suggesting confidence in holding suppliers to account; which Commissioners did.[8] But they also needed specialist help and for this they turned to a lawyer.

The Improvement Commission's preference for legal over engineering expertise ultimately cost residents dear, through costly legal battles throughout its quarter-century lifetime. But their choice was of its time. An alternative option, taken by the neighbouring parish of Ealing, was to employ a civil engineer. But as MacLeod points out, civil engineers were a new kind of professional expert in the early nineteenth century, outside the established 'triarchy' of the law, medicine and the Church.[9] Chiswick's Improvement Commissioners were not 'early adopters' and so their first salaried official was a Clerk (also the vestry Clerk), the solicitor, Robert Finnis. He was paid £60 a year and charged extra on top for legal and other special work.[10] Over time ratepayers would learn to resent his influence. Ealing did without a Clerk entirely, but quickly set its civil engineer Charles E. Jones to work on a parish-wide sewerage scheme. By 1870 'the whole of the district [had] been efficiently

[6] R. Knight, *Britain against Napoleon*, (London, 2013).
[7] e.g. *CIC Mins*, December 3, 1862, July 15, 1874, July 19 and August 2, 1876.
[8] e.g. £5 Fine for Burford & Ball (sloppers) neglect. *CIC Mins,* January 19, April 20 and May 4, 1881.
[9] R. MacLeod, *Government and Expertise*, p.10.
[10] *CIC Mins*, July 21, 1858, and Chapter 8.

drained.'[11] It took Chiswick until 1883 to come close to doing the same. [12] Its decision to prioritise legal expertise suggests a defensive stance due to Chiswick's ongoing battle with the Metropolitan Board of Works. The absence of a doctor on Cannot's list of essential Board members reflects badly on Chiswick's Medical Officer of Health, a late appointee, indicating that he was not seen as making much of a difference. While his frequent reports to the Commission raised alerts over disease outbreaks and risks, he was not in the same mould as Liverpool's hugely influential Dr William Duncan (1847-1863).[13] Chiswick's surviving Medical Officer of Health Reports from this period were more of a public health score card than a call to arms in any sense.[14]

The Improvement Commission's corps of salaried experts and Inspectors grew over time from two to seven, in line with local needs and new social and environmental legislation. In 1858 there were just the Clerk and a Sanitary Inspector/Messenger.[15] Both also served the Vestry, as Clerk and Beadle. The Sanitary Inspector reported to the Commission on local 'sanitary evils' and nuisances. In 1861 Joshua Trehearne, a civil engineer, was appointed Surveyor. In 1872, when Chiswick was decreed an Urban Sanitary District under that year's Public Health Act, it had to employ a Medical Officer of Health.[16] In 1874 a Petroleum

[11] *Ealing, Middlesex Directory for 1870*, Guildhall Library.
[12] *CIC Mins*, December 7, 1881.
[13] Appointed in 1847, Dr William Henry Duncan was the first Medical Officer in England and an inspiration for Edwin Chadwick's Public Health Act (1848), hereafter (11 & 12 Vict.), Cap. 63, see G. Kearns, P. Laxton and J. Campbell, 'Duncan and the cholera test: public health in mid-nineteenth century Liverpool', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire & Cheshire*, 143 (1994 for 1993), pp.87-115.
[14] F. Dodsworth, 'Chiswick Parish - Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health 1882,' hereafter MOH Report 1882, and Ibid., 1883, CLSL.
[15] *CIC Mins* July 21 and August 11, 1858.
[16] Sections 4 and 10 of the Public Health Act (1872), hereafter (35 & 36 Vict.) c.79.

Inspector was employed under the 1871 Petroleum Act and he later doubled as a Food Inspector under the 'Adulteration Acts' of 1875. [17]

A comparison of the Clerk and Surveyor's wages in 1861 and 1881 demonstrates the rise in status and responsibility of civil engineers during what MacLeod has called the late-nineteenth century's 'Reign of the Engineer'.[18] In 1858, the Surveyor earned a quarter of the Clerk's salary, by 1881 he earned 4% more.[19] Over those two decades the Surveyor came to be a figure of resentment, due to large fees he received from the Improvement Commission for supervising building works; money paid by ratepayers.[20] By 1881 he had a team of assistants, and toured the parish in a pony and trap, also ratepayer funded. When 'speaking tubes' were purchased to connect his office with the Clerk's (and the Clerk's office to the Board Room), Charles Bilton thought he was taking liberties. Bilton, an Assistant to Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, a recently appointed Improvement Commissioner and later founder of the Chiswick Ratepayers' Defence Association, said '[H]e should like Speaking Tubes from one district to another, instead of having to travel long distances.' [21]

The Clerk and Surveyor may have switched places in the Improvement Commission's salary hierarchy but, in an important sense, the Clerk remained the more trusted expert. The Surveyor, whose civil engineering profession was just forty years old by mid-century,[22] appears regarded much as IT consultants are today; with some skepticism. On every

[17] *CIC Mins*, January 21, 1874 and May 18, 1881. Petroleum Act (1871), hereafter (34 & 35 Vict.) c.105, Sale of Food and Drugs Act (1875), hereafter (38 & 39 Vict.) c.63.
[18] R. MacLeod, Government and Expertise, p. 10.
[19] *CIC Mins,* November 15, 1882.
[20] Chiswick Parish, *WLO*, 30 July, 1870.
[21] *CIC Mins*, July 16, 1879 (pony and trap), December 7, 1881 (Surveyor's team), also 'Chiswick Improvement Commissioners', *AG,* June 23, 1883.
[22] Our History, Institution of Civil Engineers, https://www.ice.org.uk/about-us/our-history, [Accessed 12 August, 2016].

occasion that can be found, Surveyors' plans for Chiswick-wide main drainage schemes were submitted to the scrutiny of other, more eminent engineers. [23] This was understandable, given the embryonic state of sanitary science at the time. Nobody really knew how best to do it and the financial costs of getting it wrong would be high. Even Joseph Bazalgette's team at the Metropolitan Board of Works had, in 1859, considered 37 different experimental solutions to the problem of disinfecting and deodorizing sewerage, before opting for 'Dale's Muriate of Iron.'[24] The Chiswick Improvement Commission delayed starting its costly sewerage works for as long as possible, only proceeding after 1875 when low-cost government financing became available. [25] The decision to go ahead came a decade after Chiswick's sanitary need became an emergency, and after several local sewerage projects were halted in light of grander schemes by outside experts.

Engineering Chiswick's drainage: Untested Technologies, Uncertain Professionals

It was not the double-checking of the Surveyor's plans but promise of better, bigger, and cheaper sewerage infrastructure that stymied Chiswick's sanitary progress. The need for a parish-wide scheme became urgent when, in the hot summer of 1866 amid Britain's final cholera epidemic, the Thames Navigation Act was passed.[26] The following year Chiswick and other parishes in the Thames Valley were given 13 months to stop emptying sewage effluent into London's river 'or into any River Street Cut Dock Canal or Watercourse which communicates with the River Thames at any point within three miles of the said River measured in a

[23] For unquestioning acceptance of legal judgments, CVM October 29, 1857, CIC Mins August 31 and December 22, 1864, November 16, 1881, May 3, 1882. For double-checking of engineer, May 31 and July 31, 1859, September 6, 1870, May 19, 1880, and May 4, 1881.
[24] 'Report on the deodorization of sewage, addressed to the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works,' 14th October, 1859, *Miscellaneous Original Papers, MBW (Board) 1856-1870,* LMA/MBW/626.
[25] Under Sections 242 and 243 of the Public Health Act (1875), hereafter (38 & 39 Vict.) c.55. See also E. P. Hennock, *Fit and Proper Persons. Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth-Century Urban Government* (Montreal, 1973), p.61.
[26] Thames Navigation Act (1866), hereafter (29 & 30 Vict.) c.89.

direct line therefrom.'[27] There was no way Chiswick could plan, fund and build an alternative system so quickly. The obvious solution, after briefly considering joining its neighbour Acton's new sewerage scheme, [28] was to use the Metropolitan Board of Works London-wide sewer system as an outfall. [29] The Board of Works had, after all, confiscated Chiswick and Acton's age-old Stamford Brook Sewer for itself, so it would be easy enough for the parish to re-connect its drains to it. But despite frequent pleadings over many years, Bazalgette's Board refused.[30] Chiswick was among many extra-metropolitan parishes, especially in the Thames Valley, needing somewhere to send their waste. Bazalgette feared that granting them access might stretch London's sewers beyond their limits. At this time, a sequence of expert schemes appeared on the horizon to help Thames-side parishes. All would turn out to be a hindrance to Chiswick. With each new dawn its own plans were put on hold pending expert reports into their merits.

Sanitary Interference at the Urban Edge: a Thames Valley Sludge Hub?

Were the many Thames Valley sewerage schemes evidence of a nascent centre of expertise in the area, a 'Sludge Hub' akin to the 21st-century's Silicon Valley for IT engineers? There were four Thames Valley schemes brought to the Chiswick Improvement Commissioners' attention (plus two other proposals, one to link Chiswick with other Brentford Union parishes and one to combine it with Acton and Willesden). [31] In October 1867, J W Grover and Edmund Wragge (civil engineers) proposed a scheme to unite parishes, from the western metropolitan boundary to Chertsey, into a sanitary district 23 miles wide. *The*

[27] *CIC Mins*, October 2, 1867, also (29 & 30 Vict.) c.89, S.63(3).
[28] Ibid., May 23 and June 20, 1866.
[29] Ibid., January 9 and February 13, 1867.
[30] Ibid., May 8, 1867.
[31] Ibid., January 21, 1874 and February 7, 1877.

Times said that a Colonel Ewart would report on the plans for the Home Secretary. [32] In October, 1871, Bazalgette was planning a scheme stretching from Chiswick to Windsor and Eton, using the parkland of Bagshot Heath as its outfall. [33] In June, 1875, Lt. Col. Ponsonby Cox, R.E., contacted Chiswick from the Local Government Act Department regarding a conference on 'forming a combination of Sanitary Authorities whose Districts are situated in the Thames Valley near to, but not within the Metropolitan Area for the purposes of carrying out a joint scheme of sewerage works for their Districts.'[34] Lt. Col. Ponsonby Cox was in touch again in October 1875, with a plan, proposed by Surbiton's Improvement Commissioners, to link west Middlesex parishes into a United Sanitary District under the Public Health Act (1875).[35]

There is something of the air of a sanitary 'gold rush' in this torrent of Thames Valley schemes and on one occasion we see a civil engineer touting for Chiswick business, as a result. [36] One likely economic explanation for civil engineers' Thames Valley focus, was the recent removal of drinking water companies to the area. Under the Metropolis Water Act of 1852 they were forced to extract London's drinking water from upstream of Teddington Lock. [37] Water and drainage engineers were frequently one and the same in this period,[38] and the Thames Valley would have had an abundance of their expert teams. In that sense, one can see the Thames Valley as a Victorian equivalent of the 20th century computer engineer's 'Silicon Valley,' or Old Street's 21st century's 'Silicon Hub; ' a kind of a Sludge

[32] Ibid., October 2, 1867, November 6 and 20, 1867.
[33] Ibid., October 4, 1871.
[34] Ibid., June 12, 1875.
[35] Ibid., October 29, 1875, (38 & 39 Vict.) c.55, S.279.
[36] Ibid., January 8, 1869.
[37] Section 1 of the Metropolis Water Act (1852), hereafter (15 & 16 Vict.) c. 84.
[38] e.g Thomas Hawksley, one of Britain's greatest civil engineers, also employed by Chiswick as a sewers consultant, *CIC Mins*, April 19, 1870 and October 31, 1877, and 'Hawksley, Thomas (1807–1893)', *ODNB,* (full citation in Bibliography).

Hub, where new ideas were generated and turned into business opportunities by entrepreneurial experts.

None of the above schemes held water, so to speak, and by 1877 Chiswick's Improvement Commission had waited long enough for someone else to solve their problem. Under the confident Chairmanship of a civil engineer, the long-serving Commissioner Stephen W Leach, work now began on a bespoke main drainage scheme for the parish.[39] It would separate roof from road water, domestic and business effluent, and employed a filtration scheme and sludge tanks. It is not known what was done with the solid matter, or how the effluent was cleansed, but its outpourings were pronounced 'satisfactory' by a Thames Conservancy Inspector in 1881.[40] Figures 9 and 10 are thought to show a visit by Improvement Commissioners to their sewerage works in 1879, when the Surveyor Henry O Smith, explained its operation and demonstrated the engines and machinery.[41]

[39] *CIC Mins,* 18 July, 1877.
[40] Ibid., September 21, 1881. See also J. Hetherington,'On the Sewage-Flow of Chiswick,' Paper No. 2309, *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers*, 1888, copy in CLSL.
[41] *CIC Mins*, April 10, 1879, also File: 'Sewage Works Chiswick 628', CLSL.

Figure 9 A visit to Chiswick Sewerage Works' Filter Tanks at Corney Reach.[42]

Figure 10 Beside the Steam Engine at Chiswick's Sewerage Pumping Station.[43]

[42] Ibid., ME 1212.

Conclusion

Chiswick's Improvement Commission started life with its own technical skill-set, the business acumen which supported its preferred *laissez fare* style of governance. But this was insufficient to the increasingly technical tasks needed to perform its duties, from building a parish-wide sewerage system to interpreting government legislation. The Commission employed many technical experts, especially from the mid-1860s when a torrent of new environmental and social legislation began. Its most influential expert was its Clerk (a solicitor), its Surveyors (both civil engineers) coming second.[44] Many outside engineering experts saw great potential in schemes to create an extensive, new sanitary district in the Thames Valley. The ambition of these schemes echoed that of Chadwick's Metropolitan Commission of Sewers fifteen years earlier. Although it failed through lack of funds, by the 1860s many clearly felt conditions were better for a similarly ambitious project under what has been called, here, a Thames Valley Sludge Hub. But while holding out the prospect of improving Chiswick's sanitation, those short-lived schemes actually harmed it by causing repeated postponements of its own plans. The Chiswick Improvement Commissioners experience of this, after two decades of reliance on *laissez faire*, forced them to become reluctant pragmatic interventionists.[45] In the next chapter we will explore how that happened.

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[43] Ibid., ME 1211.
[44] *CIC Mins*, July 3, 1861 and March 7, 1877. Surveyors were: Joshua Trehearne (1861-1877); Henry O Smith (1877-1883).
[45] For *laissez faire* versus pragmatic interventionism see L. Goldman, *Science, Reform, and Politics in Victorian Britain. The Social Science Association 1857-1886*, pp. 270-271.

Chapter 5 Improvement Milestones: New Laws & Pressures

'In spite of some obloquy and occasional misrepresentation, I can truly assert, that it has ever been the endeavor of the Board, in all matters committed to their care, to combine as much economy as was consistent with due efficiency.'

Reverend Lawford William Torriano Dale, Vicar of Chiswick (1882). [1]

Figure 11 Reverend Dale with biretta and highly-decorated white stole.

The Vicar of Chiswick did not always get on with his fellow Improvement Commissioners, who disliked his 'ritualist' ways.[2] Figure 11, a photographic portrait of him, proclaims Dale's fondness for Roman Catholic ritual in the clerical dress he wore for the sitting.[3] His convoluted critique of Commissioners upon resigning from their board fell short of a ringing endorsement. The son of a poet, himself a writer and hymn tune composer, Dale chose his words wisely and almost certainly intended them sarcastically.[4] The business-minded Board's economy and efficiency had, by 1882, left Chiswick with filthy streets, fetid ditches, 'jerry-built' housing and a riverside footpath that was a death trap.[5] In chapter 4 we learned of Improvement Commissioners' instinctive *laissez faire* and how this, combined with a lack of confidence in their surveyor and interference by outside experts, delayed a new

[1] *CIC Mins,* November 1, 1882.
[2] Petition to the Bishop of London from Parishioners of Chiswick, October 3, 1871, *F.P. Jackson 37*, f.277, Lambeth Palace Library.
[3] I am indebted to the current Vicar of Chiswick, Revd. Simon Brandes, for his insights into the 'ritualist' symbolism of Revd. Dale's attire.
[4] Dale had employed sarcasm before, masking his dislike of the wealthy brewer Henry Smith while re-nominating him as Churchwarden. Thus: '*I need not add many words to express the fact that the satisfaction of the parishioners will, I am sure equal mine, when they hear this,' CVM,* April 20, 1876.
[5] *CIC Mins*, November 15, 1876, January 4 and March 1, 1882.

sewerage scheme for Chiswick. This chapter attempts to plot the Commission's path to a more proactive approach to governance, identifying seemingly important milestones along the way. Understanding the forces which caused this change is not straightforward. *The West London Observer*, which chronicled the start of Chiswick's dispute with the Metropolitan Board of Works had, by January 1857, abandoned its regular reporting of non-Metropolitan business.[6] Occasional articles on the Chiswick Improvement Commission surfaced in the *Observer* from 1866 and more frequently from 1869, but the paper folded in 1871. It was only when the *Acton Gazette* relaunched as the *Acton, Chiswick and Turnham Green Gazette* on 13th March, 1880, that regular reporting of Chiswick affairs started again.[7] In the reporting gaps, our only sources of Chiswick Improvement intelligence are the anodyne minutes of its Clerk. But from 1880, with the *Acton Gazette's* help, we can see those meetings, and their parish context, come alive with new social forces. Combining these sources we can begin to understand contemporary levels of satisfaction with the Commission and take the pulse, locally, of national socio-economic, political and religious trends.

A meta-analysis of Chiswick Improvement Commission actions and influences.

For a continuous picture of Improvement Commission affairs, four graphs have been plotted of useful data points found in their minutes and other archive sources. It is hoped, through these graphs, to identify significant moments in the Commission's lifetime, which are worthy of investigation. For example, peaks and troughs may suggest rising or falling local conflict, pointing towards important sections in the Improvement Commission's copious minutes or, where available, local press coverage. From this we can begin to build a picture of meaningful local and national forces of change.

[6] *WLO*, BNA.
[7] *AG,* ELHC.

Conflict in Annual Improvement Commission Elections

Each year, in the first week of November, six Commissioners stood down and those same six, or replacements, were then elected for a term of three years. Contested elections suggest dissatisfaction, political change or some other important factor. This is assumed to be true, also, of the Improvement Commission. More than six nominations would hence seem meaningful, and plotting yearly nomination numbers gives Figure 12:

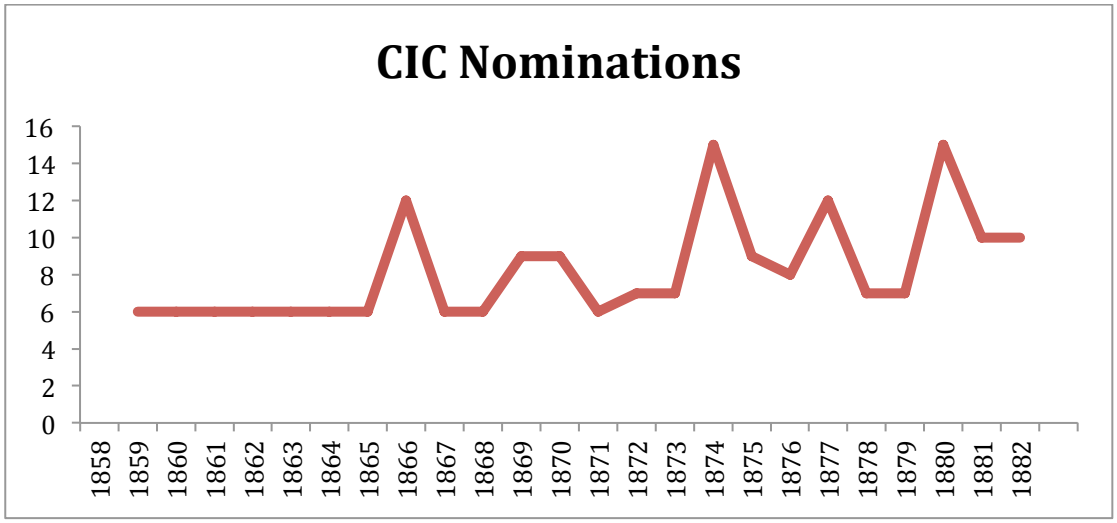

Figure 12 Yearly nominations for six available seats on the Chiswick Improvement Commission.[8]

From this graph we can detect clear signs of local agitation, or public interest, in 1866, 1869, 1874, 1878 and 1881.

Rising Population

Demographic change often brings social tensions, so population growth in Chiswick may have brought pressure for change. Figure 13 shows that Chiswick's population rose rapidly between 1871 and 1881. This suggests high inward migration, linked to new jobs and

[8] *CIC Mins*, elections held on the first Wednesday in November, as per (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69, S.13.

housing, and a correspondingly higher birthrate due to a rise in young adults in the parish.[9] The steeper rise from 1881, based on additional data from surviving Medical Officer of Health Reports, was linked at the time to declining mortality due to local sanitary improvements and, to an extent, healthier new housing.[10]

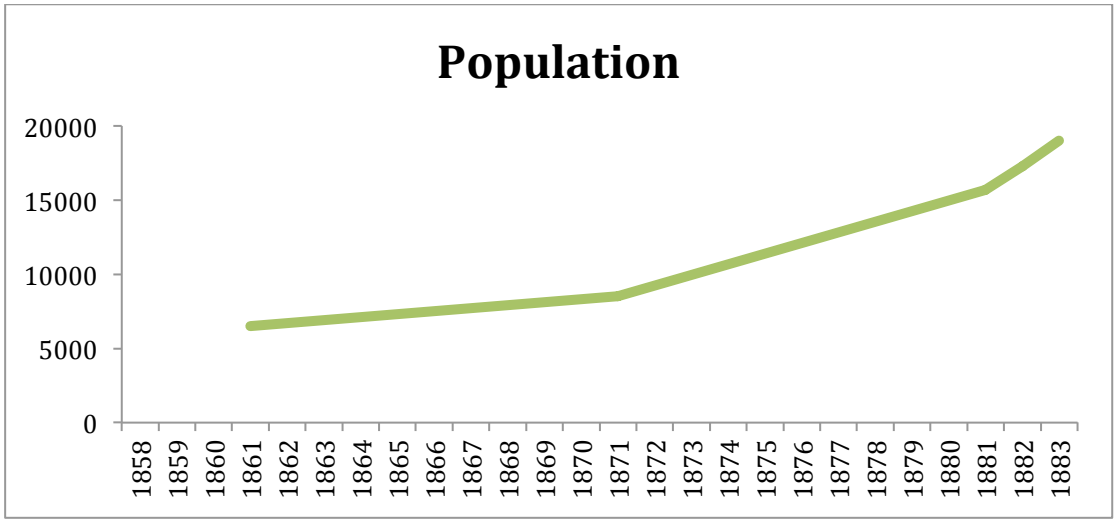

Figure 13 Chiswick population rise in the Improvement Commission's lifetime. [11]

Comparing Figures 12 and 13 we see a weak correlation between rising population and increasing competition for places on the Improvement Commission. Was this due to the influx of new ideas? Or to perceived inadequacies in local governance? Further analysis of nominee biographies, including their ages, professions and political affiliations, will help to interpret the trend. In this respect, it will be just as interesting to know who was not elected in those peak years, as who was, as it may highlight local class or other tensions.[12]

[9] D. Friedlander and R. J. Roshier, 'A Study of Internal Migration in England and Wales: Part I,' *Population Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Mar., 1966), pp. 239-279, p.246.
[10] MOH Report, 1883 and also 1882, 614 Chi., CLSL
[11] *VCH*, 7, p. 68, and MOH Report 1883, Ibid.
[12] See Chapter 7.

The Impact of Government Legislation

A third data set has been chosen to place local Chiswick issues in the national political context. At a time of intense national Reform agitation, one might expect to see this mirrored in the local context, with a rising assertiveness of communities seeking better represention by local government. But this would depend on how strongly national politics was felt locally. In the absence of newspaper reports for much of the Improvement Commission's lifetime, a proxy has been chosen as a measure of local awareness of national issues. From a detailed digital transcript of Chiswick Improvement Commission and Vestry Minutes (1858 to 1883), references to Acts of Parliament have been noted and yearly totals produced.[13] This may seem an unusual data set to track, but government legislation (new, old, permissive, compulsory, or still in its committee stages) would not have been minuted unless it was important and meaningful to parish affairs. Plotting these totals produces Figure 14:

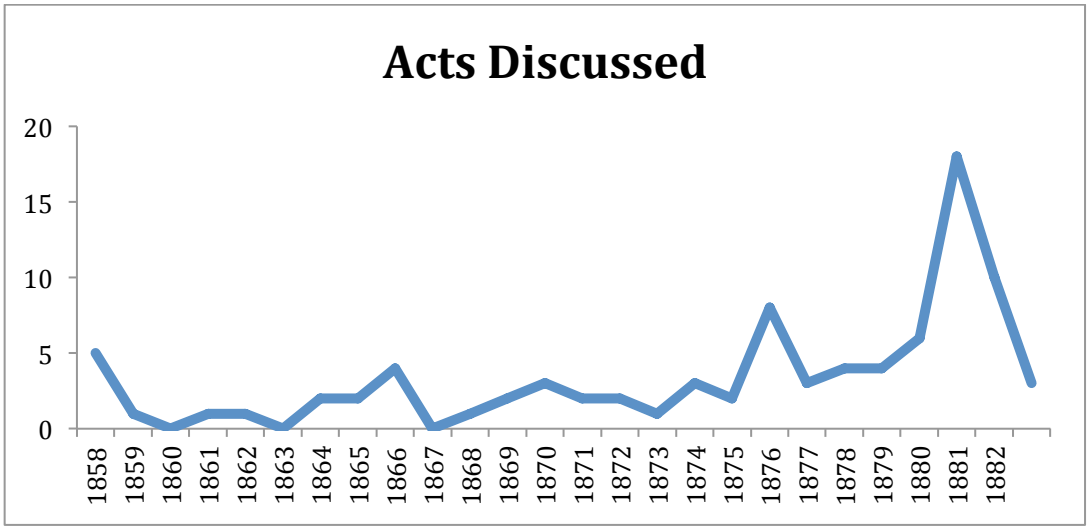

Figure 14 Legislation discussed by the Improvement Commission and vestry.[14]

[13] The yearly totals include any Act or Bill mentioned, whether or not they were discussed in previous years. Repeated mentions in the same year were not counted.
[14] Details of legislation discussed, with dates, in Appendix.

The peaks in Figure 14 show gradually increasing references to legislation from 1866, with a steep increase following the Public Health and also Artizans and General Labourers' Dwellings Acts of 1875. The very high peak in 1881 represents an avalanche of centralizing social legislation felt in the parish. Acts and Bills discussed were both old and new, and confined to Commission (or vestry) business, whatever the national import of other Parliamentary business. So, Disraeli's Reform Act of 1867 was mentioned in the vestry only regarding plans of the Boundary Commission to include Chiswick in the Act's newly-created Borough of Chelsea. New voting rights were not minuted.[15] Nor was the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, which touched the lives of Chiswick's Vicar and parishioners of alike.[16]

Combining Figures 12, 13 and 14 produces a correlation, in Figure 15, between local population growth, legislative focus and sense of local, civic responsibility. This reflects the febrile atmosphere of the Second Reform period and the impact of social legislation. Though only part of the local picture, excluding the economic cycle, for example, and changes to local taxation, this offers a helpful framework from which to explore Improvement Commission actions.

[15] Hereafter Reform Act (1867), or (30 & 31 Vict.) c.102.
[16] Public Worship Regulation Act (1874), hereafter (37 & 38 Vict.) c.85, also fn.2.

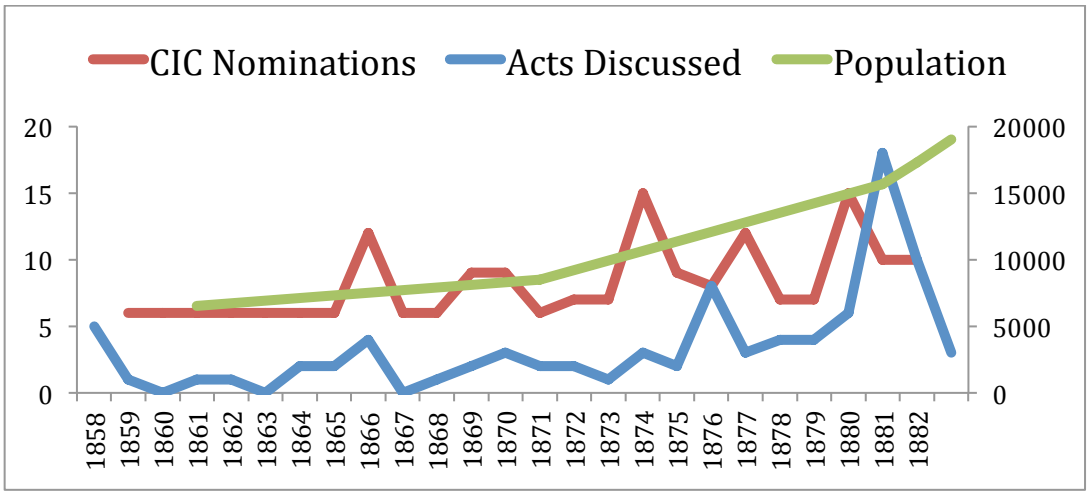

Figure 15 Improvement Commission election nominations, legislative focus and population rise.

Rising Rates

One further graph helps to explain the Improvement Commission's demise. It is a plot of the six-monthly General District Rate levied by it from 1875, replacing its earlier separate General Paving, General Sewer and Improvement Rates 1874.[17]

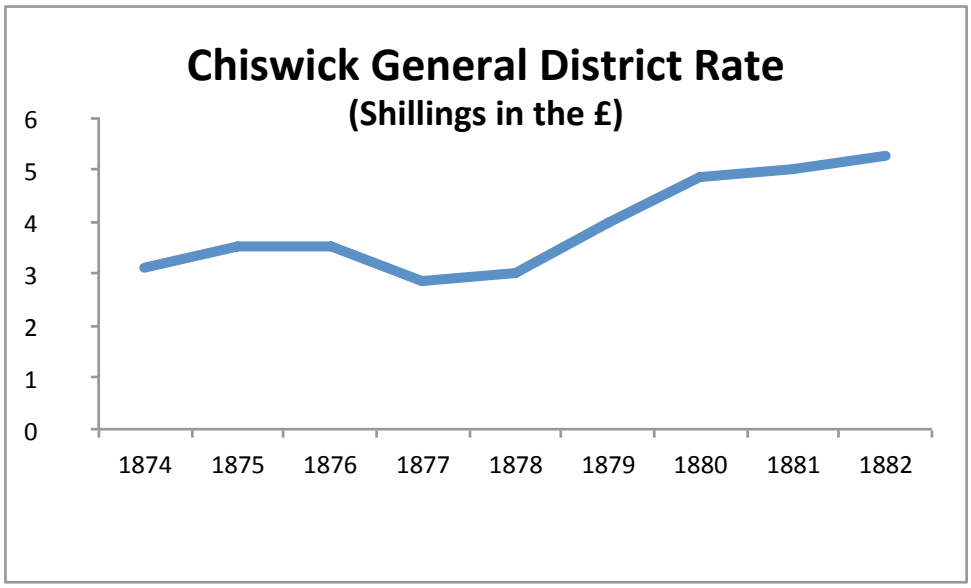

Figure 16 The Chiswick Improvement Commission's General District Rate.[18]

[17] Made possible under the Public Health Act (1872) section 16(2), hereafter (35 & 36 Vict.) c.79, s.16(2).
[18] *CIC Mins*, May 13, 1874, May 5 and November 16, 1875, April 19 and October 18, 1876, April 18 and October 15, 1877, April 17 and October 16, 1878, April 16 and October 15, 1879, April 21 and October 18, 1880, April 20 and October 19, 1881, May 3 and October 4, 1882.

The Improvement Commission's General District Rate was just one of the local rates residents paid (there was also the Poor Rate and School Board Rate). Its adoption conferred greater powers of borrowing for local sanitary improvements.[19] But, in combining three rates levied on different dates into one, it made rate increases more noticeable in the community. Rising rates were the proximate, though not sole, cause of the Chiswick Improvement Commission's extinction.[20]

What the Peaks and Correlations Reveal

What happened in 1866, between 1869 and 1870, in 1874, 1877 and in 1880 that caused the nomination peaks in Figure 12? Knowing this may help us to understand the various forces which fuelled local dissent. Until the mid-1860s, Chiswick's legal battle with the Metropolitan Board of Works had dominated its affairs. With the Commission's capitulation in 1865, it lost part of its *raison d'etre*.[21] It was a novelty form of administration compared with the centuries-old vestry system and, from the mid-1860s, sections of the community cast doubt on its self-electing clique of local worthies and challenged it for power. The triggers may seem mundane (rates, the Commission's high wages bill and poor service provision) but it will be argued that they were buoyed by larger national trends. It is noteworthy that the 7th Duke of Devonshire, William Cavendish, though possessing a nominee on the Board throughout its lifetime, was not involved in the Chiswick Improvement Commission's governance. He may have been 'a patron of commanding

[19] (35 & 36 Vict.) c.79, s.16(2).
[20] See Chapter 8.
[21] *CIC Mins*, July 12, 1865.

influence and sagacity' on his East Sussex estate, where he was 'Eastbourne's patron saint,' but he was not Chiswick's. [22]

In 1866, for the only time in its history, the Improvement Commission's existence was threatened by a single ratepayer emboldened by social legislation.[23] Mr Arthur Newton claimed to have the community's interests at heart, when he cited the recent death from cholera of Mrs Brooks in Chiswick New Town. He warned that unless its drainage was improved 'I shall take it upon myself to vindicate the Act of 1858… and I shall have the bulk of my fellow parishioners with me…'[24] In reality, he was motivated by self-interest. Newton wanted to open a laundry and empty its sudsy effluent into Chiswick New Town's already inadequate drains, but the Improvement Commission would not let him.[25] Nor did he have the community support he claimed. Ultimately he did petition to have the Local Government Act brought into effect in Chiswick but the Local Government Board dismissed it, finding that the Improvement Commission had acted reasonably.[26] Had Newton succeeded, Chiswick's Improvement Commission would have been replaced by a more accountable and representative Local Board.[27] But in a rare and detailed report by the *West London Observer*, we see that it was not Newton's bluster that lost Commissioners support that year, it was their 'extravagance' and unaccountability.[28] '[T]he majority' of those standing for re-election 'were seldom present and even when so were, with the other members, quite ruled by the clerk, who was, indeed, the Board.'[29]

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[22] D. Cannadine, *Lords and landlords: the aristocracy and the towns, 1774-1967*, (Leicester, 1980), p.230.
[23] (21 & 22 Vict.) c.98, S.12 and 13.
[24] *CIC Mins*, July 14, 1866
[25] Ibid., January 17 and February 14, 1866.
[26] TNA/MH/13/50/248.
[27] (21 & 22 Vict.) C.98, Sections 24 (3). Qualification for membership of a Local Board was a Poor Rate assessment of £15 rateable value, not the £30 required of Improvement Commissioners under (21 & 22 Vict.) c.69, S.9.
[28] 'Dissatisfaction of Chiswick,' *WLO*, 10 November, 1866, BNA.
[29] Ibid.

Ratepayers' 'determined stand' in the November 1866 elections occurred amid national Reform agitation and in the shadow of that year's Hyde Park Riots, just four miles away. The Liberal Government had fallen, Derby and Disraeli were in the process of formulating a new Reform Bill and everyone, from the Queen down, knew the franchise needed broadening, or else! Enter Henry Newcombe, a 27 year-old Liberal *rentier,* elected to the Chiswick Improvement Commission a year earlier. He wanted to open up Chiswick's local government to popular scrutiny by allowing reporters into its meetings, but his motion was soundly defeated.[30] Later that year, and two weeks before the Commission elections, the Editor of the *West London Observer* himself sought press access, but again it was refused (yet somehow news of the election proceedings got out). [31] Newton then acted against his fellow Commissioners by nominating six rival candidates, some of whom were of a lower social class than existing Commissioners, including a butcher, a builder, a schoolmaster, and a *rentier*.[32] In the story of this election we see pressure for greater representation and extension of the local franchise. This supports the notion that Chiswick's population, like the nation's, sought Reform and a break with the past.

Henry Eydmann Junior, an influential local builder, stood unsuccessfully for election in 1869. He may have hoped to profit from new building work following the recent opening of Turnham Green railway station.[33] It was not until 1870 that a builder was elected. That was William Adamson, whose firm employed 300 men.[34] Six years earlier, in evidence to a Parliamentary Committee, Adamson had supported the London and South West Railway's planned new service for Chiswick. He wanted it 'very much indeed,' because '[w]e get a

[30] *CIC Mins,* January 17, 1866.
[31] Ibid., October 24, 1866.
[32] Ibid., November 7, 1866.
[33] Ibid., November 10, 1869.
[34] 1871 Census, Ancestry.co.uk.

communication to Waterloo, which is very advantageous, that being the central station.'[35] In June 1870 the Improvement Commission had adopted new building bye laws for the parish which gave it control of property development.[36] A builder on its board might therefore hope to benefit from his position. Actually, Adamson's firm shrank by around 10% during his first decade on the Commission. However, this may still demonstrate a protective effect from its membership, given the business uncertainty of an economic depression from 1873.[37]

The 1870 Commission election is also noteworthy for the accession onto the Board of Benjamin Hardy, a real 'mover and shaker' and a wealthy coal merchant.[38] He was Chairman of the Chiswick Conservative Association and was soon a founder member of the Chiswick School Board.[39] The Conservative Party may have lost the 1868 election but in Middlesex a Conservative MP (Lord George Hamilton) was returned for the first time in 20 years.[40] In Chapter 7 we will see Hardy's membership of the Improvement Commission as part of the Conservative Party's evolving constituency machine, that would increase its appeal among working men.[41] Two years later, after the Ballot Act of 1872 passed, Improvement Commissioners briefly adopted secret voting, though the Act was not intended for small local authorities.[42] We can sense, in that November 1872 election, the fear among Commissioners that an outsider might oust one of their own. Minutes show

[35] Testimony of Mr William James Adamson, 7th March, 1864, *Parliamentary Minutes of Evidence, Kew, Turnham Green and Hammersmith Railway*, National Archives (hereafter TNA), Rail 1066/1338.
[36] 'Chiswick Parish Bye Laws' of 1870, TNA/MH 13/50/259.
[37] Adamson remained on the Commission to its end, *CIC Mins*, November 5, 1873, November 8, 1876, November, 11, 1879, November 8, 1882, also 1881 Census, Ancestry.co.uk, and A. E. Musson, 'The Great Depression in England, 1873-1896,' *The Journal of Economic History*, 19 (2), pp.199-228, p. 200.
[38] 'Death of Mr Benjamin Hardy,' *TCT*, May 22, 1914, Newspaper Clippings Folder 1^2, p.182, CLSL.
[39] Under the Elementary Education Act (1870), hereafter (33 & 34 Vict.) Chap.75, also *Chiswick School Board Minutes*, 1872-1886, CLSL.
[40] In 1885 Hardy acted as Lord Hamilton's election agent, 'Obituary,' Ibid.
[41] F. B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill*, p. 235.
[42] Ballot Act (1872) hereafter (35 & 36 Vict.) c.33, also *CIC Mins*, September 18, 1872.

that John Russell Cloutte, a local schoolmaster, was a candidate but withdrew shortly before the vote, agreeing instead to be a Commission Auditor.[43] This left the *status quo* unchallenged and the following month Commissioners reversed the secret ballot decision.[44]

For many reasons, the 1874 Improvement Commission elections were the most hotly-contested in its lifetime. This was a General Election year (when Middlesex, with the nation, voted Conservative), and this usually increased candidates for the local authority. Also that year the Public Worship Regulation Act was passed to curb 'ritualist' practices in the Church of England.[45] This was strongly felt in Chiswick, and the Act was later used to imprison two 'ritualist' vicars known locally: the Rev. Arthur Tooth, who, from 1865 to 1868, had assisted Rev. Dale at Chiswick New Town's Chapel of St Mary Magdalene; and Dale's older brother Thomas Pelham Dale.[46] But the candidacies of three local clerics that year were probably unrelated to the Act, but instead due to their joint-membership of Chiswick's School Board.[47] Hennock has traced a connection elsewhere, in Birmingham for example, between local worthies who implemented the Education Act and their interest in serving on civic authorities (though these had no official jurisdiction over schools).[48] Thomas Burt, Superintendent for the Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), may fall under that same 'education' category, but his electoral appeal was almost certainly boosted by his Chairmanship of a local ratepayers association.[49]

[43] Ibid., November 6, 1872.
[44] Ibid., December 18, 1872.
[45] Public Worship Regulation Act (1874), hereafter (37 & 38 Vict.) c.85.
[46] Reverend Arthur Tooth, ODNB, and Thomas Pelham Dale, *ODNB* (full citations in Bibliography).
[47] *CIC Mins,* November 11, 1874.
[48] E.P. Hennock, *Fit and Proper Persons*, pp. 80-81.
[49] 1871 Census, Ancestry.co.uk, and *CIC Mins*, July 27, 1870.

The Commissioners' 1877 election was noteworthy for social and political reasons. That year Chiswick's main drainage scheme got underway and it is no surprise, since the Commission had borrowed £30,000 for it, that Thomas Burt was re-elected. But of wider social interest was the election, finally, of John Russell Cloutte.[50] He taught at the Belmont House School, which prepared children 'for the services and professions.'[51] As before, Cloutte was probably nominated by James Flexman, a Turnham Green ironmonger. Flexman also stood unsuccessfully that year, and the very fact of his candidacy – and that he almost won a seat - speaks to the rising status and assertiveness of Chiswick's shopkeeping classes.[52] Cloutte may have been supported by builders and artisans, who could benefit from the talent his school produced.[53] He was not openly party political, though his later libertarian interventions on the Turnham Green cricket pitch suggest Liberal views.[54] That year's election of William Henry Norman and Dr Gordon Hogg adds further political interest. Norman, a retired Licensed Victualler, was 'a most zealous [Conservative Association] Committee Member'[55] and Dr Gordon Hogg was an aspiring Liberal politician. [56] At this time, Improvement Commission membership seems to have been political Liberal, though with a small 'L.' But its Conservative members were more politically and socially active in the community.[57]

[50] 1871 Census, Ancestry.co.uk and *CIC Mins*, November 14, 1877.
[51] 'Chiswick: Education', *BHO (full citation in Bibliography)*.
[52] CIC Mins, 14 November, 1877.
[53] The builder Henry Eydmann, Junior, nominated Cloutte in 1873.
[54] See Chapter 7.
[55] 1881 Census, Ancestry.co.uk, and *AG, October 9,* 1880.
[56] 'Middlesex, Ealing [331],' in F.W.S. Craig, ed., *British Parliamentary Election Results 1885-1918*, (London & Basingstoke, 1974), p.345.
[57] See Chapter 7. Conservative members included Rev. Dale, 'Chiswick Conservative Association,' *AG*, July 8, 1882.

Many factors led to the 'lively proceedings' at the Commissioners' elections in 1880, another General Election year. Even without the politics, rising rates and costs to individual property owners from the parish main drainage scheme were causing discomfort.[58] By now £60,000 had been borrowed for this, which residents had to fund in their rates, which rose by 33% in 1879 and a further 21% in 1880. [59] Now the prospect of another rates hike loomed, to fund repairs to the Brentford (now Chiswick High) Road which was newly designated a 'Main Road' under the Highways Act of 1878.[60] This Act stipulated that the County should contribute financially towards maintenance of main roads, following the abolition of the Turnpike Trusts. Under its provisions Improvement Commissioners expected to receive half the costs of maintaining Chiswick's Main Road from the County. But this depended on a 'Certificate of Satisfaction' from the County Surveyor showing that the road was properly formed and maintained, which the surveyor did not provide. So Chiswick was forced to borrow £5,000 from the Local Government Board to improve the Brentford Road itself. [61] Everyone knew that Chiswick's roads were terrible. Even the *Acton Gazette's* Editor suggested that John Macadam must be turning in his grave. [62]

The Commission began to flex its muscles in 1880, by more energetically enforcing its bye laws and the provisions of public health legislation. The former Commissioner and *rentier*, Henry Newcombe, leader of rebels in the 1866 Improvement Commission elections, was now supplying his tenants with foul drinking water from a pump and action was taken

[58] By May, 300 notices had been served on owners for connections with main sewers, *CIC Mins*, May 19, 1880.
[59] *CIC Mins* April 16 and October 15 1879, April 21 and October 18, 1880.
[60] Section 13 of the Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act (1878), hereafter (41 & 42 Vict.) c.77.
[61] *CIC Mins*, March 3, 1880. Chiswick was not alone; Acton, Heston and Isleworth also appealed the County Surveyor's findings, *CIC Mins* February 18, 1880.
[62] Editorial, *AG,* March 13, 1880.

against him, and two others, for refusing to close them and provide clean water.[63] Elsewhere, developers of the new Sulhamstead Estate were told to form a more costly 40 foot-wide road at its southern end.[64] The days of *laissez faire* local governance were clearly gone. The community was not grateful, and during that year's election meeting, Commissioners faced hectoring and strident allegations of incompetence and favouritism.[65] Flooding on Turnham Green had not been this bad for 25 years, said Henry Eydmann Junior, through the Commission's 'endeavour to teach the water to run up-hill five feet'. Not only that, but the £60,000 public works loan was, he insisted, benefitting the south and east of the parish, including the new Bedford Park Estate, more than the west. 'The engineer made the whole of the western district private property, so that the inhabitants… are expected to drain their own district themselves. This is an injustice which ought to be made known,' said Eydmann, 'There has been a [public] sewer laid for the drainage of a portion of the Bedford Park district.'[66] Another ratepayer, George Bateman, wondered whether the Commissioners 'had got average capacities (laughter)?' They needed new blood, he said. 'Did they think they were the only qualified men to sit at the Board? '[67]

In the event all of the Commissioners' men were elected, but strong support for their opponents showed that a newly assertive, commercial, class of residents thought themselves at least equal to the parish's governing elite. [68] This is a likely consequence of

[63] *CIC Mins* December 17, 1879, January 7 and 21, February 4 and 18, 1880 and March 16, 1881.
[64] *CIC Mins*, February 18 and August 4, 1880, and May 19, 1881.
[65] 'Board of Commissioners, Lively Proceedings,' *AG,* November 6, 1880.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid., and *CIC Mins* November 10, 1880.

the extension of the franchise and also of immigration with newcomers like Bateman ('the amusing Yorkshireman') disinclined to observe local niceties.[69]

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how, in the absence of newspaper reporting, raw data from local authority elections can be extracted and combined with other primary sources, to elucidate unreported periods in Chiswick's history. Our graphs show that while the General Elections of 1865, 1868, 1874 and 1880 went unmentioned in Improvement Commission minutes, along with the passing of the Second Reform Act in 1867, there was a correlation between these events and pressure for seats on its board. Changes to the Commission's member profile have been linked to those events and in some cases mirror the changes on other local authorities. But to understand whether this helped the Commission to improve Chiswick, we need to view the scene from the perspective of its residents in a small but growing and industrializing town near the Metropolis. And it is to them that we now turn.

[69] 'Local Notes,' AG, July 8, 1882.

Chapter 6 Improving Chiswick in the Age of Reform

'In the fifties, large houses tenanted by well to do families were the rule throughout the parish; now there are very few of these to be seen, and the parish of St Nicolas is the abode principally of artisans, mechanics, and grades of society considerably below these, while factories of various kinds cover sites formerly occupied by substantial residences and grounds.'

Reverend Dale, Obituary, 1898.[1]

Chiswick was a village when the Improvement Commission took office but by its end, Chiswick was a town. And though its lifetime spanned the gas lit to the electric age it was social, not scientific, innovation that made the Commission change. We saw in Chapter 5 how community assertiveness grew before and after the Reform Act of 1867, altering Chiswick's local authority to better represent ratepayers. Here we will ask how ratepayers themselves changed and demanded new kinds of 'improvement.'

We cannot think of Chiswick at this time without its riverside industrialization. This brought to the parish newly-aspirational and assertive working classes who demanded higher standards of living. Between 1874 and 1891, the global success of Chiswick's 'Thorneycroft & Donaldson' shipbuilding firm, and its high speed boats, was phenomenal (Figure 17). In those years alone, Barnaby counted 222 torpedo boats designed, built and supplied by Thorneycroft to navies from Norway to New Zealand. [2] And as Europe's colonial carve-up of Africa got underway, Thorneycroft supplied Baptist missionaries with an ingenious flat-pack

[1] Reverend Lawford William Torriano Dale, Vicar of Chiswick (1857-1898), *TCT*, May 6, 1898, CLSL.
[2] K.C. Barnaby, *100 Years of Specialized Shipbuilding and Engineering, John I Thorneycroft Centenary 1964* (London, 1964), p.24.

steamboat for navigating the Upper Congo river.[3] The firm's Chiswick works was a centre of technical innovation whose *'Lightning'* torpedo vessel, built in 1877, was the fastest in H.M. Navy. It would, said *The Times*, 'play an important part in any future naval war.'[4]

Figure 17: Speed testing 'The Sir Arthur Cotton' in Chiswick (1874). The *London Journal* said she was the fastest vessel in the world with a trial speed of 21.4 knots. [5]

Chiswick's riverside remained an engineering hub until the early 20th century, though few traces of this remain today. We recall it here for the transformation it brought to Chiswick life in the Second Reform period, not just from the noise and environmental pollution of Thorneycroft's coal-fired, steam-powered works, but through its employees. Thorneycroft's shipbuilding engineers were among the class of more secure, better-paid and protected workers described by Kirk and others as a labour 'aristocracy.'[6] In 1880s Chiswick they were

[3] 'New Steamboat for the Baptist Missionary Society,' *AG*, October 29, 1882.
[4] "Her Majesty's Steam Torpedo Vessel 'Lightning'," *The Times*, March 20, 1877.
[5] K.C. Barnaby, *100 years of Specialist Shipbuilding*, p.23. Chiswick graveyard is just behind the trees.
[6] N. Kirk, Change, *Continuity and Class*, pp. 28-32.

a force to be reckoned with. A hundred and twenty of Thorneycroft's 'riviters,' 'holders-up' and 'angle-iron smiths and platers' were members of the Boiler and Iron Shipbuilders Association and struck in 1882, as they had two years earlier, for higher wages.[7] 'The men are quite able to get work elsewhere,' wrote *The Acton Gazette*, 'and a number of them have already gone either to the east end of London or to the north of England, and have been found employment.'[8] Even before the strike, the engineers earned (assuming a six day week) 34, 26 and 42 shillings, respectively, per week.[9] As we shall see Commissioners, now including the civil engineer and philanthropist John Donaldson, J. I. Thorneycroft's partner, would be forced to consider the views of such people in Chiswick's Improvement.[10]

These and other demographic and socio-economic changes occurred in the context of parliamentary Reform which, after 1867, increased the voting rights of Chiswick's working class neighbours in the newly-created Borough of Chelsea. Did it matter to Chiswick's workers that they were not similarly enfranchised? In this chapter we will see evidence of working class politicization, suggesting that it did. This was also a time of class fragmentation, described by Kirk among working classes but also among the middle classes, with the railway-led emergence of commuting city workers.[11] It will be shown that two new housing estates, begun in the 1870s, represented two new, class-based, geographic zones in Chiswick which became loci of improving cultural change. We will explore the impact of social legislation on these communities, from new building, public health and

[7] 'The Strike at the Torpedo Works,' *Acton Gazette,* Saturday, July 1, 1882.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid. For further details of the Glebe Estate's early community see G. Clegg, 'The Glebe Estate,' *Brentford & Chiswick Local History Journal*, No. 12 (2003), pp. 17-20.
[10] Donaldson was elected anImprovement Commissioner on May 24, 1876, serving until November 8, 1882, *CIC Mins*.
[11] Ibid., see also R. Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, p.12 for the increasing segregation of work and home life in the City of London at this time.

environmental standards to increased leisure time and newly accessible open spaces. It will become apparent that in Chiswick, as elsewhere, Reform symbolized more than the vote.

How did Reform affect voting rights in Chiswick?

As a result of the 1867 Reform Act, Chelsea's working men benefitted from a new 'Lodger Franchise' which meant that, however much they paid in rates, if their rates were fully paid-up they could vote.[12] All of Chelsea's 'occupiers' could now register for the vote whereas in Chiswick, a county parish, a qualifying minimum of £12 in 'occupiers' rates, or ownership of property rated above £5, applied.[13] The county registration process was more cumbersome than in boroughs and this would further have impeded working-class voting in Chiswick.[14] Chiswick's boundary with Hammersmith meant that it was just a footstep away from the Lodger Franchise and this seems likely to have caused some resentment among its aspirational working classes. No wonder, then, that in the Second Reform period we find a Chiswick that is fractious and increasingly politicized, with ratepayers of all classes asserting their rights to hold local government to account, even if national government was beyond their purview. Coinciding, as it did, with Chiswick's property development boom this period saw the flourishing of diverse political, cultural and leisure activities on new housing estates, which also set new improvement demands. In 1880, from the start of detailed newspaper reporting we can see how those needs were realised and a new political phenomenon, the constituency party machine, grew up in Chiswick to play its part in the changes.

[12] The Borough of Chelsea was created under (30 & 31 Vict.) c.102, Schedule B. It included Hammersmith, Kensington and Fulham. Chiswick's vestry opposed the Boundary Commission's proposal to include 'a large portion of the parish' in Chelsea. It estimated that the consequent abolition of compounding would force a rates increase of 6d in the pound, *CVM* April 13 & 23, 1868.
[13] (30 & 31 Vict.) c.102, S.4-6.
[14] F.B. Smith, *Making of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 202-203 and pp.236-237.

How did the Improvement Commission respond to Social Legislation?

The community assertiveness which grew in Chiswick was bolstered by new social legislation. This set higher local government, environmental and public health standards and offered mechanisms that ratepayers could use to hold existing local authorities to account.[15] Much of the early legislation, for example, the Local Government Act (1858) was permissive and where possible the Improvement Commissioners ignored it. Later Acts were compulsory and, as Chapter 4 showed, required the employment of local Inspectors for compliance and enforcement. But, as we shall see later, even a permissive Act that was not adopted could influence local improvements, as with the Commons Act (1876).[16]

Belatedly, as Chiswick's first property boom got underway, sections of the Local Government Act were adopted and, on 21st June, 1870, used to make Chiswick parish building bye laws and control new housing developments, streets and sewers.[17] The timing of this may have been linked to plans, finalized in 1869, for the working class Glebe Estate.[18] Commissioners will have witnessed the perils of unregulated housing development on the South Acton Estate, one and a half miles away. It had become a slum district and home to pig keeping, slaughterhouses, manure heaps and the boiling and crushing of bones.[19] Five years later Improvement Commissioners considered adopting the Artizan's and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act (1875).[20] It is not clear whether that actually happened.

[15] e.g. Chapter 5, fn.23-25.
[16] Commons Act (1876), hereafter (39 & 40 Vict.) c.56.
[17] (21 & 22 Vict.) c.98, S. 34, 35, 36 and 75 were adopted. S. 36 gave the Improvement Commission powers to make new streets while S.75 gave it compulsory purchase powers, needed for Chiswick's planned sewerage works. S.34 and S.35 enabled the Improvement Commissioner's building bye laws.
[18] See 'New Houses for New Classes' below.
[19] M.A. Jahn, 'Railways and Suburban Development,' p.80.
[20] Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act (1875), hereafter (38 & 39 Vict.) c.36, *CIC Mins*, December 15, 1875, January 19, 1876 and March 1, 1882.

New Houses for New Classes

Ninety eight houses were being built in Chiswick, during 1871, compared with just two in 1861.[21] By 1881, a hundred and sixty six were under construction and a second property boom was underway.[22] Though development was Chiswick-wide, it was concentrated in two new class-specific zones. These were Bedford Park, housing the new metropolitan middle-classes (Figure 18), and half a mile to the south, the Glebe Estate, housing Chiswick's new 'labour aristocracy' (Figure 19). Chiswick New Town, also shown, was the only working class estate of any size built before 1870 and housed some of the parish poorest.

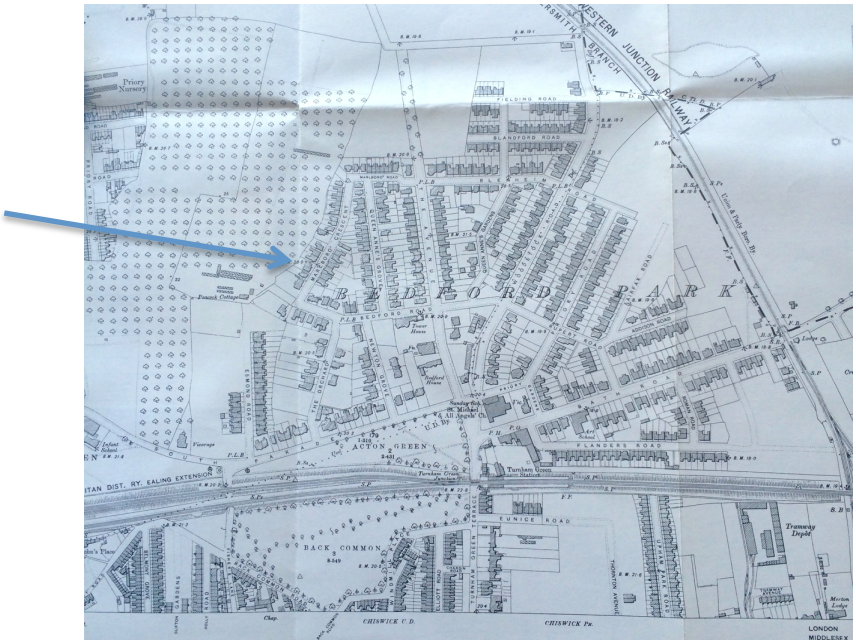

Figure 18: The Bedford Park Estate.[23]

[21] James Wisdom, 'The Making of a West London Suburb,' p. 132.
[22] Ibid.
[23] 'North Hammersmith & Bedford Park,' *Old Ordnance Survey Maps* (1893), The Godfrey Edition.

Figure 19: The Glebe Estate and Chiswick New Town. [24]

Chiswick New Town

Chiswick New Town had always been near the bottom of Chiswick's housing heap. Built in the 1820s for agricultural workers, '[t]his range of buildings,' said the Vicar in 1858, 'is in the centre of a district of extreme poverty the population of which is about 1800, or from 1800 to 2000.'[25] From the first, Improvement Commissioners saw Chiswick New Town as a problem. Their references to it were invariably negative, typically focusing on its uneven roads, pigs, smallpox and other sanitary evils, 'degradation, sickness and premature death.'[26] Contemporaries thus regarded Chiswick New Town's densely-packed terraces as home to the parish *residuum*, though Hammond has found its community was more diverse than

[24] The orthogonal Glebe Estate is above the triangular Chiswick New Town, from 'Chiswick,' *Old Ordnance Survey Maps* (1893), CLSL.
[25] Reverend LWT Dale to the Lord Bishop of London, December 25, 1858, *F.P. Jackson,* f.256, Lambeth Palace Library.
[26] *CIC Mins*, September 8, 1858, November 23, 1859, November 9, 1864, and July 14, 1866.

that.[27] During the 1860s Parliament feared and wanted to exclude this class of people from the proposed extension of the franchise.[28] North of Chiswick New Town, separated only by a 'plantation,' was the Glebe Estate. Built from 1871 this offered a better class of workers' housing.[29]

The Glebe Estate

Built by a small, *ad hoc* consortium of water engineers and an investor-industrialist, and designed in collaboration with the Vicar, the 20-acre Glebe Estate served Chiswick's aspirational, skilled working classes – or 'artizans.'[30] Its slightly-less densely packed terraces of 16-17 foot-wide workers' cottages on 40 foot-wide streets had front and back gardens, unlike Chiswick New Town's, windows and fireplaces in every room, and most of its WCs emptied to drains, not cesspools.[31] It was the local, market-based, realization of a philanthropic housing movement started, in the 1860s, to offer respectable homes for respectable workers.[32] Kirk shows how this labour aristocracy saw the poverty of labouring classes as symptomatic of character failings, want of initiative and self-help.[33]

The Glebe Estate housed builders, carpenters, joiners, painter-decoraters and others profiting from the construction boom, alongside railway workers, clerks and shipbuilding engineers. Fifteen years earlier, in parliamentary discussions on Reform, William Ewart

[27] P. Hammond, 'Chiswick New Town.'
[28] For comparison of the *residuum* with skilled workers, F. B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill*, p.13.
[29] 'Fraser A & Ors,' *Chiswick, St Nicholas w. St Mary Magdalene*, ECE/7/1/36597, Church of England Record Centre.
[30] T. & R. Szwagrzak, 'Early Days of the Glebe Estate, a work in progress,' *Glebe Estate Residents' Association*, also CLSL.
[31] Ibid., and J. Wisdom, 'The Making of a West London Suburb,' pp.81-82.
[32] J.N. Tarn, *Five Per Cent Philanthropy, An account of housing in urban areas between 1840 and 1914*, (Cambridge, 1973), pp.42-66.
[33] N. Kirk, Change, *Continuity and Class* pp. 30-32.

Gladstone had thought to extend the vote to such men by setting the minimum qualification at earnings of 26 shillings, which made the franchise 'unattainable by the peasantry or mere hand labourers, except in very favourable circumstances… while it is… very generally attainable by the artisans and skilled labourers of our towns.'[34] Though Glebe Estate residents would be more likely to qualify for the vote under the new 'occupier' franchise, many were excluded through shared house occupation.[35]

Gladstone and Disraeli may have liked the sound of such voters, but Chiswick's Improvement Commissioners found them and the Estate's sloppy 'jerry builders', troublesome.[36] While Glebe residents petitioned for better lighting, footpaths and sewering, their new houses and streets flouted the Commissioners' building bye-laws.[37] Dwellings were poorly constructed with 'bad materials'[38] and neighbouring streets for a similar demographic doubled as landfill. Here 'tins of putrid fish and meat' were substituted for hardcore.[39] Elsewhere in London, Dyos has wondered why, in such 'busless muddy wastes of half-finished estates people did not complain more.' In Chapter 8 we will learn that they did.

[34] F. B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill*, p. 67.
[35] J. Wisdom, 'Making of a West London Suburb,' p. 85.
[36] 'Jerry building' entered the lexicon at this time, H. J. Dyos, 'The Speculative Builders and Developers of Victorian London,' *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 11, Supplement: Symposium on the Victorian City (2) (Summer, 1968), pp. 641-690, p.676.
[37] *CIC Mins*, January 17, 1872, September 17, 1873, October 15, 1879, July 7 & 21, and September22, 1880, March 16, May 18, June 15, September 21, October 5 & 19, and December 7, 1881, and February 6, 1884.
[38] 'Letter to Mr Beeston,' *Letter Book No. 2*, October 11, 1875, p.268, CLSL.
[39] *CIC Mins* October 20, 1875, also June 2, 1880, and 'Queer Macadam,' Chiswick, *AG*, 25 December, 1880.

The Bedford Park Estate

On the top tier of Chiswick's new housing stratification was Jonathan Carr's Bedford Park, built over 11 years from 1875.[40] Its architect-designed, Queen Anne style houses led to its contemporary labelling as a 'suburb for aesthetes.'[41] It is better regarded as a retreat for the new metropolitan middle class who could afford to commute to work in London. Occupiers of Bedford Park houses, paying upwards of £32 yearly rental, would have qualified for the county 'occupier' franchise.[42] Though many regard Bedford Park as 'the first garden suburb'[43] Richard Dennis argues that it was more than that; not just a retreat from metropolitan living, but also from the 'randomness of the urban fringe.'[44] Thanks to the advocacy of Bedford Park's developer, Jonathan Carr, its residents were protected from the randomness of Chiswick life, too. Unlike Glebe residents, no minuted records have been found of Bedford Park residents petitioning Improvement Commissioners directly (beyond its residents who were also Improvement Commissioners). But the 'pester power' of Jonathan Carr was evident soon after Bedford Park's construction began. He was the Commissioners' most prolific, individual correspondent, with at least twenty recorded communications between 1877 and 1882. The greatest of his demands was for Chiswick parish to assimilate a 29-acre detached portion of Ealing, so as to improve the drainage of his new houses there.[45] It would be to too tedious to list his many other demands.

[40] Now considered an iconic Chiswick housing development, just 15 of Bedford Park's 113 acres were originally in Chiswick. 29 acres were in the detached portion of Ealing (adopted by Chiswick in 1879) and 69 acres were in Acton, 'An Important Application… from the Vigilance Committee…,' Bedford Park, *AG*, June 23, 1883, also *CIC Mins* July 16, 1879.
[41] A. Saint, 'Bedford Park, Radical Suburb,' a publication of *The Bedford Park Society*, (London, 2016), p.16, CLSL.
[42] 'Bedford Park,' *The Bedford Park Gazette*, October, 1883, p.47, CLSL.
[43] http://www.bedfordpark.org.uk, [Accessed 23rd August, 2016].
[44] R. Dennis, *Cities in Modernity, Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp.184-5.
[45] *CIC Mins*, September 19, 1877, May 1 & 29, June 5, 1878, May 19, 1880, May 4, 1881.

Bedford Park and Glebe Estate residents had different experiences of life on the 'urban fringe.' Once suitable train services started, Bedford Park residents commuted. Work and home were two different places for them, justifying their suburban characterisation. Due to its subsequent fame and appeal, Bedford Park and its villadom has sometimes coloured historians' understanding of the whole of Chiswick at this time. Yet next to the parish church, just a mile from Bedford Park, were shipbuilders; not a typically suburban feature. Chiswick's working class residents, whether in Chiswick New Town or the Glebe Estate, would not, in the main, have commuted to work. Jahn found that daily workmen's train services and fares did not reach Chiswick before the 1890s.[46] From this it seems clear that Chiswick's working classes were not suburban in the Improvement Commission's day, in anything but the most ill-defined of geographical senses. By exploring the reality of life on Chiswick's new housing developments we can better understand Chiswick's late nineteenth century history.

Leisure, Lifestyle and Improvement

Leisure time became increasingly important in the Second Reform period, when new social legislation granted extra Bank Holidays and increased access to open spaces.[47] Shop workers demanded shorter working hours and an 'Early Closing Movement' spread into Chiswick from Acton.[48] New sporting and cultural associations began to build cross-class social cohesion and placed new demands on the Chiswick Improvement Commission.

[46] M.A. Jahn, 'Railways and Suburban Development,' p.137.
[47] Bank Holidays Act (1871), hereafter (34 & 35 Vict.) c.17, and (39 & 40 Vict.) c.56,
[48] 'Early Closing Movement, Public Meeting of Employers and Assistants in Acton,' *AG*, October 7, 1882.

Between Bedford Park, the Glebe Estate and Chiswick New Town there were the expected differences in leisure activities. Bedford Park had a tennis court, and drama and debating in the Bedford Park Club which, Saint reminds us, was radical for its time in granting membership to both men and women.[49] The Glebe Estate had Billiards and Skittles at The Bolton Hotel (its pub),[50] and for the newly sober, a British Workmen's Club was formed where, for a penny a week, men could sit with 'daily and other papers… and spend an hour together without the temptation to drink. '[51] They had 'taken the pledge,' at recent, immensely popular, Chiswick meetings of the visiting Blue Ribbon Army Mission. A 'great temperance wave,' said the *Acton Gazette's* editor, was 'Shaking the Great Metropolis to its very centre.' And he wondered whether it would 'compel the whole race of Englishmen to become water drinkers?'[52] The movement's popularity in Chiswick speaks to the socio-economic conditions of parish life. Clark has argued that its success in 1870s and 1880s England was linked to industrial urbanization, social dislocation and deprivation; it was never a rural movement.[53] Chiswick's enthusiasm for temperance was evidence that shipbuilding, construction and the coming of the railways made Chiswick feel industrial, reminding us of the poverty and deprivation later recalled by the Vicar.

Temperance and the Improvement of Drinking Water

It was through an earlier temperance missionary that Commissioners were forced to improve drinking water for some of Chiswick's poorest residents. In 1879, the Treasurer of

[49] A. Saint, 'Bedford Park, Radical Suburb,' *Special Publication by the Bedford Park Society* (London, 2016), pp.25-27, CLSL.
[50] 'Particulars and Conditions of Sale, "The Bolton Hotel,"' ACC/0891/02/09/0010, LMA.
[51] British Workmen's Club, *AG*, October 14, 1882.
[52] Ibid., 'Blue Ribbon Gospel Temperance Movement,' September 23, 1882.
[53] P. Clark review of L. Shilman, *Crusade against Drink in Victorian England*, *The American Historical Review*, 95, No.1 (February, 1990), pp.168.

the Temperance Society, Mr Webb, wrote to Chiswick's Medical Officer of Health about the water-pumps at Pack Horse Square. The former Commissioner, Henry Newcombe, owned cottages there.[54] Webb had obtained an analysis of the water and further analysis obtained by Improvement Commissioners led to a subsequent court case and judgment that the water Newcombe supplied to his tenants was not safe for 'domestic purposes.'[55] The original complaint was made under the Public Health Act (1875) and Improvement Commissioners were thus forced to act, illustrating the locally empowering effects of that great consolidating piece of social legislation.[56]

This event also provides intriguing evidence concerning the public understanding of science in 1879, as it suggests a surprisingly rapid dissemination of new scientific ideas on the causes of disease.[57] Although Pasteur and Lister had long held to the 'germ theory' still, in 1874, scientists from 21 nations believed 'the ambient air,' caused cholera.[58] Although Robert Koch identified cholera bacteria in 1884, proving that it was not caused by anything in the air, still the idea that invisibly-small things could spread disease is thought to have been only slowly accepted. Surgeons, for example, did not routinely wear gloves and gowns to operate until the 1920s.[59] Yet here was a temperance missionary in Chiswick connecting sickness with something invisible in water; something only 'analysis' could identify. Mr Webb's scientific knowledge appears to have been ahead of Dr Dodsworth, Chiswick's

[54] *CIC Mins*, November 19, 1879.
[55] 'Closing Private Wells,' Chiswick, *AG*, July 22, 1882. The three-year delay was caused by the Hammersmith Court system, *CIC Mins*, August 3, 1881.
[56] Section 70 of the Public Health Act (1875), hereafter (38 & 39 Vict.) c.55.
[57] 'Germ Theory, Brought to Life, Explaining the History of Medicine,' *Science Museum,* http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/techniques/germtheory, [Accessed 22 September, 2016].
[58] N. Howard-Jones, 'Robert Koch and the cholera vibrio: a centenary,' *British Medical Journal* (Clin. Res. Ed), 1984 Feb 4; 288(6414), pp.379-381, pp.379-380.
[59] 'Gloves, Gowns and Clothing,' Brought to Life, http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/techniques/clothing, [Accessed 26 September, 2016].

Medical Officer of Health, who considered 'free access of air and good drainage,' to be just as important as an 'improved water supply,' in lowering Chiswick's disease risk from enteric or typhoid fevers.[60] This episode may indicate that the spread of new medical knowledge in the late Victorian era was more complex, and more rapid, than has been recognised.

Open spaces and Public Health

Under the Commons Act of 1876, Improvement Commissioners planned to acquire Chiswick's remaining Commons and waste lands. This important piece of social legislation added the democratisation of open spaces to extensions of the franchise by allowing local authorities to obtain Commons for public exercise, recreation and allotments for the labouring poor.[61] Ultimately, Improvement Commissioners adopted the less prescriptive Metropolitan Commons Act (1866) following a 'memorial' of ratepayers and inhabitants. [62] A year earlier gypsies had formed an encampment on Chiswick Back Common, close to Bedford Park, and complaints had led Improvement Commissioners to employ a bailiff to remove them. [63] Chiswick's Commons were said to be in a bad state and trees were being destroyed.[64] Following acquisition of the Commons, Jonathan Carr, a newly elected Improvement Commissioner persuaded the Commission to consider the costs of putting 'the whole of the Commons in such order as will make them of the greatest advantage to the parish.'[65] Improvement to Commons in the neighbourhood of Bedford Park would have

[60] *MOH Report, 1882*.
[61] (39 & 40 Vict.) c.56.
[62] *CIC Mins,* May 18, 1881.
[63] Ibid., November 16 and December 7, 1881.
[64] Ibid., July 20, 1881, an early example of concern for trees, so current in Chiswick today.
[65] Ibid., May 16, 1883.

made Carr's Estate more attractive. Meanwhile, Commissioners spoiled the fun of the parish poor by banning the 'playing at Cocoa Nuts on the Commons.'[66]

Bedford Park's success was predicated on its health benefits and garden aspect. Figure 20 illustrates the marketing appeal of low mortality statistics, however false these were. [67]

Figure 20: 1882 Advertisement for Bedford Park [68]

Cricket, 'Cocoa nuts' and Quoits: the Sporting Battles of Turnham Green (1883).

Chiswick's Cricketers were appalled following the Improvement Commission's acquisition of Turnham Green Front Common, because it had not considered the maintenance of its cricket pitch or, indeed, how to protect the public from flying balls. Where once Cavaliers

[66] Ibid., May 2, 1883.
[67] There were 5 deaths in Bedford Park in 1882, not 5 (or 6) deaths per thousand. *MOH Report, 1883*.
[68] Photograph courtesy of Dr David Budworth, from his private collection.

had faced Roundheads a new Battle of Turnham Green now commenced over who governed the ground. Its story provides a further example of just how disconnected from the community, how divided among its members, and how incompetent the Commission had become by its final months.

Cricket matches had been played on Turnham Green Common since 1822 and, since 1864, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who owned it had allowed the Chiswick and Turnham Green Cricket Club to 'take possession' of it. [69] When Improvement Commissioners acquired Chiswick's Commons, Ecclesiastical Commissioners expected the Cricket Club's enjoyment of the pitch to continue.[70] But the Improvement Commission asserted that it, not the Cricket Club, would now control all applications for its use.[71] So the Club responded by removing its protective posts and chains, which enclosed the pitch, and a dispute ensued in which some Improvement Commissioners found their loyalties divided. The veteran Commissioner and Cricket Club member, Henry Smith, foresaw that 'so soon as the Front Common was thrown open, it would be altogether spoilt for cricketing purposes and who should say that it would not shortly be turned into a quoit ground.'[72]

Over its history, the Club had spent £1,200 on maintaining the ground and knew unrestricted access to the pitch would wear it out. Benjamin Hardy, another leading Improvement Commissioner, had personally spent £70 or £80 on its upkeep. 'Some one must be answerable for the control of these Commons…' he said. Just ' because the ground was capable of bearing 50 or 60 matches during the season, that was no reason why 150 should be played upon

[69] 'The Cricket Club and the Commissioners,' Turnham Green, *AG*, May 5, 1883.
[70] *CIC Mins* May 16, 1883.
[71] CIC Mins, 11 April,1883.
[72] Ibid. Quoits is a game where metal hoops or horseshoes are thrown onto a stake in the ground.

it.' Not everyone felt similarly. John Russell Cloutte, the Improvement Commissioner teacher at Belmont School, had always resented the Cricket Club's posts and chains and the fees they charged his students to play on the pitch.[73] But his views were disregarded, as he had once demanded a football match on the crease.

Cricketers felt the Commissioners *laissez faire* would ruin the ground and deter good clubs from playing Chiswick fixtures. And the Commission's apparent cluelessness was making it a laughing stock. 'That august body,' said Mr Wylde, at a Cricket Club meeting, 'had decided that they might collect monies, for the use of the ground, but afterwards found that they had no powers to levy money, and deputed that power to the [Chiswick and Turnham Green Cricket] Club (renewed laughter).' A week later Dr Gordon Hogg, the Liberal Commissioner urged unilateral action and 'In as public a manner as possible, to replace the posts and chains.'[74] This they did and ultimately, facing no Improvement Commission backlash, the Cricket Club regained *de facto* control of the pitch. 'We simply agree to shut our eyes and not see that the ground is enclosed,' said Jonathan Carr. [75]

Henry Smith's early warning about the risks of opening up the Common came true. It was damaged by 'roughs… who cut [it] up… by playing quoits thereon.'[76] The surprising allegation was made by the Liberal Commissioner, George Edwards, at a subsequent Improvement Commission meeting that a senior Cricket Club official had actually paid for the damage to be done.[77] Why? At the next Club meeting it was said this was a politically-motivated slur.

[73] 'The Cricket Club and the Commissioners,' Turnham Green, *AG*, May 5, 1883
[74] 'Cricket on Turnham Green Common', *Ibid.*, May 12, 1883.
[75] First meeting of 'Chiswick Local Board', Ibid., June 9, 1883.
[76] 'The Cricket Club & the Commissioners, Mr Edwards' Accusation', Ibid., May 26, 1883.
[77] Ibid.

[78] If so, it may have been aimed at Benjamin Hardy, the Cricket Club's Treasurer, who was Chairman of the hugely successful Chiswick Conservative Association. This episode reveals not only Chiswick's love of cricket, but also the Improvement Commission's lack of foresight and control. And it provides a tantalizing glimpse of the power of Victorian 'soft-politics' through clubs and societies, which will be explored later.

Tramways, Cheap Trains and Chiswick Improvement

In December 1880, when the 'Shepherd's Bush, Gunnersbury and Kew Tramways Company' wished to lay tracks through Chiswick's main, Brentford Road, the Improvement Commission was divided. It had received 'memorials' for and against; from the 'Gunnersbury and Turnham Green Railway Passengers Protection Association' and from 'owners, ratepayers and frontagers,' respectively.[79] First the Commission was 'against' the tramway, then 'for' and then 'against,' again. Ultimately, despite a supporting petition bearing 2000 signatures, (representing one eighth of the local population), Commissioners rejected the plans.[80] In March 1881 the tramway company decided to terminate its tracks just east of Chiswick parish.[81] The Commission's vacillation on this and the apparently greater influence of wealthier ratepayers (the frontagers) than 'passengers', was a sign of its disconnection with the wider Chiswick community.

Until prompted, Improvement Commissioners had not thought to assist hopeful working class railway commuters in obtaining cheaper and earlier train services. But in 1883, assisted by the leading local Conservatives (and Improvement Commissioners) William

[78] Ibid.
[79] *CIC Mins,* December 15, 1880.
[80] Ibid., February 2, 1881.
[81] Ibid., March 16, 1881.

Blakiston and John Fowle, an 'Early Workmen's Trains' lobby grew in Chiswick, as in Acton. As elsewhere, this followed the report of the Select Committee on Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (1882), which supported the migration of working people from the city to the outer suburbs.[82] To facilitate this, new early and late train services at cheap, 3rd Class fares would be needed and the Select Committee offered tax incentives to railway companies for this.[83] In 1883, such services between London and Chiswick were not yet available and this was linked to low house occupancy in the parish. At an Early Workmen's Trains meeting, Mr Henderson said it was too much 'for working men to have to walk to town, and then work about twelve or fourteen hours a day, as he had to do many a time.'[84] In support, William Blakiston said he did not wish to patronise working men but felt '…it was the duty of every one to lend a helping hand in a movement which would greatly benefit not only the working men but also other residents in the district.'[85] A resolution sent from the meeting to the Improvement Commission sought its influential support. Its Clerk, Robert Finnis, subsequently wrote to the railway companies requesting workmen's fares and services in Chiswick.[86] Yet despite this, and the passage of the Cheap Trains Act that year, commuter services for Chiswick's working classes did not arrive until the 1890s.[87] Here we perceive an Improvement Commission which, just months before its repalcement with a Local Board, had become more receptive to popular pressure. We can also see bridges formed between working and middle-classes, built through local Conservative activism and it is to this that we now turn.

[82] M.A. Jahn,'Railways and Suburban Development,' p. 136.
[83] Ibid.
[84] 'Early Workmen's Trains, meeting at Acton Green', *AG*, April 21, 1883.
[85] Ibid.
[86] *CIC Mins*, April 18, 1883.
[87] Ibid., Cheap Trains Act (1883) hereafter (46 & 47 Vict.), c.34, and M.A. Jahn, 'Railways and Suburban Development,' p. 137.

Class, Politics and the Constituency Party Machine

The Second Reform period engendered new, mutually beneficial intersections of working class and middle class interests.[88] Such *ad hoc* alignments also presented opportunities for building political party support in the constituency. The Chiswick (temperance) Mission sprang from Liberal sympathies with the working classes.[89] The shipbuilder J. I. Thorneycroft and John Donaldson (a longstanding Improvement Commissioner) bought its Glebe Estate site and funded the Mission's construction, between 1882 and 1883, through subscriptions:[90] Jonathan Carr, now Chairman of the Bedford Park Liberal Association, subscribed 10 shillings; the Conservative Chairman Benjamin Hardy, gave a Guinea (£1-1s); and William Cavendish, the Liberal 7th Duke of Devonshire, made a rare appearance in Chiswick life with a generous donation of £25.[91]

Benjamin Hardy's subscription shows that local Liberals faced Conservative competition for working men's votes.[92] Chiswick's Conservatives already had a junior 'Workmen's Group,' but the Liberals had none. Benjamin Disraeli had understood that artisans' support would bolster the Conservative Party's national electoral success, though he did not like spending time with them.[93] Benjamin Hardy had no such qualms, and he had a talent for adapting his speeches to any class of audience. Knowing the pride of Chiswick's shipbuilders in their small and agile high-speed craft, he exploited it politically. At a Conservative Workmen's

[88] N. Kirk, *Change, Continuity and Class*, p. 32.
[89] By 1883 there were two: the Chiswick, Turnham Green and Gunnersbury Liberal Association and the Bedford Park Liberal Association, *AG*, October 16, 1880 and July 8, 1882.
[90] 'New Mission Hall, Chiswick', Announcements, *AG*, July 1, 1882, see also D.&D. Butcher, 'A Century of Chiswick Mission', Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal, C (1982), http://brentfordandchiswicklhs.org.uk/local-history/buildings/churches/235-2/a-century-of-chiswick-mission/, [Accessed 31 August, 2016].
[91] William Cavendish, 7th Duke of Devonshire, ODNB (full citation in Bibliography).
[92] This is further supported by the formation of a Bedford Park Conservatives' Association to match the Liberal Association there, 'Bedford Park,' *AG*, May 26, 1883.
[93] F. B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill*, p. 235.

meeting, he recalled telling a Liberal friend of his plan to criticize the Liberal Radical, John Bright, in a speech. "I like your confounded impudence;" said the Liberal "it will be like a mouse attacking a man." Not so, said Hardy it would be like 'one of Thorneycroft's little torpedo boats trying to do as much damage as possible to the large vessels of opposing forces (hear, hear).'[94]

Figure 21 Benjamin Hardy.[95]

Benjamin Hardy's schmoozing were central to Chiswick Conservatives' popularity. That this was as important as national politics was illustrated by the low turnout for his speech on 'Political Affairs.' This supports Coetzee's argument, in his survey of Villa Toryism in late-Victorian Croydon, that Conservative voter loyalty was predicated on local organization, local notables and local concerns.[96] Unlike Croydon, Chiswick in the early 1880s was a place where, as in C.F.G. Masterman's account, 'in feverish hordes the suburbs swarm[ed] to the

[94] 'Mr Hardy on Political Affairs,' *AG*, April 21, 1883.
[95] *TCT,* May 22, 1914.
[96] F. Coetzee, 'Villa Toryism Reconsidered: Conservatism and Suburban Sensibilities in Late-Victorian Croydon, *Parliamentary History*, 16.1 (Jan 1, 1997), pp.29-47, p.31.

polling booth to vote against a truculent proletariat.'[97] Its demographic was not mainly commuting middle classes, and its Conservative Workmen's Group had 100 members; a substantial component of the local electorate.[98] When Hardy hosted its first annual dinner in April, 1883, he said that of 1,400 voters now registered in Chiswick, 900 were promised to the Conservatives, gloating over his party's working class popularity:

> 'Mr Charles Cross, a Brentford Liberal… said that a Conservative Working Man was a myth, but if he were to come into that room he would see that… was simply nonsense and perhaps Mr Cross might see a few Conservative Working-men in Brentford very shortly, for he (Mr Hardy) had been invited to … form a … Working Men's Club at that place (hear, hear).' [99]

Local Liberals believed that the 'energetic' Chiswick Conservatives success in 'fishing men' from them was due to 'those abominable meetings of yours, and we have half made up our minds to begin suppers.' [100] Despite Conservative protestations suppers do appear central to their political fortunes. Hardy 'pressed the flesh' prolifically. In 1882 he held a dinner for staff and scholars of the Glebe Estate's Binns Road Board School. [101] Beyond cricket, he was also President of the Turnham Green Bicycle Club[102] Its members wanted Hardy for his local influence.[103] But in the days when bicycling was something of a young man's sport, on 'Penny Farthings' and muddy, or wooden roads, the 52-year old Conservative is more likely to have sought their votes than their slipstream.[104]

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[97] Ibid., p. 32 citing C.F.G. Masterman.
[98] 'Mr Hardy on Political Affairs,' *AG*, April 21, 1883.
[99] Ibid.
[100] 'Chiswick Conservative Association,' Turnham Green, *AG*, July 8, 1882.
[101] 'An Interesting Party,' Ibid., October 28, 1882.
[102] 'Turnham Green Bicycle Club, Ibid., October 21, 1882.
[103] Ibid.,
[104] 'Death of Mr Benjamin Hardy,' *TCT*, May 22, 1914.

Liberals do not appear to have been as popular as local Conservatives. One evening in 1883 when both Associations held public meetings simultaneously, attendance at the Liberal event was 'very meagre indeed', while that evening Conservatives held 'one of the most successful of [its] ever-popular reunions.' [105]

Conclusion

In this chapter we sought evidence that social legislation and reform assisted the improvement of Chiswick. We identified occasions when this happened directly and indirectly. As elsewhere, with industrialization and the coming of railways, there was increased class-stratification in Chiswick. The Bedford Park and Glebe Estates were new geographic zones catering for this. The fact that residents in one were commuters, and in the other were not, highlights the extremely diverse nature of contemporary parish life. 1880s Chiswick was a mosaic of classes and lifestyles, for which the attribution of garden, or commuter suburb is inadequate. Nor was it an industrial town, though, as it may have seemed close to Thorneycroft's workshops and slipway. Was 'Villa Toryism' prominent in Chiswick? Probably, but it combined forces with 'Clog Toryism,' making Conservatism unbeatable in the parish.

With voters in 1883 representing just 7.4% of Chiswick's population, and Chiswick being part of the giant Middlesex County constituency, its newly-enfranchised electorate could have little direct impact on government. [106] But Chiswick played its part in making Middlesex increasingly conservative from 1868, bucking the national trend in 1880, when a

[105] 'Chiswick Conservative Association,' *AG*, April 28, 1883.
[106] Percentage calculation based on Benjamin Hardy figures, fn.98, and local population estimate in *MOH Report, 1883*.

Liberal government was returned. We have been able to explore the mechanics of the Conservative Party's Constituency Machine to understand why it was more successful than the Liberals' and confirmed that it rested on local issues, local people, and suppers, more than national politics.

The sanitary improvements discussed in earlier chapters had, by 1883, improved Chiswick's public health. The parish death rate per thousand, that important nineteenth century measure of public health, was 17.66 when the Improvement Commissioners left office (up from 15.49 the previous year). [107] Chiswick's statistics were worse than Ealing's, though better than Acton's. Since we now know the dangers of industrial pollution, and the infection risk of high density living in a shifting population, we can understand why death rates rose in that final year despite improved parish drains.[108] Chiswick's Medical Officer of Health judged the new drainage scheme a great success, not only for public health but for stopping parish pollution of the Thames, a fact confirmed by a Thames Conservancy inspection. '[T]he bright condition of the effluent' must, he said 'be a source of extreme satisfaction'.[109]

How had Improvement Commissioners' building bye laws improved Chiswick's housing? In 1883, Dr Dodsworth attributed high numbers of Glebe Estate deaths due to dampness of the soil which, he believed, harmed Glebe residents because of their 'jerry-built' housing,

[107] *MOH Report*, 1883. The comparison is with a national figure of 19.5 deaths per thousand.
[108] Deaths per thousand in: Ealing in 1882 & 1883, 13.9 & 11.23 respectively; Acton in 1882 & 1883, 20.7 & 17.66 respectively, *The Health of Ealing: Medical Officer's Report for the Year 1888*, p.5, ELHC, and *Local Board for the District of Acton: Annual Report of Medical Officer with Statistical Return of Deaths, etc., for the year 1888*, p.18.
[109] *MOH Report, 1882*.

lacking concrete foundations.[110] According to Dr Dodsworth, additional building bye Laws had been passed by 1883, although these have not yet been traced. Yet still 'jerry-building' practices continued, with old tins of fish and meat found substituted for hardcore in Sulhamstead Estate streets. So the Improvement Commission's officers had not ensured that the new bye laws were implemented. In a rare hint of criticism, Dr Dodsworth expressed frustration in his report, at the continued lack of a local infectious diseases hospital which, he reported, had required four patients with scarlatina (scarlet Fever) to be relocated to the London Fever Hospital in Islington, eight miles away. For six years, Chiswick's Improvement Commissioners had been considering the need for such a hospital and still the parish had none.

Though the Improvement Commission become more proactive in its final years, its board acquired a well-earned reputation for ineptitude and chronic indecisiveness, stemming no doubt from their institutional *laissez faire*-ism. The Commission had appeared at a time when new forms of administration were required and, as it felt its way into its unsought responsibilities, it was part of the process of parish modernization. But by the 1880s, it had outlived its usefulness and become an anachronism. Then the Local Board model of governance, embodying the sanitary and environmental directives of social legislation, predominated nationally and took over in Chiswick.[111] It was this movement that inspired the actions that caused the Commission's demise, and it is to the specifics of the *coup de grâce* that we now turn.

[110] *MOH Report, 1883*.

[111] As in Ealing and in cities. For two cities that did, and did not embrace public health legislation see G. Kearns, P. Laxton and J. Campbell, 'Duncan and the cholera test,' and A. Sharratt & K R Farrar, Sanitation and Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Manchester,' *Memoirs and Proceedings, Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*, 114 (1971), pp.50-69.

Chapter 7 Costs, Corruption and Incompetence: the end of the Improvement Commission

Chiswick's ratepayers did not thank the Commission for building a parish-wide sewerage system that emitted 'bright water' and was proclaimed a boon by the Medical Officer of Health; they organized themselves, staged a coup and killed it. By 1882 the Commission was reviled and ridiculed in equal measure for its high spending, jobbery and dithering. The end was swift, coming just a year after a Ratepayers' Defence Association was formed to expose '…alleged extravagance of the Commissioners causing the increased burden of excessive rating, and generally to protect the parishioners in the present state of affairs.'[1] Born of a ratepayers' revolt in 1857, the Commission would die the same way a quarter of a century later.

'[E]xpenditure is always popular at the moment, especially if it be out of borrowed money. Unpopularity ensues but it is at some interval. My Lords cannot overlook the growing impatience of the public under the increase of rates…'

Leonard Courtney, Secretary to the Treasury, to Sir James McGarel-Hogg, Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works. [2]

The ratepayers' assault on Chiswick's Improvement Commissioners was part of a wider social trend. From the mid-1870s, London's Metropolitan Board of Works had faced increasingly solid accusations of corruption and financial incontinence to the detriment of

[1] 'A Ratepayers' Defence Association for Chiswick,' Chiswick, *AG,* June 17, 1882.
[2] 'The Taxation of the Metropolitan Board of Works,' *The Times*, October 4, 1883, p.8, The Times Archive (URL in Bibliography).

ratepayers.[3] In 1889 these would lead to its demise, at the hands of a 'licentious press.'[4] Meanwhile, in west Middlesex, Chiswick's vestry were reeling over 'the alarming increase of the Poor Rates… mainly due to grave irregularities and general mismanagement of Workhouse Officials and the Board of Guardians.'[5] Leading ratepayers led the vestry in refusing to collect a 1s 8d rate set by the Brentford Union, levying 1s 6d instead as 'the only public way they have of expressing their indignation.'[6] Simultaneously, the Improvement Commission's own steeply-rising General District Rate had placed increasing strain on local ratepayers. Their response was to replace the Commission with a Local Board, whose first meeting was held on 19th September, 1883.[7]

By the summer of 1882, the Improvement Commission owed £84,900, nearly nine times as much as it received in rates that year. [8] Most of the money had been borrowed since 1875 from the Public Works Loan Board, mainly for the parish's new sewerage scheme. Rate increases reflected the rising costs of servicing those loans. In June of 1882, a local resident, 'G.F.W.,' wrote to the *Acton Gazette* stating that high rates were the reason so many good houses stood empty in the parish.[9] His total rates bill in 1877 (including Poor Rate, School Board Rate and General District Rate) had been £10 per year. Now the General District Rate alone was £12 10s. [10] Another correspondent felt that residents were not getting value for money. 'B.C.' described the road outside his new house as:

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[3] D. Owen, *The Government of Victorian London*, pp.174-5.
[4] Ibid., p.208.
[5] *CVM*, October 25, 1883.
[6] Ibid., November 9, 1883.
[7] *CIC Mins* September 19, 1883, also 'Chiswick Local Board,' *AG*, June 9, 1883. Details of General District Rate in Chapter 5, p.64.
[8] The total of rates collected in 1882 was £10,005, *Chiswick Parish Poor Rate Books, June 1882* and *November 1883*, CLSL.
[9] 'Chiswick and its Rates,' Correspondence, *AG*, June 10, 1882.
[10] Ibid., for a house of £30 per annum rateable value.

> '…made up with an inferior kind of gravel, and the roadway is full of ruts and huge boulders… if, after a shower of rain, one has to go out, not only has one to plough through a muddy squash, but owing to the fact that there are only two lamps in a road some 200 yards long, one is very likely to go stumbling into the roadway which is worse.'[11]

It is likely that 'B.C.' lived on a newly-formed, private street. Shortly after the publication of this letter, two Local Government Board Inquiries discovered financial irregularities in charges levied on householders for street improvements carried out under the Public Health Act (1875). One ratepayer called these 'Hanky Panky Tricks'.[12]

Twenty five new private streets had been formed in the parish in recent years, including those on the new Gunnersbury and Glebe Estates.[13] Until 1882 the Improvement Commission had discretion over the required paving and sewering standards for private streets to be declared public roads. However, a court case that year removed local authority discretion and set higher, costlier standards.[14] After this judgment, a Chiswick-wide programme of street improvements began, funded mainly by the owners of adjoining properties but usually carried out by the Commission's contractors under its Surveyor's supervision. Individual 'apportionments,' or charges for the work, were prepared by the Clerk and Surveyor and sent to property owners. But it was discovered that each apportionment contained a hidden charge of 5% 'commission' that went indirectly into the two officials' pockets. Residents had not previously realised this was happening and the Ratepayers' Defence Association, formed a month before the revelation, took it up as a

[11] Ibid., June 24, 1882.
[12] 'Chiswick Improvement Commission. The Annual Meeting,' *AG*, November 4, 1882.
[13] For the Gunnersbury Estate, see 'Askew Estate,' J. Wisdom, 'Making of a West London Suburb,' pp.67-75.
[14] Master of the Rolls decision in the case of 'West Ham Local Board v Bidder,' cited in *CIC Mins*, May 3, 1882.

cause.[15] It supported the complaint of Mr W J Compton who stated, at the subsequent Public Inquiry, that he found the charges 'very underhand' and 'illegal.'[16]

By the date of his testimony before the Local Government Board's Inspector, Mr Compton (now an Improvement Commissioner), had discovered how the scam worked. He explained that: 'The percentage has been ingeniously inserted in the specification of works, and the contractor for the works has had to sign a secret document or bond to return the percentage to the Clerk and Surveyor after the receipt by him of a cheque from the Commissioners for his account.'[17] Neither householders nor the Improvement Commission's auditors were any the wiser, as this 'commission' was not listed on bills. Though the Clerk, Robert Finnis, asserted that it was not secret, but sanctioned by Improvement Commissioners, he produced no documentary proof of this. Anyway, said the Local Government Board Inspector, 5% was twice that allowed for such work under the Public Health Act. So he banned the practice.[18] It, and the associated taint of corruption, added jobbery to the Commission's falling reputation despite a remarkably candid assertion from Henry Smith, the only remaining 'original' Improvement Commissioner, that whilst 'in the first days of the Commission … there was a great deal of jobbery' this was short-lived.[19] For the past decade or so, said the usually tight-lipped brewer, 'Commissioners had… worked might and main for the welfare of the parish.'[20] They may have worked hard, but their attempts at improvement were, as we have seen, fraught with indecision and largely ineffective.

[15] 'The Ratepayers' Defence Association, First General Meeting,' *AG*, July 8, 1882.
[16] 'The Private Streets Question, Local Government Inquiry,' Ibid., April 14, 1883.
[17] Ibid.
[18] 'Chiswick Ratepayers' Defence Association,' Ibid., June 9, 1883.
[19] 'Chiswick Improvement Commissioners', Ibid., June 23, 1883. There was no mention of jobbery in official Improvement Commission minutes.
[20] Ibid.

By 1882 Chiswick's Improvement Commissioners, famously, could not make their minds up. It was with a strong dose of irony, for example, that an editorial in the *Acton Gazette* referred to the Improvement Commission's 'consistency' in decisions over an infectious diseases hospital for the parish.[21] A year later, their vacillation on the cricket pitch led to exasperation at the Cricket Club, which: '… did not know what the Commissioners were going to do… for that august body had changed their minds three times in a month (laughter)… a very business-like way of doing business.'[22] In the 1882 elections Mr Bateman of the Ratepayers' Defence Association, said: 'He could go to Turnham Green Railway Station any morning of the week, and, picking out the first 18 men who entered, would have a body much more able to conduct the affairs of the parish than were the Commissioners (laughter).'[23] Mr Blakiston, an Association candidate for election, said the current Board 'had had their day and ought to give way at once to better men (laughter),' which is what happened four days later.

In what turned out to be its final election, the Chiswick Improvement Commission fielded just five, not the usual six, candidates. Set against these were five nominees of the Ratepayers' Defence Association. Three, Messrs. Bakiston, Cannot and Fowle, were Conservatives. [24] Messrs. Bilton and Compton, were not openly party political, but may have been more liberal.[25] The result was 'unique in the history of the parish.' [26] Where, previously, it had been 'impossible to get a stranger on the Board,'[27] this time newcomers beat all but one of the Commission's men (William J Adamson, the now retired, wealthy builder remained). The

[21] Editorial, *AG*, July 8, 1882.
[22] 'The Cricket Club and the Commissioners,' Ibid., May 5, 1883.
[23] 'Chiswick Improvement Commissioners, The Annual Meeting,' Ibid., November 4, 1882.
[24] 'Chiswick Conservative Association,' Ibid., April 28, 1883.
[25] e.g. for their links with education or other democratic tendencies. Bilton was Assistant to H.M. Inspector of Schools; Compton, a wealthy cloth merchant, opposed exclusive use of Turnham Green Common by cricket clubs.
[26] Chiswick Ratepayers' Defence Association, *AG*, June 9, 1883.
[27] Ibid.

new blood now running into Commission's veins was bluer, no doubt to the satisfaction of its Chairman, Benjamin Hardy.

One of the Ratepayers' Defence Association's objectives had, indeed, been '[t]he Infusion of new blood on the Board of Commissioners.' Another, the '[c]hange of Government from an Improvement Commission to a Local Board' was in progress as the Association's first annual meeting took place. Now, in the summer of 1883, it basked in its 'very large measure of success,' adopting the motto 'Reform, Retrenchment, and Economy,' and looked forward to getting local rates reduced. [28] This happened within months, as one of the new Local Board's first decisions was to take a penny off the half-yearly General District Rate, reducing the yearly total to below 4s in the pound for the first time since 1878.[29] Like its predecessor, Chiswick's new Local Board had eighteen members plus, despite some weak opposition, an *ex officio* seat for the Duke of Devonshire's nominee so long as he held 500 acres in the parish.[30] This was a higher ducal property qualification than the 200 acres specified in the Chiswick Improvement Act (1858). Even so, Mr Blakiston had wanted 'the power vested in [the Duke of Devonshire] abolished…' Was it, he asked pointedly, 'a general custom for any individual ratepayer to be represented on Local Boards of whatever description?'[31] On this issue, as on many others, times were changing.

[28] Ibid.
[29] *Chiswick Local Board [sic], Finance Committee Minutes, 1874-1891*, September 25, 1883, CLSL. These minutes were mislabelled in a recent restoration and include earlier Improvement Commission entries.
[30] 'Chiswick: Local Government,' *British History Online* (full citation in Bibliography).
[31] 'Chiswick Improvement Commissioners,' *AG,* May 5, 1883.

Conclusion

In the rapid demise of the Chiswick Improvement Commission we have seen how middle-class ratepayers' joined forces against a local authority that was no longer fit for purpose. They achieved what had previously been impossible, seizing power from a wealthy *ancien regime*. This quiet revolution was happening not just in Chiswick, but also in the neighbouring Metropolis, achieved with the assistance of extensive press scrutiny which had been lacking in earlier decades. This final episode in the life of the Improvement Commissioners also shows that, as in the Metropolis, achievements in environmental and public health were overshadowed by personal and local financial considerations in the minds of ratepayers.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

'And what of Hogarth's Tomb? The last time I saw it it was in close proximity to the smoke stack of a steam engine, which was puffing and snorting and belching forth smoke to its hearts content…'

'Chiswick Churchyard', by 'A parishioner', *Acton Gazette*, 1883.[32]

Fig. 22 Hogarth's Tomb, St Nicholas's graveyard, Chiswick, 2016. [33]

Hogarth's tomb escaped relatively unscathed from the eroding fumes driving the machines which, in the heart of Chiswick, built Thorneycroft's world-beating torpedo ships (Figure 22). Not so the grave of Steven Leach (Figure 23), the highly respected civil engineer and Chairman of the Chiswick Improvement Commission who led its construction of a similarly coal-fired, steam-powered sewerage pumping station beside Thorneycroft's. Its pollution added to the rest, helping to erase Leach's memory from parish history. That was during Chiswick's industrial age, as unthinkable in Hogarth's day as it was when the Improvement

[32] 'Correspondence,' *AG*, May 19, 1883.
[33] Photograph taken by the author, September 14, 2016.

Commission was born, and almost unimaginable to today's graveyard visitor. The etching of its tombstones is a rare, but tangible reminder of an industrial period in Chiswick and a time of great change in local, and British history. This thesis has explored how one of the many experimental, amateur-led, organs of local government coped with the assault on its community's senses.

Figure 23 Eroded inscription on Stephen Leach's tombstone, St Nicholas's Church graveyard, Chiswick.[34]

[34] Ibid.

The Chiswick Improvement Commission has been largely forgotten, as it does not fit into the narrative of Chiswick's history as currently told. In truth, it was always an anachronism. Despite this, its board members stuck with the task of parish administration when parish life was being forced into an urban mould whose shape was not yet formed. With hindsight we can see that it inhabited a defined era of increasing central control of parish affairs, when national government led the way to new local government structures that improved standards of public health, were more accountable and did more for the communities they served. It was a time when parish affairs achieved Cabinet ranking. A year after the Improvement Commission started work, Lord Palmerston created the first Cabinet post for a President of the Poor Law Board.[35] From this small beginning, with the assistance of that 'outdoor parliament,' the Social Science Association, and the British Medical Association, came the professionalisation of public service and a rethinking of what local government should be and should do.[36] The history of Chiswick's Improvement Commission is a small, but noteworthy, part of that history although, by the time it was replaced by a Local Board, it had long outlived its purpose.

Though just a blip in the history of social and public health administration, it is important to know about such blips as the Chiswick Improvement Commission because there was a cacophony of them in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. It was born in an era of amateur, haphazard initiatives in local administration and public health. With limited resources and expertise, it did its best. But in time, having fulfilled its function, it had to give way to more professional, accountable and democratic local institutions. In this chronological pattern, the Improvement Commission almost exactly mirrors and

[35] J. A. Chandler, *Explaining Local Government*, p. 64.
[36] L. Goldman, *Science, Reform and Politics*, pp. 1-3.

tracks national developments: we trace the origins of modern local government from the 1880s, in the nation as in Chiswick.

The Improvement Commission's archives offer contemporary viewpoints which, though partial and incomplete, serve to protect us from errors of generalization, infused as they can be with modern sensibilities. In Chapter 2 we might have dismissed Chiswick's row with the Metropolitan Board of Works as a form of 'anti-centralisation' had we not read the details in vestry minutes. Had Warwick Draper read them too he, and later historians, would not have seen the Improvement Commission as a suburban construct. [37] Such an unquestioning suburban characterization might also have led us, in Chapter 6, to imagine 'Villa Toryism' but not to countenance Chiswick 'Clog Tories.'[38] This thesis has also attempted to restore Chiswick's working class population to its nineteenth-century place in the community, despite the paucity of primary archives. Through this we explored how important nineteenth-century shifts in class relationships played out in a small parish resistant to change.

The Chiswick Improvement Commission was run by a bunch of amateurs found, ultimately, to have their fingers in the till and who were ousted for this and their ineptitude. We have seen how Chiswick chimed, under their watch, with the ringing of national political and demographic changes. And we saw how these jolted the Commission into varieties of public service that were unimaginable at its creation. In this thesis, a history of Chiswick has been told which is not popular with local historians. It largely ignores aristocratic, artistic or even garden suburban events, focusing instead on a more central and influential feature of its

[37] Chapter 2, fn.1
[38] T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998), p. 643

mid-nineteenth century community life; the Chiswick Improvement Commission. Through its eyes, and those of the ratepayers who scrutinized it, we can see how Chiswick really functioned between 1855 and 1883. That was when the seeds of modern Chiswick were planted; neither quite urban nor suburban (and abounding with rebellious ratepayers).

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1819	(59 Geo. 3) c. 12	Poor Relief Act
1829	(10 Geo. 4) c. 44	Metropolitan Police Act
1832	(2 & 3 Will. 4) c. 45	Representation of the People Act (Great Reform Act)
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1845	(8 & 9 Vict.) c. 18	Lands Clauses Consolidation Act
1847	(10 & 11 Vict.) c. 16	Commissioners Clauses Act
1847	(10 & 11 Vict.) c. 34	Towns Improvement Clauses Act
1848	(11 & 12 Vict.) c.112	Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act
1848	(11 & 12 Vict.) c.123	Nuisances Removal Act
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Suggested Additional Reading

Books

J. Bentley, *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain, The Attempt to Legislate for Belief* (Oxford, 1978).

L. Clarke, *Building capitalism : historical change and the labour process in the production of the built environment* (London, 1992).

H. J. Dyos and J. Summerson, *Victorian suburb : a study of the growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1961).

S.E. Finer, *The Life and Times of Sir Edwin Chad*wick (London, 1952).

C. Hamlin, *Public Health and Social Justice in the Age of Chadwick: Britain, 1800-1854* (Cambridge, 1998).

T. Koditschek, *Class formation and urban-industrial society, Bradford, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 1990).

R. Macleod, *Public Science and Public Policy in Victorian England*, (Aldershot, 1996).

H.H. Walker & M.G. Neesam, *History of Harrogate under the Improvement Commissioners*, 1841-1884 (Harrogate, 1986).

Journals, Pamphlets and Theses

S. Morris, 'Market Solutions for Social Problems: Working-Class Housing in Nineteenth-Century London,' *The Economic History Review*, 54(3), 20, (2001).

D.R.G. & A. Owens, 'Geographies of Wealth: real estate and personal property ownership in England and Wales, 1870-1902,' *The Economic History Review,* 66(3), (2013), pp. 848-872.

D. Kroll, 'The other architects who made London: planning and design of speculative housing, c.1870 - 1939' (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of London, 2013).

Online

J. Grigg, 'The 1897 Engineers Strike - What happened in Chiswick', *Labour Heritage, Bulletin*, Spring 2003, http://www.labour heritage.com/Bulletin%20Spring%202003.pdf [Accessed 27 April 2016]

Appendix

Acts of Parliament and Bills cited in Chiswick Improvement Commission and Vestry Minutes, with yearly totals, from Chiswick Local Studies Library (minutes do not always record exact title or date).

July 14, 1858
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858).
Commissioners Clauses Act (1847).
Metropolis Local Management Act (1855).

July 21, 1858
Metropolis Local Amendment Bill.

September 22, 1858
Thames Conservancy Commissioners' Bill.

1858 TOTAL: 5

October 5, 1859
Towns Improvement Clauses Act (1847).

1859 TOTAL: 1

March 20, 1861
Metropolis Local Management Bill amendment (1855).

1861 TOTAL: 1

November 19, 1862
Police Clauses Act (1847).

1862 TOTAL: 1

January 13, 1864
Railway Bills: Hammersmith & City, Kew, Turnham Green and Hammersmith Railways.

June 1, 1864
London & South West Railway Bill.

1864 TOTAL: 2

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

/Appendix, Acts discussed contd…

August 3, 1865
Gas Clauses Act (1847).

December 20, 1865
Metropolitan Sewers Act (1848).

1865 TOTAL: 2

January 17, 1866
London & South West Railway Bill.

March 21, 1866
Thames Purification Bill.

July 14, 1866
Local Government Act (1858).

August 22, 1866
Sanitary Act (1866).

1866 TOTAL: 4

April 13, 1868
Representation of the People Act (1867) - Chiswick vestry.

1868 TOTAL: 1

June 16, 1869
Local Government Act (1858).

August 18, 1869
Towns Improvement Clauses Act (1847).

1869 TOTAL: 2

March 18, 1870
Compulsory Purchase Act.

August 17, 1870
Thames Navigation Act (1866).

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

/Appendix, Acts discussed contd…

December 12, 1870
Education Act (1870).

1870 TOTAL: 3

January 14, 1871
Local Government Act (1858).

November 15, 1871
Thames Sewage Commission.

1871 TOTAL: 2

January 17, 1872
Thames Sewage Commission (regarding a Bill).

September 4, 1872
Public Health Act (1872).

1872 TOTAL: 2

November 19, 1873
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858).

1873 TOTAL: 1

January 21, 1874
Petroleum Act (1871).

August 5, 1874
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858).

8/10/74
Lands Clauses Consolidation Act (1845).

1874 TOTAL: 3

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

/Appendix, Acts discussed contd…

October 29, 1875
Public Health Act (1875).

December 15, 1875
Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement Act (1875).

1875 TOTAL: 2

May 9, 1876
Bill regarding… Management of Highways.
Bill regarding… 'throwing open for the free use of the Public the present Toll Bridges connecting the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey'.

May 10, 1876
Thames Navigation Act (1866).

September 20, 1876
Public Health Act (1875).

October 10, 1876
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858),
Local Government Act (1858).
Artizans and General Labourers' Dwellings Act (1875).
Sanitary Act (1866).

1876 TOTAL: 8

February 7, 1877
Public Health Act (1875).

November 21, 1877
Gas and Water Facilities Act (1870).

March 20, 1877
Local Taxation Returns Act.

1877 TOTAL: 3

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

/Appendix, Acts discussed contd…

February 6, 1878
~~Highways~~ County Government Bill.

March 6, 1878
County Government Bill.

May 29, 1878
Poor Law Amendment Act (1876).

October 2, 1878
Public Health Act (1875).

October 15, 1878
Highways and Locomotive (Amendment) Act (1878).

1878 TOTAL: 4

May 21, 1879
Thames Flood Prevention Bill.
District Auditors Act (1879).

July 2, 1879
Petroleum Inspection Bill.

September 17, 1879
Public Health (Internments) Act (1879).

1879 TOTAL: 4

February 4, 1880
Food and Drugs Act (1878).

March 3, 1880
Gas & Water Facilities Act (1870).

April 7, 1880
Metropolis Fire Brigade Act (1865).

May 19, 1880
Highways and Locomotive (Amendment) Act (1878).

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

/Appendix, Acts discussed contd…

August 8, 1880
Metropolitan Buildings Act.

December 15, 1880
Commons Act (1876).

1880 TOTAL: 6

January 9, 1881
Municipal Corporation (Borough Funds) Act (1872).
Markets, Slaughterhouses and Fairs Bill.

March 2, 1881
Public Health (Interments) Act (1879).

March 16, 1881
Public Health Act (1875).
DistrIct Auditors Act (1879).

April 6, 1881
Commons Act (1876).

May 18, 1881
Sale of Food and Drugs Act.
Petroleum Acts (1875) and (1879).
(Food) Adulteration Act.
Metropolitan Commons Act (1866).
Bill for confirming the Brentford Gas Provisional Order.
Bill for confirming the Shelpherds Bush and Hammersmith Tramways Provisional Order.

June 16, 1881
Edmonton Local Government Bill.

July 20, 1881
Bill for regulating the hawking of Petroleum and other substances of a like nature.

August 3, 1881
Charitable Trust Bill.

September 21, 1881
Bill under Commons Act re: Chiswick & Turnham Green Commons.

/Appendix, Acts discussed, continued over page…

November 16, 1881
Petroleum Act of August (1881).
Employers Liabilities Act (1880).

1881 TOTAL: 18

January 4, 1882
West Metropolitan Tramways Bill.
Brentford New Road and Improvements Bill.

March 1, 1882
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March 15, 1882
Bill for confirming the Chiswick and Turnham Green Commons Scheme.

May 3, 1882
Highways and Locomotive (Amendment) Act (1878).
Baths and Washouses Act.

July 19, 1882
Food Adulteration Act.

August 2, 1882
Boiler Explosions Act (1882).

September 20, 1882
Electric Lighting Act.

November 1, 1882
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858).

1882 TOTAL: 10

March 31, 1883
Chiswick Improvement Act (1858).

April 17, 1883.
Cheap Trains Bill.

May 16, 1883
Public Health Act (1875).

1883 TOTAL: 3