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The “Mob” in Eighteenth-Century English Caricature

HERBERT M. ATHERTON

TO SPEAK OF THE CARICATURE of the eighteenth-century mob is, in a sense, a contradiction in terms. “Caricature,” as a graphic technique, pertains to individuals and not to the impersonal mass. Though the word is used here advisedly—as a convenient if somewhat inaccurate designation for graphic satire of the century as a whole—it remains true that the “mob” does not figure prominently in its domain. The techniques and limitations of graphic satire generally were not able (with notable exceptions like Hogarth) to grapple easily with the mob as a subject. Moreover, graphic satire’s interest was directed, in politics anyway, more to “High Life” than to “Low Life.” This preference was a reflection of the assumptions of the day, in which the mob, referred to by Henry Fielding as “that very large and powerful body which forms the fourth estate in the community,” was not considered part of the Constitution or political nation.

Nevertheless, the mob was a presence in eighteenth-century politics that could not be ignored, however ephemeral or sporadic that presence was taken to be: the Sacheverell riots of 1710, the Church and King riots of 1714–15, the Excise bill in 1733, the Porteous and Irish disturbances of the later thirties, the Jew bill of 1753, the clamor against Admiral Byng in 1756, the Spitalfields and Wilkite riots of the 1760s, the Gordon riots of 1780, periodic elections disturbances, and innumerable minor tumults over wages, against Methodist preachers and conspicuous foreigners, for or against the

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victims of Tyburn and the pillory, and—in the provinces—riots against enclosures, turnpikes, game laws, bread shortages, and on behalf of smuggling. Such occasions of popular outcry took many expressions: the jeering of epithets and sobriquets, huzzaing of slogans, waving of banners and tokens, torches and cudgels, burnings and hangings in effigy, window smashing, pulling down of houses, looting, street fighting, chalking and overturning of coaches, pelting with rocks, dirt, dung, and dead animals; and, in celebration (for the mob did not always act in anger), the illumination of bonfires and emptying of hogsheads.

In the several thousand extant caricatures of the era, there are scores in which the mob appears. The figures in the mob, subjects of “Low Life,” were very much the study of the social caricatures of the period. Moreover, in their production and distribution, the caricatures themselves belonged to that world which bred the mob: London and its street life, its hurly-burly, raucous, noisome, brutal, and cynical existence. And while this perspective shuts caricatures off from much of that altogether different world outside the metropolis (and the rural riot), it made them especially sensitive to the curious role which the “inferior sort” played in national politics. To this extent graphic satire was well qualified to test the old aphorism that the eighteenth century was an age of aristocracy tempered by mob rioting.

Until the middle of the century caricature used the mob for two purposes. The first was as a vehicle of support for some principle or cause, usually associated with political opposition. Ordinarily, the caricaturist employed the more respectable symbols of “opinion without doors” as it was called (e.g., the Mayor and Corporation of the City of London), though the mob proved suitable on occasion to demonstrate the intensity of public feeling, taken to be *vox populi*, *vox dei*. Such was the case in many of the prints prompted by Sir Robert Walpole’s Excise bill of 1733, a measure which produced extraordinary outcry. One of these prints, *The London Merchants Triumphant* (Fig. 1),¹ shows tradesmen and others celebrating the withdrawal of the bill by burning an effigy of Walpole in a bonfire before the Royal Exchange. The anachronistic, perhaps atavistic

¹ Frederic George Stephens, ed., *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, Division I: Political and Personal Satires*, 4 vols. (London, 1870–83), No. 1927. The *Catalogue* was continued under the editorship of M. Dorothy George to cover the period 1771–1832, 7 vols. (London, 1935–54).

prejudices of the mob—intensely nativist and libertarian—were regarded as Tory in complexion and were very much in keeping with the folklore of political opposition, especially in the first half of the century.

The other use of the mob was as a satiric weapon in the caricature of individuals. To demean a man of high estate or prominence the prints would sometimes subject him to the calumny and vilification of the mob, in a kind of graphic effigy abuse. Admiral Byng was subjected to such popular ridicule in the many prints expressing public wrath at the fall of Minorca in 1756. The unpopular minister, Lord Bute, suffered exceptional abuse at the hands of the caricaturists in the first years of George III's reign. One such print, *The Scotch Yoke or English Resentment*,² shows Bute atop a pile of burning faggots, hooted and jeered by a mob which abuses him with such comments as "See his arse there! See his arse!"

Until the middle of the century the mob figured in graphic satire only in such stereotypical ways. With the rise of the elder Pitt, the economic distress of the 1760s, and the stirrings of urbanized radicalism in the Wilkite movement with its organized demands for political reform, there began a transformation of that larger political nation beyond the tight little world of oligarchic power, of public opinion beyond the ken of parliamentary politics.

Caricature was very attentive to the rioting and popular disturbances of the 1760s, especially that associated with the career of John Wilkes. *The Battle of Temple Bar*³ is a print depicting the riot which occurred in March 1769, when a group of Wilkes's opponents attempted to present a loyalist petition to the king. The print (Fig. 2) captures in almost epic fashion many of the elements of the political riot as represented at the time: a vast concourse of people attending a procession of carriages and pulling out the occupants; hats and hands raised in outcry; brickbats and other objects flying through the air; displaced wigs (a conventional way of suggesting violence).

Despite a general sympathy for Wilkes and his cause, satire was not yet willing to treat public opinion as a legitimate part of the Constitution. Politicians, including Wilkes, who attempted to bridge the two worlds were usually treated with ridicule by the satirists.

² *Catalogue*, No. 4033.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 4280.

Even Pitt, the "Great Commoner," generally a hero to the caricaturists, was sometimes taken to task for his cultivation of popularity "without doors."⁴

The demagoguery of popular politics was also a major issue in the early career of Charles James Fox, especially in the Westminster elections of 1780 and 1784. Fox's self-styled image as a "man of the people" inspired a great many satires. *The Humours of Covent Garden* (Fig. 3)⁵ portrays a typical election riot of the eighteenth century with a gathering of Fox's supporters. Evidence of riot can be seen everywhere: a cat, rocks, and other objects fly through the air; a coach is overturned; various figures in the crowd are fighting. Fox's catering to the populace, albeit in an open borough, brought upon him the charge that he was going beyond the traditional obligations of the canvass to the improprieties of a true democrat. *Carlo Khan's triumphal entry into St. Stephen's Chapel* (Fig. 4)⁶ makes the same point. It shows Fox on the shoulders of the Duchess of Devonshire (an ardent supporter of Fox), who carries him into the House of Commons, attended by a mob with banners and other symbols, including the cap of liberty. The print attempts to suggest the oddity (and impropriety) of joining the two political worlds, "within" and "without doors."

Remarkably enough, the most important popular disturbances of these years, the Gordon riots of 1780, attracted little attention from the caricaturists. In one sense, the riots were very much in the conventional mold of a popular reaction to an imprudent government measure (Catholic relief). But the disturbances the reaction led to were far more serious than those which attended the Excise and Jew bills, so serious as to transcend political partisanship. While a few prints inclined to be sympathetic, even most of these attempted to divorce the aims of the Protestant Association from the mob violence which enveloped its cause. One print, *The Members of the Protestant Association*,⁷ for example, depicts the presenting of the monster petition against Catholic relief to parliament in June 1780. The army of supporters, whose dress sets them apart from the lower

⁴ *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi* (Catalogue, No. 3913), a print of c. 1762, shows Palace Yard, Westminster, with the sweep of a cheering throng celebrating its hero, Pitt, who rides above the crowd astride the bubbles of his own vanity, one of them marked "Popularity."

⁵ *Catalogue*, No. 6511.

⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 6588.

⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 5841.

classes, marches in disciplined ranks to St. Stephen's. Their suggested behavior seems the very antithesis of a mob—and quite contrary to the tumultuous disturbances in Palace Yard on that day. *The Burning & Plundering of Newgate* (Fig. 5)⁸ provides an altogether different picture. A cheering mob, carrying clubs and banners, loots and burns the prison. A prostitute, holding her plunder, stands in the middle of the picture. There is a variety of social types present, figures whose dress suggests the middling sort and figures who appear to represent the very dregs of society. At the left two gentlemen watch the mob's activities as a pickpocket relieves one of the men of his wallet.

In *No Popery or Newgate Reformer*⁹ is to be found one of the few personal caricatures of the eighteenth-century rioter. The subject (Fig. 6), shown with bludgeon and cockade, wears a simple coat with kerchief. The attire, together with the absence of a wig, suggests someone of modest status, perhaps a common laborer. The grotesque, wart-filled face is a good example of the stylized method of suggesting low birth in the eighteenth century.

Such a print is rare since caricature never settled upon a common stereotype of the mob rioter. In recent years historians like George Rudé have attempted to put faces on the anonymous mob, known only to contemporaries by even more impersonal epithets: the "inferior sort," the "insolent rabble," the "dregs of the people," the "brutal, lower populace," and, after Burke, the "swinish multitude." Through his studies of the court records of the Wilkite, Gordon, and other riots, Rudé has shown that most mobs of the eighteenth century were comprised not of the dregs of society, but of the wage-earning class, including journeymen, apprentices, common laborers, as well as the occasional craftsman or shopkeeper.¹⁰

It is worth asking whether or not such conclusions are confirmed by the visual evidence of contemporary prints. Unless a figure in the prints carries certain attributes of his or her occupation, however, it is often difficult to make precise identifications. An age which nourished sharp class distinctions was remarkably egalitarian

⁸ Ibid., No. 5684.

⁹ Ibid., No. 5679.

¹⁰ Rudé's work on this subject includes "The London 'Mob' of the Eighteenth Century," *Historical Journal*, 2, No. 1 (1959), 1–18; "The Gordon Riots: a Study of the Rioters and their Victims," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Ser., 6, pp. 93–114; *The Crowd in History: a Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England 1730–1848* (New York, 1964).

in the essential features of its dress: the standard coat, waistcoat, breeches, stockings, cravat, and cocked hat extended far down the social scale, as did the various robes, bodices, petticoats, hats, and caps of female fashion. Because of their scale the prints were rarely able to capture degrees of finery or quality of material in such basic dress. They do, however, make a distinction between such attire and that worn by the great body of wage-earners and the very poor. For men this was usually a simple jacket or short coat, breeches or sometimes trousers, kerchiefs, and round, broad-brimmed slouch hats. Instead of the sword or walking stick (symbols of gentility) cudgels or bludgeons would be carried by men of the lowest classes. Aprons would usually indicate shopkeepers and artisans. Women of the same background wore the simplest of bodices and petticoats, often an apron or shawl, perhaps an overjacket, and a variety of hats or caps. Both sexes rarely wore wigs. Tattered attire always indicated the poorest of the poor and usually carried with it associations of disrepute.

One has little difficulty making this basic distinction between the “well-dressed, creditable looking people” and the “shabby sort” in the prints (see, for example, Figs. 1, 2, and 5). Beyond this basic distinction caricature drew its mob characters from the repertoire of London’s Low Life, from the jostle and jumble of its street world, a much more varied world, of course, than exists in today’s urban streets, given over as they are to little more than thoroughfares for vehicle traffic. London’s streets then provided a forum for local commerce, entertainments, and displays.

One of this world’s most visible characters was the butcher, usually a burly fellow in jacket or shirt, generally a kerchief or cap on his head, with his steel, knife, and marrowbone (see, for example, Fig. 4). Butchers with bones and cleavers (with which they made music) were always to be found at fairs and popular entertainments, and were commonly seen not only in London’s markets, but in the open stalls that fronted on many streets. The butcher is a frequent character in representations of the mob, not only because of his familiar presence, but because, with his usually robust physique, he was a tough who was good in a fight and who was often hired as a ruffian or bruiser. So he appears in Hogarth’s *The Idle ‘Prentice Executed at Tyburn* (Fig. 7), the principal male figure in center foreground (marked by the steel hanging from his belt).

The bruiser is to be found in prints depicting election riots; many politicians were given to hiring such toughs for their own protection. The bruiser figures prominently in Hogarth's *Four Prints of an Election*. He can be seen in the center foreground of Fig. 3, the fellow with the eye-patch and cudgel. The "brawl" was an activity traditionally associated with the mob and was often viewed by contemporaries as good sport, something in which people from different classes could participate. *Symptoms of a Mob* (Fig. 8)¹¹ offers a humorous comment on the eighteenth-century love of brawling, even among figures (as is probably suggested here) of different classes.

The tough or bruiser was not necessarily a butcher, but came more generally from the mass of low-skilled laborers of the wage-earning class, a class which included chairmen, porters, coal heavers, and draymen. The Thames waterman belonged to this class and was renowned for his toughness, insolence, and coarse language. A great many in this wage-earning class were Irish, invariably associated in the eighteenth century with violence and incivility. Many of the sedan chairmen of London, another rough lot of men, were Irish.¹²

The sailor provided another character for the mob. London, as a major port, was usually filled with stranded seamen. The spirited "Jack-Tar," though a popular symbol of patriotism, was often a source of trouble in London's streets—frequently discharged without pay, abandoned, and disgruntled. Moreover, the press gang served as a principal cause of riot at the time, for the operation of the press was fiercely resisted by the civilian population.¹³ The sailor can be easily recognized in the prints with his baggy trousers, jacket (or striped shirt), and round or (sometimes) cocked hat. A sailor can be seen in Fig. 2 by the carriage wheel at the right.

Of the women in the mob one of the most common was the ballad-hawker. She appears in the center foreground of Fig. 7 along

¹¹ Lewis Walpole Library, ref. 799.7.1.3.

¹² The Irish "Paddy" became a popular subject for graphic satire as his presence in London increased. There are many caricatures of the period commenting on the Irishman's migration to London to make his fortune. The Irish chairman also appears in several prints, e.g., *Paddy Whack's First Ride in a Sedan* (Lewis Walpole Library, ref. 800.1.28.1), published in 1800. For the Irish in London, see M. Dorothy George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (New York and Evanston, 1964).

¹³ One print, Gillray's *The Liberty of the Subject* (Catalogue, No. 5609), published in 1779, shows a press gang of seamen attempting to impress a poor tailor, while their efforts are resisted by the tailor's wife and an attending mob.

with the bruiser and a common laborer about to throw a cat, as a woman in slouch hat and tattered attire, with a baby cradled in her arms. This essential character became a stereotype in the caricature of Georgian Low Life. The ragged and forlorn woman with child developed, in fact, into a conventional representation of poverty. Such was the image chosen to represent the “beggar” (Fig. 9) in *Costume of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis*, a collection of social portraits published in the eighteenth century.¹⁴ The mother in Hogarth’s *Gin Lane* is an adaptation of the same.

Another prominent female figure was the fruitseller or market woman. The Covent Garden seller, with her rustic witch’s hat (though often it was a milkmaid’s hat), tattered shawl, skirt, apron, and basket, is well known from such studies as Hogarth’s *Morning* or Nebot’s *Morning in Covent Garden*. Market women can be seen in Fig. 3, as can another fixture in most studies of Covent Garden, the prostitutes (fighting with bottles at the right), who frequented the bagnios nearby. The whore was commonly represented in eighteenth-century prints as a young woman with beauty marks and a low-cut bodice (see Fig. 5).

Other characters will occasionally emerge from the mob’s anonymity—weavers, domestic servants, Jewish pedlars, chimney sweeps (the last can be seen in Fig. 4). Artisans, apprentices, and tradesmen are sometimes marked by their particular callings, though they usually disappear into the general descriptions of dress found in the prints.

Before the French Revolution caricature rarely credited the mob or the inferior sort generally with a political consciousness of its own—beyond the rather simplistic libertarian tradition of slogans and shibboleths. Many prints, in fact, ridiculed the pretensions of the lower classes to interest themselves in politics.¹⁵ This perception began to change after the Gordon riots and was altogether over-

¹⁴ The collection includes studies of the drayman, pedlar, Thames waterman, and fishwoman. An earlier series, Marcellus Laroon’s *The Cryes of London* (London, c. 1688), offers portraits of the various characters in London’s streets, together with their respective trade cries. Included in the series are the coal heaver, whore, and a ballad-singer in slouch hat, scarf, petticoat, and apron.

¹⁵ One such print, *A Meeting of City Politicians* (Catalogue, No. 5613), published in 1779, ridicules the coffee-house politics of a group of artisans, whose interest in affairs of state (the print implies) only distracts them from their natural callings. Another print, entitled *The Politicians* (Catalogue, No. 4018, of 1763), shows a collection of figures from the mob: the ballad-hawker with a little boy, a porter, milkmaid, butcher, cobbler, blacksmith, carpenter, and chimney sweep.

1733

THE LONDON MERCHANTS TRIUMPHANT
(or Sturdy Beggars are Brave Fellows)
*being a Sketch of the Rejoycings
in the City &c. Occasion'd by the
Excize Bill being Postpon'd*



*Long, Long live the glorious Two hundred and four
And may we such Senators have evermore.
Whom Places nor Penions, will ever persuade
To give up our Furies, and Fetter our Trade*

*Who Steadily Zealous, are always prepar'd
To Maintain English Rights, & our Liberties guard
But a Curse on the Slaves, who Excise infest on,
May be daily be horse-pounded, pelted and put on*
Apr. 1733.

FIGURE 1. The London Merchants Triumphant. 1733. British Museum.



FIGURE 4. *Carlo Khan's triumphant entry into St. Stephen's Chapel. 1784.* Lewis Walpole Library.

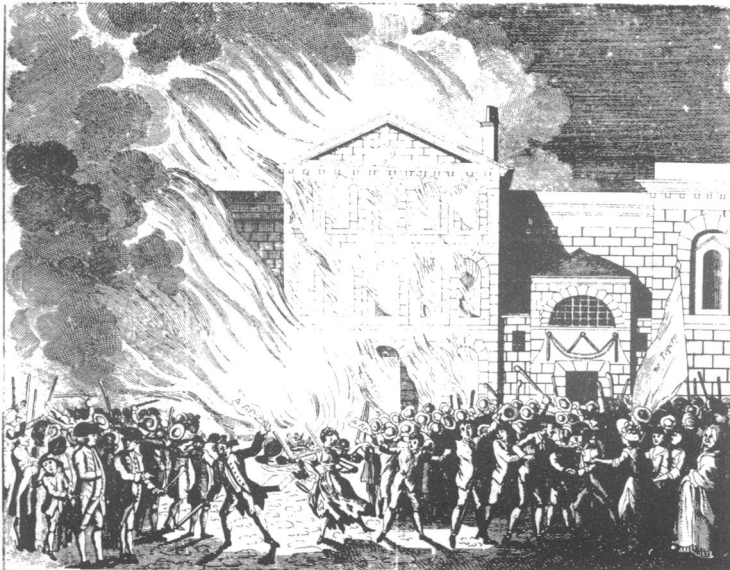


FIGURE 5. *The Burning & Plundering of Newgate. 1780.* British Museum.



NO POPERY or NEWGATE REFORMER.

*Tho' He Says he's a Protestant, look at the Print,
The Face and the Bludgroat, will give you a hint,
Religion he cries, in hopes to deceive,
While his practice is only to burn and to thieve.*
Published with Art Directors, June 17, 1780 by J. Catch of S. .

FIGURE 6. *No Popery or Newgate Reformer*. 1780. Lewis Walpole Library.

The IDLE 'PRENTICE Executed at Tyburn.



FIGURE 7 *The Idle 'Prentice Executed at Tyburn. 1747. British Museum.*



FIGURE 8. *Symptoms of a Mob*. 1799. Lewis Walpole Library.



BEGGAR

FIGURE 9. "Beggar" from *Costume of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis*. 1800. Lewis Walpole Library.



FIGURE 10. *London Corresponding Society, Alarm'd*. 1798. Lewis Walpole Library



FIGURE 11. *Philosophy Run Mad*. c. 1792. British Museum.



FIGURE 12. *A Peace Offering to the Genius of Liberty and Equality*. 1794. Lewis Walpole Library.

thrown in the 1790s with the threat of Jacobinism abroad and the genesis of a genuine working-class radicalism at home. The mob in caricature now became "politicized," no longer regarded as the dupe of parliamentary factions but as a malevolent force in its own right. Tolerant contempt changed to intolerant fear of the mob as a bestial, uncontrollable power. While it was still possible on occasion in these difficult years to view rioting with some amusement, Gillray's savage caricatures of Jacobinism, which showed the French as grotesque, subhuman fiends, spilled over into the treatment of English lower-class radicalism. In prints such as *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion*,¹⁶ which shows a French army marching up St. James's Street supported by an English Jacobin mob in the background, Gillray puts striking, almost simian features on the Frenchmen. In doing so he was, in fact, drawing upon an old tradition in graphic satire, a tradition which had developed the stereotype of the Frenchman as a scrawny ape-dandy or monkey. This is how the Frenchman had been portrayed in English caricatures for almost a century. Scrawniness, emaciation had been associated in the English mind with the French as a symbol of their poverty. It was also an association the English made with the Scots and with their own poor.

In the *London Corresponding Society, alarm'd*¹⁷ Gillray carries over his caricature of the French Jacobins to London's lower classes. The print (Fig. 10) shows a group of men huddled plotting in a cellar. All are Low Life characters: a butcher, baker, pickpocket, a Dissenter, and others. All are in simple dress, some with the emblems of their trades. At least one of the figures has a distinctively simian face, very much akin to the Irish stereotype in Victorian caricature.¹⁸ All of the figures in the print are, in fact, quite likely intended to be Irish, since the print was inspired by the arrest of certain Irish members of the Society in February 1798.¹⁹

While caricature "Jacobinized" the English mob, it also gave Jacobinism, itself, and the exponents of reform in England a mob-like identity, representing them in the imagery of the mob in rather

¹⁶ *Catalogue*, No. 8826.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 9202.

¹⁸ See L. Perry Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington, 1971).

¹⁹ The butcher, as Gillray perhaps intended, bears a strong resemblance to Charles James Fox.

interesting ways. In *The Republican Attack*,²⁰ a print of 1795 concerning the riot which attended George III's opening of parliament, when there was allegedly an attack upon the king's life, the leading Foxite Whigs—Fox, Sheridan, Lansdowne—are depicted as Jacobin riffraff of the worst sort, in tattered jackets, breeches, and *bonnets rouges*; they assault the king's coach as a bread riot takes place in the background.²¹ Gillray, in his *Patriotic Regeneration—viz.—Parliament Reform'd*,²² a print of 1795, projects what a “reformed” House of Commons would look like. The print shows the Whig leaders, in the ragged attire of the inferior sort, trying the former prime minister, William Pitt, at the bar of the House, while the new M.P.'s, portrayed as a Jacobin mob of sansculottes, look on. A fat butcher and a chimney sweep can be recognized among those on the benches.

More interesting, perhaps, is the iconography the English caricaturists devised to attack the principles of the French Revolution. In *Philosophy Run Mad* (Fig. 11)²³ is a series of allegorical creations, including a bizarre figure representing the “Republic of Paris,” atop a ruined column of “Laws,” “Religion,” “Order,” and the like. Surrounding this figure are the allegorical representations of “Peace,” “Plenty,” “Liberty,” and “Equality,” each devised so as ironically to suggest its opposite. The personification of Equality is especially interesting. Standing on top of the prostrate figure of a gentleman, he is a half-naked man in tattered shirt, with a kerchief and perhaps the remnants of breeches. He has a coarse face and strikes an arrogant pose, and he is brandishing a cudgel. The image is very much like the figure in another print, of 1781, which shows the personification of “Popular Rage,” a man in a tattered jacket, with a cudgel, and wearing a clown's face.²⁴ The artist has, in *Philosophy Run Mad*, drawn the essential stereotype of the triumphant bruiser to suggest to an English audience in a tangible and understandable way the true meaning of French equality.

²⁰ *Catalogue*, No. 8681.

²¹ In a print of 1790, *Frith the Madman Hurling Treason at the King* (*Catalogue*, No. 7624), which depicts an attack made upon George III in January of that year, Fox is portrayed as an old market woman, while his cohort, Sheridan, appears as a sailor.

²² *Catalogue*, No. 8624.

²³ *Ibid.*, No. 8150.

²⁴ *The Hon^{ble} Charles James Fox* (*Catalogue*, No. 5836), an attack on the allegedly republican and democratic principle of its subject.

A Peace Offering to the Genius of Liberty and Equality (Fig. 12)²⁵ a Cruikshank engraving of 1794, employs the same technique. It shows the leaders of the Whig opposition as a gang of Jacobin ruffians in conventional mob attire, looting the blessings of the British Constitution and bearing them to the Genius of Liberty at the right, a remarkable figure of a grotesque female in ragged dress. Her pendulous breasts and disheveled locks of hair bristling with snakes suggest the conventional iconographic image of the Fury—the Fury of Anarchy. But the artist has merged this conventional allegorical figure with another allusive image. The figure is holding a bottle of gin and sits on casks of the same. The artist has chosen a variant of that familiar character in Georgian Low Life caricature: the gin-seller, the gin-sodden ballad-singer, the beggar—Hogarth's neglectful mother in *Gin Lane*. Much of the effectiveness of English propaganda against the French Revolution had to do with its ability to translate alien and abstract ideas into familiar concrete associations. The caricaturists' interpretation of the Revolution was to a great extent in social terms, especially the values of class prejudice.

This anti-Jacobin tradition in caricature carried over into the early decades of the nineteenth century. Perceptions of working-class radicalism in the years after Waterloo were certainly affected by it. Like the enemies of reform, caricature readily put a Jacobin appearance on a genuinely indigenous and not necessarily revolutionary movement. Continuance of this perception suggests an enduring fear, a mistrust of the mob, a hostile attitude prompted by the political aspirations of the inferior sort. Alienation had replaced the rough equality and familiarity of the street; chronic disorder was no longer tolerable. No minister could say, as the Duke of Newcastle had once said with patronizing tolerance: "I love a mob."

Within a decade or two the mob and its caricature had disappeared or had been transformed into something else. By the 1840s the distinctive caricature print of the Georgian era had given way to what eventually became the modern newspaper cartoon. As for the mob, obviously rioting and popular disturbance didn't disappear, but they became a less familiar part of London's scene. The widening and clearing of streets, the sedan chair surrendering to the hackney cab, a better constabulary, a reformed criminal code, the

²⁵ *Catalogue*, No. 8426.

end of public executions and other brutalizing entertainments, the licensing of drink, the extension of morals and manners to the lower classes—all that we associate with the Victorian word “improvement”—brought an end to that particular institution of the eighteenth century.

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