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**LANDSCAPE AND THE GEOGRAPHICAL
IMAGINATION OF J.B. PRIESTLEY: 1913-1930**

Master of Philosophy

University of Sussex

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July 2013

Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been, and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank everyone who, in different ways, has helped me to prepare this thesis. The bibliography by Alan Day has been an invaluable guide through Priestley's vast number of writings especially those that have been the main source of information for my thesis. The staff at the Reading Room of the British Library at Colindale supplied copies of the *Bradford Pioneer* and *The Yorkshire Observer*. Alison Cullingford, the Special Collections Librarian at the J.B. Priestley Library at the University of Bradford has provided information and commented on Priestley's work. Several members of the J.B. Priestley Society, including Tom Priestley, J.B. Priestley's son, have also been helpful by providing information. Staff at the Local Studies Library in Bradford and the West Yorkshire Archives helped me to access information about Priestley, Bradford before the First World War and the redevelopments during the 1950s and 1960s. The staff at the BBC Written Archives Centre in Reading provided information on the making of *Lost City*. There were no formal consultations or interviews in my research and access to information was not restricted by any special conditions. My daughter Madeleine helped with what I considered to be some tricky IT technicalities. Last but not least I want to thank my tutor Dr Simon Rycroft for advice and information and for always encouraging me to move on to the next stage.

I wish to thank everybody who has given permission to include literary, archival and illustrative material in my thesis. I am particularly grateful for the permission from United Agents and Dent Everyman's Library to include material from *Angel Pavement* and other examples of Priestley's work. The covers of *Angel Pavement* have been included with the permission of the Random House Group and Harper Collins Publishers.

Summary

There are a number of studies on J.B. Priestley's life and work including assessments of his novels, social and political writings and contribution to English culture. Some of these studies have commented on Priestley and landscape, especially his attachment to Bradford and rural Yorkshire. There are no detailed studies, however, relating to his geographical imagination. The purpose of this research is a survey and interpretation of Priestley's work to form a source of information and ideas relating to landscape, dwelling and topophilia as the basis of his geographical imagination. The thesis will consider, firstly, what he wrote relating to the origin and form of his attachment to Bradford and rural Yorkshire as indicated by his articles in the *Bradford Pioneer* in 1913, a Labour newspaper published in Bradford. The thesis explains the extent to which he continued this attachment in his later work after the First World War before writing about London. In the next stage I approach the novel *Angel Pavement* in terms of his responses to London in relation to the provinces. Finally, the research is concerned with how *Angel Pavement* represented the landscape and identity of London in about 1930. The main contribution of the research is its detailed response to Priestley's thoughts on urban and rural landscapes in his early journalism and popular fiction. The research is organized around two main themes. The first of these is concerned with the origin of Priestley's attachment to Bradford and rural Yorkshire. The second considers how this attachment has influenced later work, in particular how he approached writing about London.

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Figure 1: Statue of J.B. Priestley in Bradford City Centre

Chapter 1 Introduction

Since 1986, Priestley's enduring presence in Bradford has been symbolized by Ian Judd's statue that shows him gazing towards City Hall apparently ruminating on his surroundings with his coat blowing in the wind (Figure 1)¹. However, the setting of the statue is inappropriate since it looks towards modernistic buildings and amorphous road spaces. These resulted from a failure to value Bradford's Victorian identity with its busy streets and imposing architecture, which Priestley described in some of his most significant work.

His attachment to Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside is well-known and the landscape has been recognized by various commentators as significant in much of his work. However, none of the existing studies have identified in detail the form and scope of his geographical imagination relating to landscape. John Baxendale (2007) has considered landscape to some extent from the perspective of a cultural historian. Holger Klein (2002, p.577) has recognized that 'the early novels up to *Daylight* (1943) offer us more often concretely visualisable environments, *Angel Pavement* being the best example'. Peter Holdsworth (1994, pp.1-62) located Priestley firmly in the environment of pre-First World War Bradford but did not focus on landscape. Roger

¹ The statue was unveiled on 31 October 1986 and is the work of Ian Judd. It stands outside the National Museum of Film, Photography and Television and the Central Library close to the Alhambra Theatre. Information obtained from the Bradford Sculpture Trail via <http://mediafiles.thdms.co.uk/publications/YS>. The Bradford Sculpture Trail was researched and written by Jane Winfrey in association with the Bradford City Centre Management.

Fagge (2007) has written about Priestley and landscape with a focus on his liking for the American South West. Gary Firth (2006) related Priestley to Bradford using a fascinating collection of historical photographs, a number of which portray urban and rural landscapes. In the foreword to Firth's book, Tom Priestley, J.B. Priestley's son, commented that '[o]ne could imagine a Bradford without him but never J.B. Priestley without Bradford' (2006). The novelist John Braine (1958, pp.9-10) claimed that '[i]t isn't possible to imagine him as coming from any other city than Bradford'. He added that Priestley

remains in the best sense a provincial. He is a provincial in a way which very few English writers are. For behind every word that he writes is one place, that black stone city in the Pennines where happiness stopped in 1914...Bradford still has the right to be loved. Places aren't simply names on the map, places are combinations of individual people...and geography and history.

However, when Priestley's *Freedom of the City* was being debated in the early 1970s Braine commented satirically, in a handwritten, obviously draft and undated work, on 'Bruddersford' being Priestley's town but that he lives in the South 'like a lord'². The history of this antagonism has been set out by Judith Cook (1997, pp.279-283) starting with what was considered to be an unacceptable Sunday night performance of *Dragon's Mouth* in 1952. Priestley obviously distanced himself from Bradford by moving to the South of England. However, his continued descriptions and comments on Bradford throughout his long writing career make his relationship with the city special and worth assessing, specifically in terms of landscape. He did not constrain himself, however, by writing within a Yorkshire context and was able to bring experiences of other landscapes into his writing, notably those in London.

² This is a handwritten, obviously a draft and undated work. Braine has written satirically about Priestley in what he identified as a 'song' and a 'monologue' which he titled 'Unlucky [?] Jack'. It starts:

'Mi name is Jack Priestley, mi
town Bruddersford,
In my home in the South I
live like a lord, –
Except in t'Statesman where Ah quizzle & moan'.

The piece continues and ends:

'It wor all different when Ah
was a lad
Bruddersford was different; Ah lived
there
You could sense t' difference in
The air
It wor somehow richer'.

Source: West Yorkshire Archives Item No. D 75 /2/20 Notebook (Reproduced by permission of David Higham Associates on behalf of the Estate of John Braine.)

The purpose of this research is a survey and interpretation of Priestley's work to form a source of information and ideas on his geographical imagination relating mainly to the concepts of landscape, dwelling and topophilia. The research is, firstly, an assessment of what he wrote relating to the origin and form of his attachment to Bradford and rural Yorkshire as indicated by his articles in the *Bradford Pioneer* in 1913. Then the research assesses how and to what extent he continued this attachment after the First World War, as indicated mainly by articles in *The Yorkshire Observer*, before writing about London, and in some major work produced after the Second World War. In the next stage the research approaches the novel *Angel Pavement* in terms of Priestley's responses to London in relation to the provinces. The research considers how *Angel Pavement* represented the landscape, identity and experience of London in about 1930. The thesis concludes with an assessment of Priestley's geographical imagination. By approaching the research in terms of dualities (journalism and novels, urban and rural landscapes, provinces and London) it is possible to produce a balanced and focussed thesis.³ The articles published in the *Bradford Pioneer* and in the novel *Angel Pavement* are significant sources for researching Priestley's geographical imagination at key stages in his literary career. These articles and this novel have not previously been surveyed and interpreted in detail in terms of geography and the research can, therefore, inform subsequent work and complement existing studies.

Priestley and his work have been commented on at length in a diversity of publications including biographies (e.g. Brome, 1988; Collins, 1994; Cook, 1997), monographs (Atkins, 1981; Holdsworth, 1994; Smith, 2002), chapters in contextual studies (LeMahieu, 1988; Waters, 1994; Gindin, 1992), papers in academic journals (Littlejohn, 2000; Klein, 2005), articles in newspapers and magazines (e.g. Braine, 1958) and as an example in books by geographers, historians and other writers (Matless, 1998; Gardiner, 2011; Cherry, 1988; Harris, 2010). Some studies have addressed particular themes (Wiener, 1979; Baxendale and Pawling, 1996; Davey, 1999; Baxendale, 2001, 2003 and 2007). Priestley has also been the subject of unpublished research by Day (1970) on Priestley's social and political thought and by Smith (1974) on his novels. The comprehensive bibliography by Day (2001) and the monumental study of Priestley's novels by Klein (2002) have been of special importance in facilitating and reinforcing my research. The articles and comments in the *Journal of the J.B. Priestley Society* and the *Newsletter* have also provided a valuable history of responses to his

³ Copies of the *Bradford Pioneer* and *The Yorkshire Observer* were accessed at the Library at Colindale and the Local Studies Library, Bradford.

work. However, in comparison with some of these existing studies, my study is not intended as a literary critique. Instead my research complements existing studies by indicating some alternative directions for the interpretation of literary texts using geographical concepts, ideas and approaches (Hones, 2008, p.1308; Thacker, 2005, p.56). The imaginative geographies considered in this research are the realizations of what landscapes meant for Priestley, either directly or through the experiences of his characters.

1.1 J.B. Priestley

Priestley was born in Bradford in 1894 and had a long life which ended in 1984. He lived in Bradford for a relatively short time because of army service, followed by going up to Cambridge. He attended Belle Vue Higher Grade School but left aged 16 to work as a clerk for a local textile firm. In Bradford he lived in a suburban district, firstly in Mannheim Road and then in the adjacent Saltburn Place (Figure 2).

He was fortunate because his father, Jonathan Priestley, was a well-established teacher and socialist who became the headmaster of a large elementary school. In 1914 Priestley enlisted but not for patriotic reasons, he claimed, nor because of community pressure, but because the War challenged his 'untested manhood' (Priestley, 1963a, p.79)⁴. He was awarded an officers' scholarship to study at Trinity Hall Cambridge where he read history and political science (Cook, 1997, p.51). While a student he wrote articles for the *Cambridge Review* on a variety of topics. Although he considered lecturing he decided to move to London and develop his career as a writer. At first he lived in Walham Green, then Chinnor in the Chilterns but following his early success he moved to Hampstead and then Highgate. He later lived on the Isle of Wight and then near Stratford-upon-Avon. His fame as a writer was established by *The Good Companions* in 1929 and a number of other successes followed, notably *Angel Pavement* in 1930. These successes were achieved despite two tragedies in his life: firstly the death of his father in 1924, and then his wife eighteen months later (Hanson and Priestley, 2008, p.107).

Priestley's output was prodigious. In addition to novels, he wrote criticism, articles for magazines and journals, plays, film scripts, social histories and autobiographies. *English Journey* is a special form of travel writing that drew attention to the condition of England. He was also well-known for his radio broadcasts, especially his popular

⁴ *Margin Released: a writer's reminiscences and reflections* was published originally in 1962 by Heinemann. The edition published in 1963 by the Reprint Society has been cited throughout this thesis.



Figure 2: Detail from Ordnance Survey Yorkshire West Riding sheets CCXVI.3 & CCI.15 published in 1908(original scale 1:2500) showing where Priestley lived in Saltburn Place and Mannheim Road, Bradford (The Godfrey Edition 2004 & 2000)

Wartime *Postscripts* of which Churchill disapproved. He contributed much to social and political thinking (Day, 1970) and his work after the Second World War has been discussed in relation to utopian ideals (Klein, 2005). He was interested in philosophies of time that were discussed at length in *Man and Time* (Priestley, 1964).

Priestley has been described as a socialist although his political affiliations were somewhat idiosyncratic. He was involved in the Common Wealth Party and was active in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament from its inception. Recognition of Priestley's

importance as a writer and commentator on England has been maintained since his death. His plays are frequently performed and some of his major work has been re-published including *Bright Day* and the *Postscripts*. A recent article in *The Guardian* pointed out that he is a 'man who is surely ripe for a wider rediscovery' (27 January 2012, p.38). The main justifications for such a rediscovery are the quality, breadth and extent of his contribution to English letters.

1.2 Priestley and Geography

For a variety of reasons Priestley's work is also important for geography. Although there have been many studies by geographers on literature and geography he has escaped their attention. He offers opportunities for discoveries in terms of the imagination he can bring to both fictional and non-fictional descriptions and interpretations of landscapes, and by showing how they were meaningful for himself and his characters. His journalism has an imaginative quality that closely resembles the comments and ideas in his novels. My research adds to a number of studies of individual authors (e.g. Johnson, 2000; Crang, 2008; Spooner, 2000; Sharp, 2002; Lorimer, 2012), and those with an emphasis on how cities and regions have been represented (e.g. Spolton, 1970; Pocock, 1979; Hudson, 1982; Barrell, 1982; Daniels and Rycroft, 1993; Preston, 1994; McCleery, 2004). It shows how a major 20th century author represented Bradford, rural Yorkshire and London, and the relationship between the provinces and London in terms of landscape. Priestley was a writer who had a strong sense of attachment to Bradford and rural West Yorkshire and who was able to write about his experiences from the inside as a journalist, and then to use them to shape those from the outside as an established novelist.

Much of his output is related directly or indirectly to landscape although it would be misleading, of course, to claim he was a 'landscape writer'. He made no secret about taking Stamp and Beaver's (1933) *Geographic and Economic Survey* with him on his English Journey, which at least shows some awareness by him of academic geography. As a context for the research it is useful to identify the types of his landscape writings. These comprise the portraits of Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside in his newspaper articles published in 1913 and 1919 in which focussed and imaginative pictures of urban and rural landscapes stand out. He developed his responses to landscape in novels published in the 1930s, with narratives related to the relationship of the industrial provinces and London, popularly referred to as the North-South Divide. In *English Journey* he turned his attention to the condition of England

and issues such as conservation, modernization and regeneration. In 'The Swan Arcadian', the first part of *Margin Released* (Priestley, 1963a) he described Bradford and aspects of rural Yorkshire by looking back at 1910-1914. Other significant work has also been informed by looking back, notably the exploration of its literary potential in the novel *Bright Day* and in the documentary film *Lost City*. Some minor writings, such as magazine articles, are also expressions of his urge to maintain a link with his hometown (e.g. Priestley, 1931; 1945; 1956).

Since he was not a regional writer Priestley could avoid creating an inward-looking identity for West Yorkshire. He used his experiences there as a source of ideas, narratives and examples in different genres. He is unusual by being skilled at using landscape context in this way. We can see, for example, what Bradford was like in 1913 and that London had similarities with it some 20 years later. In this respect, in *Angel Pavement* he can be seen as provincializing London rather than distancing it from provincial cities. Since Priestley was a popular writer his thoughts on landscape were read widely. His geographical imagination is unusual because he did not abandon the North and continued to write about it. This dividing of his attention between the provinces and London no doubt made his textual landscapes particularly influential since they appealed to both metropolitan and provincial readers. The feelings of his characters in *Angel Pavement*, for example, provide a humanistic dimension to landscape experiences in an economic and social context. In both his descriptions of Bradford and London he engaged with the effects of modernity on landscape experiences. Bradford was represented favourably in 1913 as a modern industrial city, but the characters in *Angel Pavement* in 1930 can be seen as cogs in the great urban machine. He was writing neither as an isolated provincial nor as a member of a London elite, dismissive of the declining regions.

Priestley's responses to landscapes in work produced between 1913 and the 1930s provide access to landscapes that are important in my own history. My study is inevitably an expression of this position – a form of positionality. By incorporating personal experiences into the research it is possible to open up ideas that might otherwise be overlooked when approaching Priestley's work. For example, my background in town planning and urban design relates to sense of place, conservation, controlling urban landscape change, and issues centred on modernity and development. I am also interested in how meanings and feelings for landscapes can be revealed in literary writings that are not constrained by bureaucracies and professional discourses.

In some respects the research is about me as well as Priestley. However, I am distanced in terms of time from what attracted his attention. It is necessary, therefore, to declare that it is what has influenced me that enables my making a bridge – a rather rickety rope bridge perhaps – between his experiences and what I consider to be significant, for example routes through the city, architecture and public spaces. As a schoolboy living in Priestley's hometown and travelling by coach through the countryside I was aware that some landscapes had been spoilt, at least in my opinion, by semi-detached housing, while other places looked pristine, attractive and 'real' Yorkshire, especially in the Dales. Other landscapes that are significant for me are those I encountered travelling to and from school, meeting friends, kite flying, Sunday walks, coming home. Some of these activities were memorable because they were regular, others by being occasional. I remember particular buildings, streets, lanes, woods, views, fields, juxtapositions, details in the built landscapes, hedges, walls, paths, making local journeys with parents and friends, travelling by bus and trolleybus, my equivalent of Priestley's tram journeys. Like him I can recall the city streets and the contrasting expanse of the moors. But I also remember some significant landmarks that were never visited, inaccessible, puzzling. Like Priestley, I migrated to London and its landscapes are also deeply significant with memories and associations. Sharing experiences of Bradford and London – but at different times – is the origin of my affinity with Priestley's work. I want to understand my attachment to Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside better and I am, in effect, looking to Priestley to help me to do this.

Chapter 2 Landscapes, dwelling and literary geographies

2.1 Landscapes

Priestley's geographical imagination is centred on landscape and the related concepts of dwelling and topophilia. To uncover that imagination I lean towards humanistic approaches that involve themes such as

the centrality of meaning and experience; the conjunction of facts and values, object and subject, material form and ideas, in geographic interpretation; the importance of context, synthesis, and therefore holism in geographic understanding;...a view of man that is contextual and not abstracted, particular rather than aggregate; and a perspective where human initiative and activity is not suppressed beneath the weight of a determining environment (Ley and Samuels, 1978, p.21).

Humanistic geography is underpinned by phenomenology. For Seamon (1979, p.16, italics in original) this means a 'way of study which works to uncover and describe things and experiences – i.e. *phenomena* – as they are in their own terms' as revealed to experiencing individuals. This revealing is essentially a sensory experience (perception) but also involves what is thought about, created and presented. Phenomenology also involves 'believing, remembering, wishing, deciding and imagining things; feeling apprehensive, excited, or angry ... judging and evaluating' (Hammond, Howarth and Keat (1991, pp.1-2). Phenomenology enables writing to be considered as a process of giving form to ideas, meanings, feelings, suggestions and attitudes and as such creates landscapes, not only for the writer, but as a context with which readers can engage and develop through their own responses.

Phenomenology is the theoretical framework for this research because it is concerned with landscape experiences as commented on by Priestley and created by him for the characters in his novels. The comprehensive history of developments in geographical thinking relating to landscape and phenomenology by Wylie (2007, pp.139-186) provides some directions for thinking about Priestley's work. Essentially, phenomenology means rejecting the idea of simply observing and representing landscape from a detached position. Instead landscape is regarded in terms of engagement, interaction and interpretation to form meanings, not simply a scene viewed from a fixed position, for example in relation to particular aesthetic tastes.

Basing this study on phenomenology means that a variety of activities and elements in urban and rural landscapes are relevant in the consideration of Priestley's work (Wylie, 2007, pp.145, 149 & 186). The rejection of landscape as simply a view from one

location means considering movement and mobility. This idea is relevant not only to journeys but also metaphorically in relation to narratives. Authors in effect take their readers through landscapes between places and over time. Movement as well as accessibility is at the heart of experiencing and engaging directly with landscapes. Landscape can be understood 'as a mobile form of everyday lived practice' (Wylie, 2007, p.177). How physical landscape, people, activities, uses and differences can be experienced depends on what is accessible and available to be noticed. Access is also related to the visibility of activities and the opportunities to understand and appreciate the ideological and historical formation that landscapes symbolize (Lynch, 1984, pp.139-141; Jenness, 1983).

Priestley's writings contribute to cultures of landscape by supporting, criticizing or challenging, for example, the ways Bradford and London were expressions of political, social and economic contexts. Landscapes symbolize particular messages, and this research aims to discover how Priestley contributed to making his interpretation of these meanings understandable for his readers by looking under the surface or by approaching his representations of landscapes from alternative directions. Wylie (2007, p.109) has summarized a definition of 'cultures of landscape'. For him they refer to everyday landscape activities and 'to the regulatory processes and cultural discourses through which notions of the proper conduct of such practices-in-landscape are elaborated'. These 'regulatory processes' and 'cultural discourses' can be considered in relation to Priestley's work as referring to how attitudes to, for example, provincial and metropolitan landscapes have been regulated by stereotyping and consequently influencing how they are expected to be regarded. For example, within the context of the research, this implies the presentation of provincial decline relative to the superiority and centralization of London, and how and the extent to which Priestley engaged in representing alternative positions. Matless (1998, p.73) has commented that 'cultures of landscape' refers to the 'ways in which particular sets of practices are seen to generate particular ways of being in the landscape, which thereby becomes the occasion for an intellectual, spiritual and physical citizenship'. The relevance of this definition to the research is simply to find out what issues of citizenship concerned Priestley and motivated him to alert his readers, for example, to the treatment of landscapes by individuals and authorities, and the need for either some form of conservation or the creation of a better alternative. Landscapes are cultural productions that create identities and then become valued or rejected through change or neglect. Accordingly, there are the issues of encroaching modernities, regeneration and loss of sense of place.

Landscapes are opportunities for personal development and learning, and form the basis of individual geographies. Like all authors, however, Priestley was inevitably writing from a position related to family, education and social background in particular historical periods and landscapes. This does not mean that his skill and creativity was 'to a great extent displaced into the logic of his ...social location' (Sharp, 2000, p.329). Priestley was too imaginative to be constrained as this rather extreme view suggests. What he represented is an expression of his values, interests, motivations and personal history. However, he was not totally free to choose. His novels, articles, non-fiction and other work were produced with regard to what was acceptable to readers and editors within the contemporary literary climate. There is also the issue of the length and purpose of his articles in particular, and the type of language, literary conventions, metaphors and topics that were appropriate. He was also not presenting his thoughts completely independent of their amendment for publication. Writing within such contexts is a version of 'rule governed creativity' rather than a completely independent expression of ideas.

My definition of landscape includes exceptional landscapes, such as those with special designations for natural beauty, ecology, architectural conservation, historic importance or urban design, including streets, squares and parks. Everyday (ordinary) landscapes are also included in this definition and in many cases are what Priestley – and his characters – experienced. One definition of 'ordinary landscapes' refers to

that continuous surface which we can see all around us...an ensemble which is under continuous creation and alteration as much or more from the unconscious processes of daily living as from calculated landscape design...[Ordinary landscapes are] a companion of that form of social history which seeks to understand the routine lives of ordinary people...[A]ll landscapes [are regarded] as symbolic, as expressions of cultural values, social behaviour, and individual actions worked upon particular localities over a span of time (Meinig, 1979, p.6).

As such the research is concerned with what Priestley saw as routines in an everyday landscape context. As regards values, behaviour and actions and 'particular localities', they are what Priestley has worked on at a specific moment for the purpose of depicting Bradford and London.

In phenomenology, the totality of what is experienced in everyday landscapes comprises a person's lifeworld (Buttimer, 1976), which relates to the range of experiences and their spatial extent. A lifeworld is therefore a landscape in which to live, either physically or through memory. It is a significant concept because it relates directly to Priestley's life in Bradford in his early years and the formation of a

relationship with local landscapes as he moved around. The research, in effect, shows what Priestley considered to be his early lifeworld as a confirmation of his attachment to Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside. This involves identifying examples from experiences in his daily life. Their significance was a patterning, a juxtaposition of experiences and recollections. In this respect the research does not give prominence to what can be seen and neglect the experience of landscape using other senses and memory.

Landscapes are essentially physical and social settings, encounters and networks. Accordingly landscapes comprise buildings, streets, squares and rural spaces – including their qualities and character – which are the settings for the activities of everyday life (Norberg-Schulz, 1980, pp.6-21; Rapoport, 1977, pp.229-30). ‘Landscape’ extends from urban landscapes to remote wilderness. Between these extremes are industrial landscapes and those which are really neither completely urban nor rural, such as suburbia, urban sprawl and the countryside on the edge of towns. The experience of all these landscapes contributes to shaping realities, knowledge and behaviours. Landscapes become charged with meanings, attitudes and personal feelings, and are consequently valued and the focus of attachment. The meanings that develop through experience become nostalgia as a result of the passage of time. Landscapes give form to memories. Meanings become attitudes that value or challenge what has been experienced.

2.2 Dwelling

‘Dwelling’ helps to conceptualize Priestley’s attachment to Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside. Occupying a place physically and through memories creates a sense of dwelling and needs to be considered as the centre of Priestley’s lifeworld and the complex of his experiences. In comparison to attachment, a sense of dwelling develops or diminishes, ebbs and flows, and does not mean total involvement with one landscape, which remains unchanged, but is modified for particular purposes, for example to create a narrative form or to respond to changes to landscape identities. The research takes into account how Priestley’s sense of dwelling was maintained and shaped to respond to the changing conditions of Bradford, for example as a declining industrial centre during the 1930s, and as a modernizing city during the 1950s. In this respect my comments are particularly concerned with how his sense of dwelling changed.

Dwelling is a state of mind, and refers to feelings for a place or landscape. This means being engaged through the multisensory experience of physical space. Such engagements are not stable, however, and change depending on historical developments and individual circumstances. Priestley's experiences were sequential but formed a spatial pattern with juxtapositions that provided him with a source of ideas and images. His sense of dwelling changed as the consequences of how he responded to it as a resident, as a successful outsider, and as someone who valued his past experiences that were being lost. It refers to a centre or a starting point, a place of reference geographically and psychologically as a source of identity and development. The idea of dwelling, therefore, refers to the existential centre of personal development. Edward Relph (1976, pp.39-40) has discussed the theme of 'home places as profound centres of human existence'. He has referred to home being 'the foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community, the dwelling-place of being. Home is not just the house you happen to live in ... [it is] an irreplaceable centre of significance'. He added that '[i]t is the point of departure from which we orient ourselves and take possession of the world'. Peet (1998, p.56) complemented Relph by also stressing the need for a home, somewhere that promotes a strong or instinctive feeling in an individual. He referred to the 'centredness' where 'one's sense of place is a function of how well it provides a centre for one's life interests'. However, a more recent interpretation of dwelling has been provided by Ingold who has defined it as

literally to be embarked upon a movement along a way of life. The perceiver-producer is thus a wayfarer, and the mode of production is itself a trail blazed or a path followed. Along such paths, lives are lived, skills developed, observations made and understandings grown ... To be, I would now say, is not to be *in* place but to be *along* paths. The path, and not the place, is the primary condition of being, or rather of becoming (2011, p.12. Italics in the original).

In this respect, for Ingold, each individual can 'be imagined as the line of [their] own movement or – more realistically – as a bundle of lines'. With reference to Henri Bergson, he added that individuals can be thought of as 'trailing' their histories after themselves 'as the past presses against the present' (Ingold, 2011, pp.12-13). For Priestley these lines start with Bradford and are a metaphor of attachment and development. The ongoing interpretations of Priestley's work ensure that the process of growth continues through the responses to his thoughts and their development.

Harrison (2007, pp.625-647) has analysed the concept of dwelling at length in relation to the work of Martin Heidegger and Emmanuel Levinas. The former is seen as organizing and articulating 'the concept around an enclosed figure being-at-home-in

the world'. However, for Emmanuel Levinas dwelling is significant because of a 'constitutive openness to the incoming of the other'. Harrison added that these two interpretations of dwelling embrace 'the central importance of the concept in the determination, figuring, and phrasing of subjectivity, sociality and signification' (p.625).

Wylie (2007, p.153) proposed the 'equation of landscape with human dwelling-in-the-world'. Within his consideration of what he termed the 'dwelling perspective' he argued that 'thought and knowledge become active and engaged; they occur through interactions between people, and interactions between people and environments. Importantly, neither "people" nor "environments" are constructed as fixed, stable, already-given entities here. Both are rather seen as continually developing and elaborating via interactions' (Wylie, 2007, p.159).

According to Latimer and Munro (2009, p.318) dwelling depends on 'whenever relations are formed in the here and now'. They also referred to there being 'an *us-ness* as well as a *there-ness* to a sense of dwelling; feelings of longing and belonging are affected by the relations created and sustained by our giving (or not giving) room to things' (italics in original). Consequently, omissions strengthen the representation of dwelling by emphasising what is retained in responses and memories. In this respect Priestley's writings are in effect an edited version of his dwelling which, inevitably, is not geographically comprehensive. Dwelling as expressed in his early writings can be seen as the original source of ideas, information, meanings and as a standard for assessments of his later work.

Nostalgia is a dimension of dwelling because of the effects of distance, space or the passage of time. Since Priestley continued his attachment with Bradford throughout his life it is important to consider how his dwelling developed as nostalgia and continued to influence his attachment to the city. Nostalgia can be motivated by making the best of what exists – and, as such, is a form of sustainability – and by drawing attention to something that is vulnerable as a consequence of changed attitudes. Nostalgia can be a means for challenging prevailing discourses, for example on the value of historic architecture or on what can be swept away through post-war redevelopment. In this respect nostalgia not only means cherishing the past as fixed in memory, but the advocacy of an alternative future. However, nostalgia often constructs a sense of place from an unabashed personal position that cleanses the past of bad memories and unpleasant experiences.

Dwelling is the critical response within cultural geography to the concept of topophilia that is associated more closely with humanistic geography. Topophilia and dwelling clearly overlap. However, topophilia has largely been superseded by dwelling as the conceptualization of relationships with places and landscapes. While topophilia is concerned simply with the consistent affection for places and landscapes, dwelling relates to how it is modified and developed in response to new experiences and historical contexts. Both dwelling and topophilia are relevant to the interpretation of Priestley's work. In this research topophilia refers specifically to his continued love for his lifeworld in Bradford and the rural landscapes outside the city.

Topophilia has been referred to by Tuan (1974, p.4) as the 'affective bond between people and place or setting'. In a more detailed definition he included

all of the human being's affective ties with the material environment. These differ greatly in intensity, subtlety, and mode of expression. The response to environment may be primarily aesthetic: it may then vary from the fleeting pleasure one gets from a view... [or the] far more intense sense of beauty that is suddenly revealed. The response may be tactile, a delight in the feel of air, water, earth. More permanent and less easy to express are feelings that one has toward a place because it is home, the locus of memories, and the means of gaining a livelihood (1974, p.93).

In geography topophilia is associated most closely with Tuan, but it was used by W.H. Auden in relation to responses to landscapes by John Betjeman (Harris, 2010, p.222 & pp.305-306). This type of topophilia is distinct from Priestley's, however, since he was responding to urban and rural landscapes that were deeply meaningful for him, not simply things that were interesting and appealing. In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard commented also on topophilia in relation to 'the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped, that may be defended against adverse forces, the spaces we love' (1969, p.xxxi). In this respect he discussed what can be considered the minutiae of landscapes such as houses, rooms and corners (1969, xxxiii-xxxiv). These are relevant to Priestley's attachment to places within a continuum extending from the internal, personalized rooms – such as the attic where he wrote his earliest work – to the public spaces of the city and the seemingly limitless spaces of the Pennine uplands.

2.3 Literary Geographies

My research is firmly related to the particular humanistic geographies that promoted literature as a valuable source of information and ideas (Baker, 2003, p.122). Novels

can be regarded as geographical because of their settings which characters occupy, move through and experience (e.g. Jay, 1975; Preston, 1987; Daniels and Rycroft, 1993). Brosseau (1994, p.349) has pointed out that the 'literary text may constitute a "geographer" [sic] in its own right as it generates norms, particular models of readability, that produce a particular type of geography'. In this sense Priestley's fictional and non-fictional work is itself a distinct textual landscape that was shaped by his imaginative use of narrative, figurative language, literary strategies and realism. Priestley was responding to landscapes but he was really creating them through his work. His landscapes were given form through descriptions, interpretations and evaluations, which are either internalized or communicated for a purpose. For example, literary texts can present and promote landscapes in different ways for personal and political reasons.

Priestley created narratives not only within his novels but also in his journalism. In 1913, and then during 1919, he in effect presented a story of his responses to landscapes, places, issues and events in and around Bradford. Similarly his London novels bear a strong relationship with the metropolitan landscapes that existed. They are also textual geographies which comprise places, districts, buildings and streets which he allowed his characters to use for fictional reasons. His journalism and novels can also be seen as part of grander geo-historical narratives. Although the early journalism only extends over a very short period of time, it forms part of grand narratives concerned with the growth and decline of the industrial provinces and those organized nationally around the First World War. Both the early journalism and the novels also form part of the narrative of the North-South Divide associated with the stereotyping of industrial cities relative to London in the national consciousness. It is also possible to see the early writings and London novels, for example, as part of a network of non-fiction, journalism, official and academic reports that together are essential for creating a more extensive geography based on different types of texts. The significance of Priestley's work is that he provides pieces for this jig-saw.

Individuality as a writer depends on literary strategies to form narratives which combine intertextuality, argument, political positions, plot and setting (Hones, 2008, p.1306). The core of this research is how the origin of Priestley's sense of dwelling was maintained and developed through distinct phases of his work and how he interpreted provincial and London settings. My argument is that this process was contextualized in terms of what shaped it and how later writings have been influenced. Narratives are not simply expressions of change over time but become increasingly spatial, since they relate to

different places, districts, towns and areas of countryside within and outside the text. As Priestley's narrative builds up following the early journalism we can see its spatial extent relating to a story about much of England. Within Bradford and London his writing has a spatial extent which has its own distinctiveness through combining different landscapes.

The emphasis in this research is on what was meaningful for Priestley. However, all that is available as evidence of these meanings, except for some autobiographical statements, are the words on the page and how they are read by me. Priestley's meanings are selective and cannot really be known comprehensively and in detail (Bennett and Royle, 1999, p.22). It is impossible to separate Priestley from his contextual influences. A mesh of contextual influences has obviously been shaping me as well as Priestley. The encounter between us is the 'mixing together' of his work with my research purposes, information, ideas and personal history. What Priestley offered in his writings, and what I do to bridge the space between us, forms the unique potential within the research.

It is convenient, I think, for me to attribute my own sense of dwelling to Priestley, and to approach his work with the assumption that he was writing about one of my favourite places, say Ilkley Moor. When he referred to the qualities of experiencing moorland he may not have been celebrating particular locations that were special to him, say somewhere in Wharfedale but I assume that he is. I assume also that he was attracted to the countryside to the north of Bradford – as I am – rather than the Pennine landscapes between Yorkshire and Lancashire.

My research is in effect a narration of Priestley's words, a response by me which is concerned with recognizing patterns and relationships within a context. Hones (2008, p.1302) has proposed a particular and 'explicitly spatial view of text that understands the writing-reading nexus as a contextualized and always emerging event'. She added that 'interpretations are...produced in relation to at least two geographies, the first being the geography of the initial text event, and the second being the geography of the context in which the reader's experience of that event is later narrated'.

The writings in this research are more or less fictionalized and did not have an overt geographical or historical purpose to understand landscapes. For this reason the research does not look to Priestley as a convenient source of geographical facts from which to construct historical topographies. Although he was a significant commentator on places and landscapes, he was concerned less with recording and more with

interpreting for political purposes as a journalist, to develop a geographical message in his London novels, to interpret nostalgia in *Bright Day*, and to draw attention to change in the documentary film *Lost City*. Priestley's fictional and non-fictional work also relates to a form of provincial-metropolitan integration within his literary representation.

Priestley has provided a source of ideas and information for looking at landscapes and places across the passage of time, rather than the direction for searching for the authority of the text. However, I contend that Priestley's imaginative use of landscapes should not be isolated from what it says about those which can be accessed in reality. It is not my aim, however, to see Priestley's work as a guide to Bradford or London. Naming places on the moors, for example, would have made his descriptions read like extracts from a guidebook. When a writer has avoided naming specific places the descriptions can be more personalized, thereby emphasizing his or her moods and feelings. However, by naming, literary writing complements other geographical media. For example, we can read about what that narrow street on a map was like to walk along or what it was possible to see looking along the Thames.

Chapter 3 Priestley and the *Bradford Pioneer*



Figure 3: Heading of Priestley's *Bradford Pioneer* articles (British Library)

3.1 Bradford and Priestley's early life

Priestley referred to his attachment to Bradford in a number of writings. He considered that he had been 'moulded and coloured, so to speak, by the West Riding, and more particularly by Bradford' (Priestley, 1945, p.753 & 1946, p.8). Writing later about his early life he claimed that 'it is the Bradford, of say 1910-1914 that dominates my memory and has this hold on my affections'. He added that this was 'a very impressionable and formative time... [T]he impressionable years, the ones that count most, belong to the North'.⁵ In 'The Swan Arcadian' (Priestley, 1963a, pp.29 & 30) he remembered that Bradford 'seemed to offer me all I wanted from a town, and already I had a deep affection for the surrounding countryside that I have not lost in half a century'. On the next page he added: '[p]art of me is still in Bradford, can never leave it... [T]he core of me is still in Market Street hearing the Town Hall chimes'. Towards the end of his life he certainly removed any doubts about his attachment to Bradford and its influence on his writing. In *Instead of the Trees: a Final Chapter of Autobiography* he affirmed that: '[t]he truth is, Bradford from 1911-1914 gave me more than Cambridge did from 1919-1922' (1977, p.21). And at the beginning of Chapter IX (1977, p.60) he asked

Can any man ever escape the influences of his boyhood and youth? Certainly not, I believe, if he is a writer. I have been thinking about my own boyhood and youth and trying to determine what effect they may have had on my own work. This took me back to a suburb of Bradford in the years before the First World War.

Bradford was much more than somewhere to live before alternatives were available in Cambridge and London. This is significant, since it shows clearly that Priestley did not

⁵ This quotation is from an undated draft article, probably dating from 1974, in file BMD 7/10/1 West Yorkshire Archives.

consider Bradford to be a hostile urban environment from which to escape. His attachment to Bradford was, however, insufficient to make him stay there. Later he explained in 'The Swan Arcadian' (Priestley, 1963a, p.28) that '[a]fter the War I could not have remained in or near Bradford, never considered doing so'. Presumably one of the reasons was the impact of the events of 1914-1918 and the loss of the social experiences he remembered so fondly.

This chapter assesses Priestley's comments by looking closely at what he wrote before the First World War in articles in the *Bradford Pioneer* relating to urban and rural landscapes. These articles are, in effect, the realization of the origin of his attachment to Bradford and its neighbouring countryside. This work, however, is only a glimpse of this relationship. The form this took is unusual because of Priestley's ability to set down his thoughts in writing. Only a selection of his feelings about what Bradford meant to him, however, is likely to have been published. It would also be misleading to regard Priestley as being uncritically attached to Bradford and not to take into account what he criticized or ignored. Unlike many of his generation, before the War he travelled abroad so his attitudes to landscapes and places in and around Bradford were not entirely parochial. The experiences of foreign cities were brief but would no doubt have contributed to how he viewed Bradford.

The most extensive bibliographical research on the early published writings has no doubt been carried out by Day (2001) who listed them comprehensively. It is impossible not to benefit from Day's endeavours which are essential in mapping out Priestley's early work. Norah Fienburgh (1932, p.5) appraised the 'Round the hearth' articles in the *Bradford Pioneer* and proposed that they should be republished in a book. Her praise is significant because it drew attention to the early writings after the success of *The Good Companions* and *Angel Pavement*, which were first published in 1929 and 1930 respectively. Baxendale (2007, pp.8-10) has outlined the history of the early writings. Other major studies of Priestley and his work (e.g. Braine, 1978; Atkins, 1981; Brome, 1988; Collins, 1994; Holdsworth, 1994; Cook, 1997) contain much about his early life but none assess the content of the *Bradford Pioneer* writings in detail, nor comment on them in depth in relation to landscape.

Day recognized the significance of Priestley's early work with regard to the 'unmistakable signs of his abundant versatility and prolific output' (2001, p.ix). Alison Cullingford (2009) has pointed out that 'themes that interest Priestley later in life do appear in his early work, which seems quite natural'. However, she questioned whether

the early works formed the basis of his later writings, [since] he didn't revise them or do anything with them, it's just that one can trace his later interests in his early work e.g. social concern, interest in characters, love of music, love of and interest in his local area, distrust of mass media techniques.

This comment recognizes the 'love of and interest in his local area'. This is the basis of my study; that is, specifically thinking about the 'local area' as landscape and in this respect the origin of what Bradford meant for Priestley.

De Vitis and Kalson (1980, p.17) have pointed out that the 'early years at Bradford were rich in the discoveries that a sensitive and romantic boy could draw upon to feed an imagination and to people a world later on'. What was available for Priestley to walk past, criticize, admire and write about as he formed his attachment to the city and created an imaginative representation for his readers? What might he have noticed and considered? Bradford and the countryside outside the city were a rich source of experiences, meanings, feelings, information, ideas and attitudes. However, although Bradford fostered his awareness of landscapes and places, it is also important to consider his social position that enabled him to access what the city had to offer, as well as an awareness of its inadequacies. What is crucial when discussing Priestley's relationship with Bradford is what he was able to achieve because of his middle-class background – with a schoolmaster father – and contact with socialist ideas, in terms of confidence and opportunities. Bradford did not simply mould Priestley; otherwise its influence would have been deterministic, which would have been at odds with his creativity. Priestley's writings were the nexus of mutually reaffirming social contacts, information, stimuli and opportunities which he shaped to form textual landscapes.

In 1844 Bradford had been assessed officially as 'one of the dirtiest and worst regulated towns in the country' by the Commissioners reporting on the Health of Towns and Populous Districts (quoted in Richardson, 1977, pp.112 & 121). The effects of uncontrolled growth and rapid industrialization were depicted powerfully in the panoramic view of 'Worstedopolis' in the 1880s. This panorama, which is dated 1889, is included in the 1997 reprint of William Cudworth's history of Bradford, originally published in 1888. This extract shows the high density of development in the centre of Bradford and the proximity of agricultural land; this is particularly evident in the complete drawing (Figure 4).

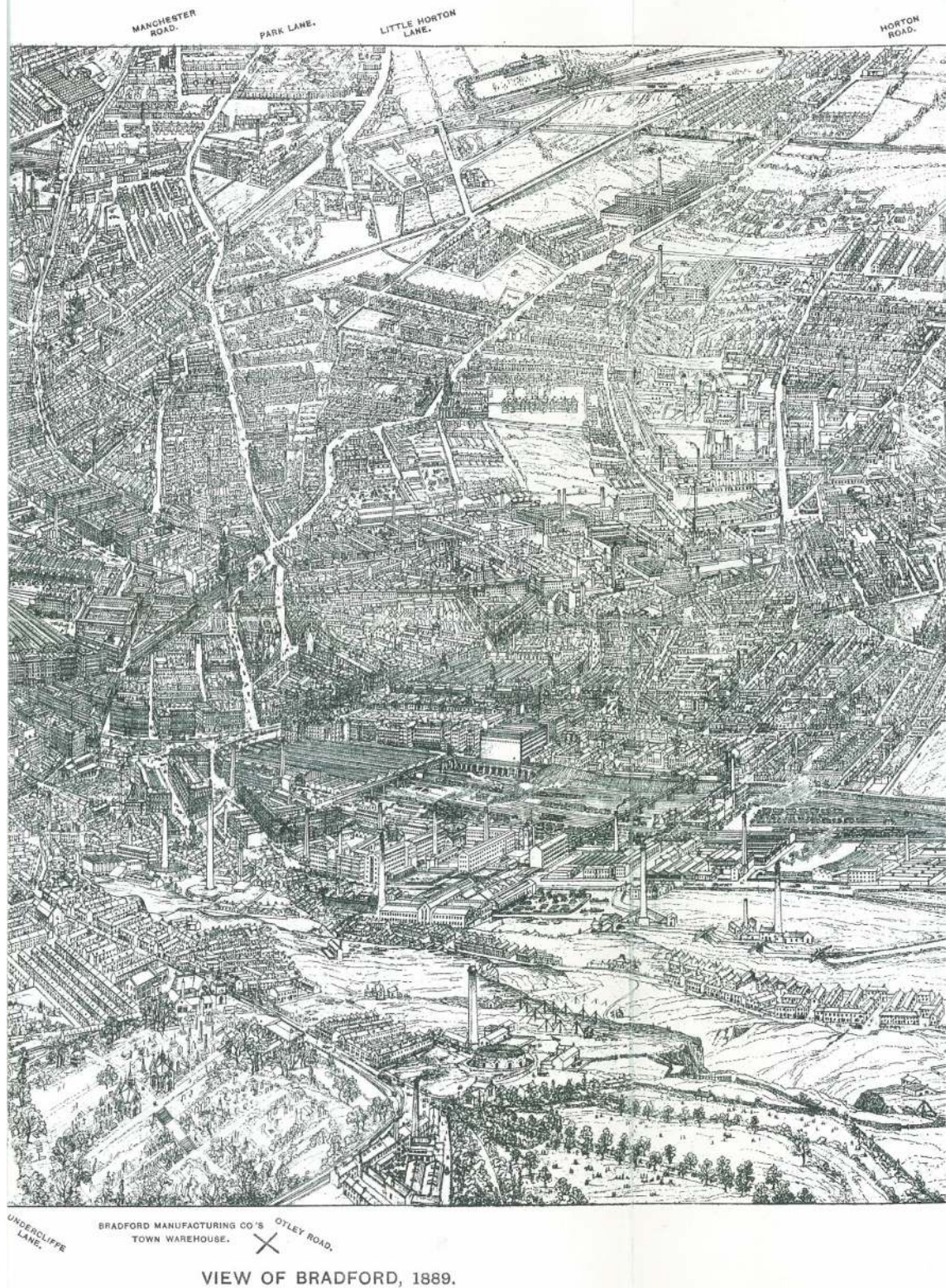


Figure 4: View of Bradford in the eighteen-eighties (Cudworth [1888] 1997)

Bradford had changed significantly by 1897 when it was granted city status which symbolized civic maturity (Beckett, 2005, pp.57-59). Writing towards the end of the 19th

century the American economist and statistician Adna Weber ([1899]1967, map between pp.294 and 295) considered Bradford to be one of a number of 'major cities' comparable with European capitals and regional centres. Jowitt (1980, p.21) pointed out that 'it is clear that Bradford in the twenty five years before the First World War was a very special place'. Priestley (1946, p.8) commented that before 1914 Bradford 'was considered the most progressive place in the United Kingdom' and referred to the concerts, symphony orchestra, choral societies and theatres. Like other industrial cities, Bradford had also developed an extensive transport network and opened an art gallery, technical college, swimming baths and parks (Elliott, 1982, p.122; Duckett & Waddington-Feather, 2005, pp.92-94 & 108). Priestley was able to develop and gain a degree of self-esteem from living in a major city that had transformed itself and which was essential to the national economy and the Empire. Six higher grade schools – such as Belle Vue which Priestley attended – were also established by 1902 (Jowitt 1980, p.19; Sheeran 2005, pp.94-95). These new schools were signs of progressiveness in the urban landscape, in the case of Belle Vue on the main road into the city from the west.



*Figure 5: Market Street, Bradford in the eighteen-nineties
(www.bradlibs.com/localstudies/vtc/lostbradford. Reproduced by permission of Bradford Libraries)*



Figure 6: View across Forster Square towards Kirkgate, Bradford in 1912 (www.bradlibs.com/localstudies/vtc/lostbradford. Reproduced by permission of Bradford Libraries)

Imposing architecture symbolized the importance of the city, especially the Town Hall and the Wool Exchange whose designs were modelled on Gothic exemplars (Pevsner, 1959, p.124). The Wool Exchange and Swan Arcade were distinctive buildings along Market Street on which Priestley commented when describing his experiences of the city centre (Figure 5), but it was Swan Arcade that stood out in his memory. Forster Square – which Pevsner (1959, p.125) considered to be characteristic of the city – and Town Hall Square were significant spaces in the city centre (Figures 6 and 7). Streets and squares provided Priestley with opportunities to see the variety of buildings, dignified facades, towering forms and architectural detailing. His memories of Bradford were that ‘in general it never seemed to [be]...the ugly city that outsiders said it was’.⁶ He accepted that the blackened stone was a characteristic of the city. However, he commented that

When on a fine morning a peculiar kind of smoky sunlight played with brightness and shadows from Town Hall to Forster Square, the effect could be almost enchanting. I may have preferred the moors but my eyes enjoyed many a little feast going in and out of Swan Arcade.

Swan Arcade opened on to Market Street, which he thought was ‘sombre and dignified’. These qualities of the urban landscape did not motivate Priestley to write a form of architectural appreciation, however, but they no doubt contributed significantly

⁶ These quotations are from an undated draft article, probably dating from 1974, in file BMD 7/10/1 West Yorkshire Archives.

to his sense of dwelling and attachment to Bradford. The combination of building types and activities associated with the textile industry also contributed to Bradford's distinctive identity, which was complemented by countryside, villages, woodland and moorland on the edge of the city.

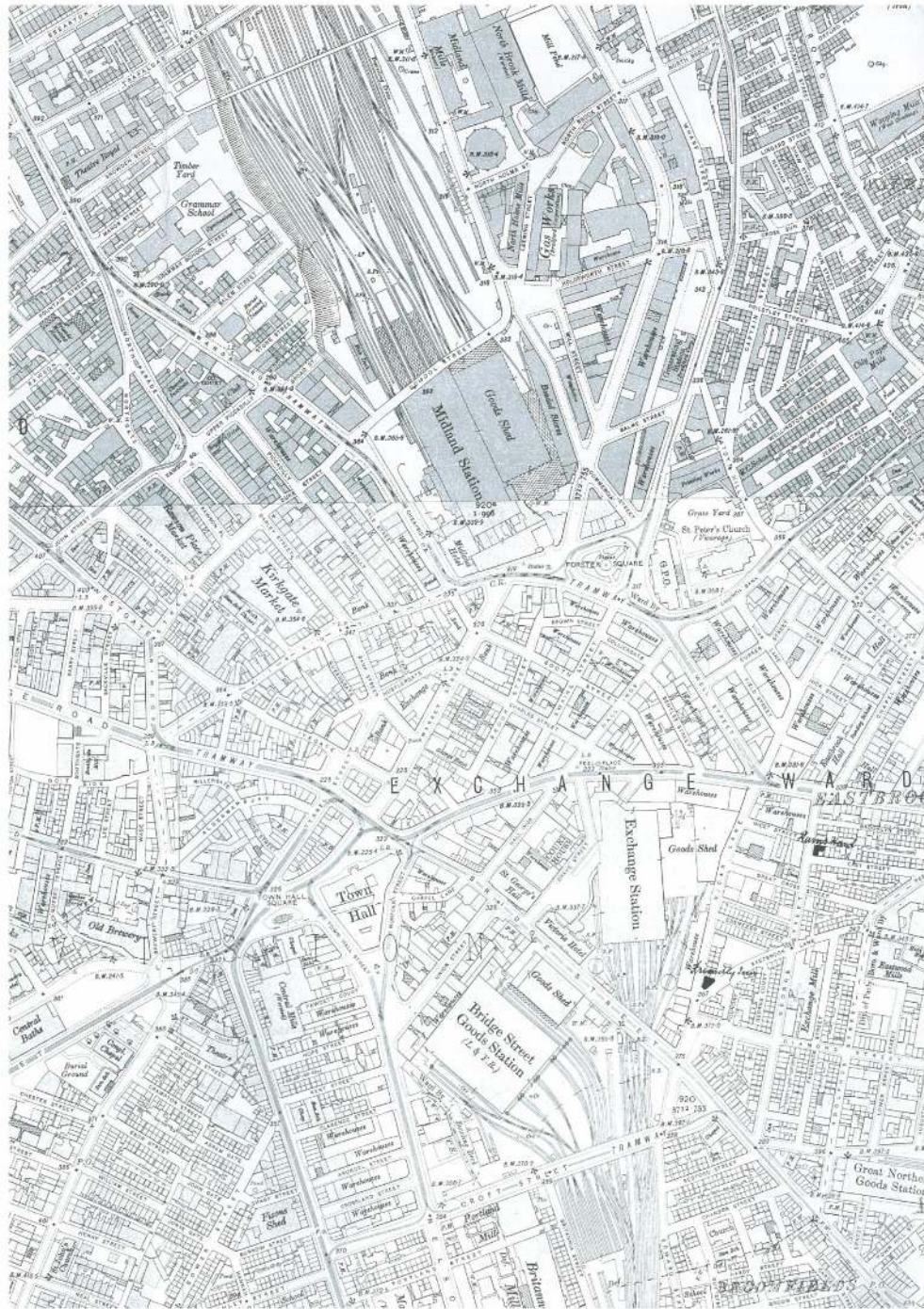


Figure 7: Detail from Ordnance Survey Yorkshire West Riding sheets CCXVI. 4 & CCXVI.8 published in 1908 (original scale 1:2500) showing Bradford City Centre

(The Godfrey Edition 1996 & c.1989)

Accessibility is the key to Priestley's attachment to Bradford in his youth. Not only could urban and rural landscapes be reached easily by walking and by tram, but he could also access political, social and cultural environments. Discussions, suggestions and ideas emanating from the social and political network to which he had access, contributed to his early writings and helped him take advantage of the opportunities to publish his thoughts and attitudes. He could access urban and rural landscapes with an awareness of socialist values, no doubt helped by his father's 'idealistic' socialism (Priestley, 1959, p.129). Through political contacts he was no doubt aware of provincial identity and the importance of Bradford relative to London (Priestley, 1963a, p.29). Priestley was one of the earliest members of the Bradford Arts Club⁷ and referred to contacts with art students (1963a, pp.71-72). These contacts influenced his interest in painting and he commented later that it was 'one of his chief diversions' and his subjects were 'always landscapes'⁸.

Priestley was not isolated from the local literary environment, which comprised a variety of writers (Wade, 2000), and was a friend of James Mackereth (Priestley, 1963a, pp.31-32). Richard Pendlebury, an English teacher at Belle Vue, no doubt introduced him to the tradition of the writers of fiction with rural settings (Keith, 1988). The most distinguished writers who had lived in the vicinity of Bradford were, of course, the Bronte sisters. Crehan (1962, p.xxvi) pointed to Emily Bronte's purposeful concern for isolation, her attachment to home and the moors, freedom, and the representation of landscape distinctiveness, which all point towards a relationship with landscape of which Priestley would have been aware. It has not been possible, however, to confirm whether Priestley studied geography while at Belle Vue to complement these literary contacts, nor if the lessons included the awareness of local urban and rural landscapes. There is, however, evidence of local geography being taught at another higher grade school (Hanson) relating to the layout of Bradford and the orientation of the pupils travelling around the City (Betteridge, 1902, pp.76-99). Another geographer made a 'plea for imagination in geography' (Rusk, 1906, pp.239-243) and indicated that new ideas and methods were in the air. Education and leisure were brought together as a result of Jonathon Priestley's interests in archaeology and botany, which no doubt contributed to Jack's experiences of rural landscape on their hikes into Airedale and Wharfedale (Firth, 2006, p.26).

⁷ Letter from Percy Monkman, dated 15 September 1973, refers to his '...personal association with him [i.e. Priestley] which goes back to our schoolboy days...' The letter points out that Priestley was one of the earliest members of the Bradford Arts Club. In file 'Freedom of the City – J.B. Priestley' (BBD 1 /7/41) West Yorkshire Archives.

⁸ A letter from Priestley dated 23 July 1973 has a note attached for an exhibition brochure in which he refers to 'painting in gouaches' as one his 'chief diversions' and 'always landscapes'. In file 'Freedom of the City – J.B. Priestley' (BBD 1 /7/41) West Yorkshire Archives.

3.2 The *Bradford Pioneer*

The *Bradford Pioneer* was established in 1913 and was a weekly newspaper with a circulation in Bradford, Shipley, Bingley and Keighley. It dealt with national and city politics and local issues from a Labour point of view. Since the newspaper was launched shortly before Priestley's articles appeared there may have been problems finding writers at short notice. It seems that the *Bradford Pioneer* wanted to foster an image of socialism that would engage readers by including a diversity of topics from a writer who seemed older than his years. His early work must be viewed as shaped by, or at least orientated towards, the political requirements of the newspaper and what the readership would expect and enjoy reading. Priestley offered a fresh outlook and may have attracted readers to this new paper. He pointed out in an article for *The Daily News* (1927, p.4) that the *Bradford Pioneer* 'Round the hearth' articles were an opportunity for writing 'quite ambitiously' and to let off steam and that as a 'fervid Socialist [he was]...only too willing to help the cause'. He commented that he was willing to write his articles for nothing. However, he admitted later (1946, p.8) to being a little opportunistic since it was the prospect of seeing himself in print – rather than his socialist leanings – which was the main reason for writing for the paper. Although these comments do not confirm that he was free to write without any editorial input, they indicate to some extent that he had a degree of freedom. A statement by the editor was inserted prominently in the 4 April 1913 edition and pointed out that

it must be distinctly understood that "Round the Hearth" is pre-eminently a personal feature, so that the opinions expressed therein are not necessarily those of the paper itself. Letters dealing with subjects treated in "Round the Hearth" are invited.

The statement about the articles being 'pre-eminently a personal feature' supports the use of them as significant evidence of how Priestley related to Bradford during 1913. It also appears that, previously, responses had been less numerous than the editor had expected as result of Priestley's insights, provocation and erudition. No doubt the editor thought that a young, ambitious writer like Priestley would speak bluntly in true Yorkshire fashion about issues and feelings with literary skill, and would stir up readers to respond.

Priestley's first published article ('Secrets of a rag-time king') appeared in 1912 (Day, 2001, p.77). The 'Round the Hearth' articles written by JBP started in the *Bradford Pioneer* on 24 January 1913 and continued up to 10 October of the same year. During this period a further four articles were published with J. Boynton Priestley as the author.

A few weeks after the 'Round the hearth' articles ended a further article was published, rather pompously called 'A nocturne'. There are 39 of these articles in total (Day, 2001, pp.77-80), which is an impressive contribution to journalism by a teenager. The articles increased from only two columns on 24 January to three columns subsequently. Priestley's attitudes are expressed wonderfully with clarity, and contain ideas that seem to have come from the pen of a much more mature writer. During a period of less than a year, Priestley made a number of imaginative, insightful and thought-provoking comments relating to landscapes in and around Bradford. These articles show that he was engaged with Bradford because he was motivated to write about it. This consequently meant engaging with the city both as a physical landscape and creatively as a stimulus for ideas and literary representations. The articles are therefore an expression of the core of his dwelling in Bradford that enabled the development of an immensely successful literary career. They are not unmitigated expressions of affection for the city, although his descriptions of countryside read as if he were declaring an uncontrolled passion.

The articles considered in this chapter were included inside the newspaper on p.6 but at the top of the page. They comprise a diversity of topics, for example, 'Socialism in fiction', 'The holidays', 'Tram queues' and 'London and the Provinces'. The articles are accompanied by small advertisements, for example for Power's book store, footwear, coal, non-alcoholic beer and union matters, as well as news items and letters. All these items appear mundane in comparison to the content and presentation of Priestley's articles. They are given an identity on the page by including a drawing by F. Paley of apparently three men smoking and relaxing in front of a glowing fire with tobacco smoke curling into the air (Figure 3). One appears to be making a point – presumably Priestley – and is holding a cigar which symbolizes the middle-class. The image was probably derived from the groups of teachers who were entertained by Priestley's father (Priestley, 1963a, p.10). It appears that Priestley's role was to appeal to older, male readers rather than to attract younger ones and women. In the first of his articles he recognized that this sitting 'round the hearth – chatting and reading, the old thinking of the past, the young dreaming of the future' was a middle-class privilege not enjoyed by workers who 'have no hearth to sit around' and whose life means nothing more than 'ignoble drudgery' (JBP, 1913a). This view is prominent in the first article and is a swipe at those who ignore these social problems and who are antagonistic to the socialist cause.

The most obvious omission is Priestley's full name since the 'Round the hearth' articles are simply initialled 'JBP'. Even so, some readers would have recognized him as 'Jonathan's lad'. However, the majority were unlikely to have known his identity. For these 'JBP' has a certain authority, aloofness perhaps, which the more ordinary 'Jack Priestley' would have lacked, so that his comments on landscapes – or anything else – are likely to have had more effect than if they had appeared to have come from a teenager. However, the 29 August edition not only contained what had become the regular essays, reviews and information from the somewhat elusive 'JBP', but also 'Eddying waters', by the grander named, J. Boynton Priestley (Priestley, 1913a, b, c).

There are few references to named places and the routes along which Priestley experienced the urban landscape and followed to reach the countryside. He took his pen for a walk and sometimes he encountered a tentative landscape-related idea which is interspersed with an eclectic assembly of other comments. These appear to some extent as a chat with his friends while smoking and drinking a glass of beer. The writings have a personal style and read as if the author was expecting nods of agreement. It is possible to identify several clear themes which show directly or indirectly his attitudes to landscape.

3.3 Landscapes and the *Bradford Pioneer*

Since he had not lived in other urban and rural landscapes it can be expected that Priestley wanted to express his attachment to Bradford in some form. However, he avoided stating this directly as he did in some other writings. The closest he comes, it seems, is to combine criticisms with recognition of the opportunities of city life and the value of experiencing nature. He seems to be attached to somewhere worth improving and a place which should not be abandoned. For example, he was clearly in favour of the idea of development in general terms. Under the title of 'Adapting ourselves to our environment' he exhorted his readers to join him in not accepting their environment if it did not please them (JBP, 1913o). He appealed to men to resist 'wretchedness, poverty, ugliness, injustice' and asked 'why...should we sit down and "make the best of things?"'. He did not refer specifically to improving the urban landscape in this particular article, but this can be inferred since he saw 'environment' as a means of developing a person's 'finest side'.

The value of the hearth and the home are evident in these early writings. How Priestley related to home is at the centre of his existential dwelling. In these respects the use of 'hearth' in the title of the series has a special significance. The hearth is a place

redolent with meaning and is represented in the heading for the articles as a location where men – not women apparently – chat with each other. Priestley referred to a comment by ‘Mr Chesterton’ that ‘the principal reason for going away on a holiday is the appreciation one has for home on returning’ (JBP, 1913g). However, he added that this

feeling will not be so strong in a person, who, after spending an idyllic week or two in the beautiful mountains, smiling, wooded plains or by the ever-changing foam-flecked sea, comes back to the dirty streets of Bradford to recommence the monotonous routine of heart-breaking, ignoble drudgery.

Of course the millworkers in Bradford did not spend their holidays in these idyllic landscapes. By being ironic Priestley strengthened his attitudes to the poor opportunities available for most of Bradford’s residents. Not only were they unable to visit such landscapes they had to return to a dirty city. Writers like ‘Mr Chesterton’ were really out of touch and did not appreciate the experience of the type of existential centre that had to be endured by millworkers in an industrial city.

3.3.1 Urbanism

Priestley described Copenhagen as an exemplar of urbanism, significantly not London or one of the English cities, not even York (JBP, 1913i). He was not reluctant to describe his trip despite it being a privilege in comparison to the lack of continental experiences of most Bradfordians. As if to emphasize his distance from them, he described ‘lounging in a deck chair, smoking, dreaming and watching the numerous yachts and schooners that looked so picturesque’ in the Skaggerak (JBP, 1913h). He liked Copenhagen and implied some comparisons with Bradford for his readers to consider. Like Bradford, perhaps ‘Denmark’s capital makes no claim to great architectural beauty [although] there are many fine buildings’. He considered that the buildings were ‘excessively clean [and] wide roads, mostly planted with trees boulevard fashion, and the numerous large squares, containing beautiful statues, give Copenhagen a very pleasant and friendly aspect’ (JBP, 1913i). This description seems to be completely at odds with Bradford, however, and it is clear that he believed it had something to learn from Copenhagen. He described the Tivoli Gardens but without referring to any of the Victorian parks in Bradford. Readers would have recognized some similarities, however, since he referred to lakes, flowerbeds and military band concerts. However, while Lister Park, for example, had an art gallery, the Tivoli Gardens had a large concert hall, theatre, ballet theatre and other attractions. It appears that he was implying that people in Bradford should think about emulating the Tivoli Gardens. His comments on Copenhagen can be viewed as motivational by

showing his readers that Victorian Bradford should be improved. Was he indicating that to be really a city worthy of its status it had to achieve qualities of urbanism exemplified by Copenhagen, thus in a sense disregarding the splendours of London?

3.3.2 Greening the city

In the first of the *Bradford Pioneer* articles (JBP, 1913a) Priestley kicked off by asserting his role as a local advocate for civic improvements. He admitted that the 'most enthusiastic citizen would be compelled to admit that Bradford is far from being a beautiful town'. However, he was concerned about improving the townscape, not by building imposing architecture or creating new public spaces, but by planting trees. He commented that the 'very nature of its staple industry would prevent Bradford from ever becoming, say, a "Garden City", but...many things...could be easily improved... [C]onstant agitation would produce beneficial results'. He added that '[m]any streets in the suburbs have trees planted down each side... [But] the worthy residents receive no encouragement or assistance from the Corporation' (JBP, 1913a). He criticized the lack of civic mindedness of a local councillor who refused to respond to the wishes of the local residents and remove 'gaudy advertisements' which intruded into the tree and shrub planting along what Priestley termed a 'boulevard' (JBP, 1913a).

His praise for Lister Park, which is situated about a mile from where he lived, is because it is the venue for what he called 'Lister Park promenade concerts' (JBP, 1913f). He seems, in this article, to be unconcerned about it as a large open space near a densely populated housing district or as an opportunity to experience nature. He may have thought about the plight of the industrial workers, but at least in this article his comments are not directed at the need for open space combined with better housing. However, in a later article he deplored the effects of industrialization on those who 'think life is made up of ceaseless toil, misery, filth, want and every conceivable form of degradation' (JBP, 1913j). His response appears positive, however, by implying strongly the need for the creation of a better environment. He proposed 'a new standard of values', because of the 'beautiful, green bounteous earth', and the 'desire, and also the capability, of living a noble, joyous life' (JBP, 1913j). He did not identify what these values should be, however, or how they might benefit the lives of the people in the mills and their families. The means of realizing these values was also not indicated even in general terms.

3.3.3 Development

In another article (JBP, 1913m) Priestley focussed on a specific local issue, the loss of a place used by people to express themselves, which he referred to as 'Bradford's Forum'. He argued that a 'more convenient place for open air meetings can hardly be imagined than the wedge-shaped tract of land that has served for many years as a political battleground, and has been the scene of many a historic encounter'. The site was between Morley Street and Great Horton Road and pointed symbolically towards City Hall. The land was shown vacant on the Ordnance Survey map published in 1908 (Figure 7), which suggests that it was just unused land following a demolition rather than a proper space for public meetings. Despite his enthusiasm for live entertainment Priestley was not persuaded by the proposal for a music hall on the site, which was developed as the Alhambra Theatre in 1914 (Sheeran, 2005, p.88). Priestley appears to have seen this as an unworthy alternative – an unacceptable diversion – to the use of the site by those 'who have endeavoured, often in vain, to teach our Bradford populace the truth' (JBP, 1913m). Evidently he thought that Town Hall Square or Forster Square were unsuitable alternatives for public meetings.

3.3.4 Criticisms of Bradford

In the story – really a parable – 'Eddying Waters' Priestley (1913a, b and c) summed up the state of Bradford. In the first of these articles he put words of criticism into the mouth of his character Henry Copestrake who 'heartily detested Moorton [Bradford?] and had a passionate horror of the industrial system existing in that grimy city'. Although this fictional city 'prided itself on being up-to-date', Copestrake was horrified by the 'ugly buildings and the hideous clamour'. In this same article he noted that Henry understood that socialism 'would abolish poverty and ugliness' and then referred to John Ruskin and William Morris. Thereby, Priestley appears to have indicated the importance of combining a beautiful urban landscape, which Ruskin and Morris stood for, with a more egalitarian society.

Henry Copestrake was an artist but George, his son, prospered through what was seen as the trivial business of advertising, not in the industry that had made Bradford famous (Priestley, 1963a, pp.53-55). Bradford was presented not as a place for Henry, although it did provide the sort of environment in which George could make the right connections and prosper. Priestley claimed that he was not pleased with 'Eddying waters', or rather a version of it that he referred to as *Poor Old Dad* in 'The Swan Arcadian' (1963a, pp.53-55). However, he added that 'as a tiny piece of social history...we can say the thing just creeps home'.

Priestley was not averse to criticizing Bradford in relation to specific issues; one of these was concerned with the development of a national theatre rather than building municipal theatres (JBP, 1913f). His particular concern was that a national theatre would benefit 'the people who live in London or not far away' rather than 'the great mass of people, those who live in the provinces [who] would not be able to visit the national theatre'. He wanted Bradfordians 'to agitate for a municipal theatre' and pointed out that the residents of Bradford were denied 'grand opera'. He claimed that Bradford was badly served with theatres in comparison with other cities despite there being an 'enormous amount of money' in the city. He concluded this article by complaining about St George's Hall, which he described as 'one of the most ugly, gloomy, dingy buildings that was ever erected to depress the soul of man'. Obviously, its classical design and promotion by mid-nineteenth century businessmen as part of the transformation of the city was not worth acknowledging. This suggests it was not generally valued by readers of the paper as a historic landmark that symbolized an earlier phase in Bradford's development.

Arguably, it can be expected that Priestley would have had more to say about the everyday residential and industrial landscapes because of the number of mill workers in Bradford and neighbouring towns. Some of the articles did, however, refer to the working and living conditions of the mill workers. One article argued that because of mechanization 'a very large number of men, women and children, nowadays, are machines themselves during their working hours, and their development, physical and mental, is consequently stunted' (JBP, 1913I). He asserted that only a 'privileged class' who have 'made no sacrifices' have benefitted from mechanization. He pointed out – presumably to those without any direct experience of working in the mills – that a 'Bradford mill is not fit for criminals to work in'. These comments appear rather generalized, however, and give the impression that Priestley himself had not experienced the deafening environment inside a weaving shed. However, at the same time as the 'Round the hearth' articles, but writing as J. Boynton Priestley, he produced an impassioned essay entitled 'The modern juggernaut' ([n.d] 2008, pp.46-48). This is about the impact on children, in particular, who live 'a few yards away from the great black wall of the mill...The atmosphere is always heavy with a dull, booming sound...The air is full of a horrible sickly stench, that makes it difficult to breathe...The mill overshadows their existence...and...has them – body and soul' without the opportunity to play where there is 'a carpet of flowers' instead of the street. Priestley located his essay in 'Morton' but it seems likely the he was thinking of the huge Manningham Mills, which was close to where he lived, or Lumb Lane Mills, which he

would have seen when he went to school. The essay was published in the *Labour Leader* in 1913 (Day, 2001, p.79), but a handwritten draft has been introduced and transcribed by John Bennett (2008, pp. 36-44).

For men, women and children, the urban landscape, their lifeworlds, comprised a sequence of home – in a mean terrace house – and dirty streets within this industrial environment. In comparison Priestley's daily life was a sequence of suburbia – city centre – suburbia, with the experience of working class districts from the open top deck of a tramcar. However, even if he did not have direct experience of working class lives he would at least have been familiar with the constant smokiness.

He commented briefly, but forcefully, on urban degradation – in one particular district – in the first of his 'Round the hearth' articles (JBP, 1913a). This nadir of urban degradation could be seen by

[a] walk along Thornton Road [which] would damp the spirits of a most self-centred optimist. Many a worker, rising early on these cold mornings, and looking at the desolate, filthy streets, must ask himself "Is Life worth living?"

Although the need for 'constant agitation' was mentioned, he did not suggest specifically what might be improved, leaving it to others to work out what to do. It also seems disappointing that in the same article he implied, perhaps ironically, that a priority was planting trees and preventing indiscriminate advertising along suburban roads and on the sides of tramcars. These comments were in his first 'Round the hearth' article, so what appear to be disparate comments about urban degradation and planting trees in suburbia can be seen as an attempt at subtly commenting on issues that his readers would share, without proposing fundamental changes that would risk being dismissed as unrealistic.

3.3.5 Rural Yorkshire

The images of 'Morton' in 'The modern juggernaut' and Thornton Road are in striking contrast to Priestley's Arcadian experiences. However, he did not grasp the nettle of the opposite of Arcadia fully and describe walking along dirty back streets in as much detail as he did his experience of nature. His responses to nature in these early writings are also at odds with his blunt pronouncements on local issues. He became lyrical in his rejection of two incongruous problems of living in the modern city, electricity and dirt, when he described

lying in some little woodland dell, with the sweet summer sunlight filtering through the leaves, a soft breeze whispering through the grasses, and

close at hand a tiny brook, murmuring and babbling on its way. Oh! to be intoxicated with the mingled fragrance of many flowers and the fresh, sweet smell of Mother Earth, to hear the drowsy humming of the bees and the soft twittering of the birds. How different is the prospect spread before me! (JBP, 1913c).

Who could resist the appeal of such a description of Arcadia? But then having been lulled into a restful state – and risking being out of touch with the reality of urban life – Priestley continued in the same paragraph to approach life in cities and large towns. He described the loneliness of the ‘inhabitants of our large towns, who, though living in a seething mass of humanity, are friendless and alone’. This jolts us back into an urban reality but without referring specifically to Bradford.

Another of his ‘Round the hearth’ articles was published at the height of summer and was titled ‘In the lap of the great mother’ (JBP, 1913k). In this article he described spending very happy days in the ‘lap of Nature’ living in a hut on the edge of the moors. By implication Priestley seemed to be encouraging a sprawl of huts across the moors, or at least the building of a few. However, he may have really been alerting his readers to the need for some form of control to preserve local, valued countryside by limiting the number of huts. Otherwise the possibility of experiencing nature would have been diminished for those who were unable to spend some time in one of these huts and this form of recreation would have been a privilege for Priestley and his friends. He certainly refused to disclose the location of the hut ‘for obvious reasons’. His comments were prescient, however, if they are considered as really an objection to encroachment into the countryside. In the interwar years the reality of makeshift dwellings was a major cause for concern for rural preservationists (Gardiner, 2011, pp.234-240). In the same article he objected to ‘the large number of gramophones and motor cycles that have of late been introduced into rural regions’. What was quiet, like using a hut, and not associated with modern life, however, appeared to be acceptable to him. An issue for Priestley would have surely been that developments would blur the clear edge to the urban landscape and the distinct beginning of countryside, for example at Baildon Moor or west of Hawksworth. The loss of such rural spaces would have caused Priestley to traipse through urban sprawl to reach the moors.

In a later article there is little doubt about the problem of modern life and the contemporary and future impacts on the countryside. He thought that cars ‘filled our streets and country lanes with dust and hideous clamour’ (JBP, 1913l). However, he thought that a ‘winding road, leading over the hills, is the most romantic thing on this great earth’ but ‘the road must be free, as far as possible, from motor-cars, motor-

cycles and other noisy toys of Mammon' (JBP, 1913n). The pleasures of country roads should be complemented by the conservation of 'an old inn' rather than letting it be replaced by 'one of those new hideous electric-lighted hostels' (JBP, 1913n).

His comments were not only directed at modern means of transport since he had also commented on the impact of the 'unequalled conglomeration of noise, ugliness, vulgarity and dirt' which had been caused by a fair in Shipley Glen (JBP, 1913e). This was – and is – valued as a place outside the built up area and, although not strictly rural, is a link from the Aire Valley on to the moors. Shipley Glen is one of the few places he identified by name, which suggests he was either commenting on one of his personal concerns or supporting a local issue. In this article Priestley was concerned about intrusive development into countryside on the edge of towns that intensified throughout England in the 1920s and 1930s. This was caused by ribbon development, filling stations and other intrusions into the historic character of rural England, as well as advertising hoardings, noise and litter resulting in what has been termed a 'visual racket' (Matless, 1998, p.48).

Under the title 'Signs of the times – our mechanical age' he bemoaned the effect on workers' lives of modernity and mechanization (JBP, 1913l). Inspirationally, if rather pompously, he claimed that '[o]nly those things can be called useful that help us to lead beautiful lives, full of joy, courage and wisdom'. However, who does the calling and defines what is useful? Joy and wisdom might be combined as the result of walking through a wood or over the moors, for instance, but courage is an ominous intrusion. Was Priestley thinking again, presciently, that when war comes, the pleasures of experiencing rural landscapes and their Englishness would inspire courage for their defence, either literally against some foreign invader or against alien intrusions resulting from the misuse of rural spaces and indiscriminate development?

His descriptions of nature are, however, so effusive that they look satirical. Can it really be Priestley who has been 'drinking great draughts of the fresh sweet morning air', and then, as if that was not enough, he confessed to '[having] danced about the moors, splashed in one of the charming ponds, shouted a gay "good morning" to the lambs or perhaps to a frisky little field mouse' (JBP, 1913k). In the same article he was not reluctant to describe seeing the 'sun rise from its golden nest in the East and gallantly disperse the mists that shrouded the neighbouring hills and valleys, the birds trilling an ecstatic chorus of welcome' instead of the more manly images of stiff climbs and muddy boots. His descriptions created exceedingly poignant images, however, since we know what happened a year or two later in Northern France.

However, industrial imagery is not completely absent from his descriptions of Arcadia when he wrote how 'glorious the early morning is on the moors! Instead of feeling like a rusty crank in a dirty machine one feels like a demi-god! Splendid! Superb!' (JBP, 1913k). In this respect his descriptions read like a form of ideological imagery, rather than descriptions of real places in the countryside. The purpose of naming real places would only have been worthwhile if there was a particular issue of landscape change to which he thought his readers should be alerted. However, his descriptions must have been inspired by real experiences and the places where they occurred, and then shaped by literary exuberance. The intention, however, might have been to keep the experiences private by not referring to a real place or landscape. Did he fear an exodus to a particular beauty spot, or did he want to avoid travel writing and show his skill simply at expressing experiences and not signposting a place to go? Trudging across the moors and the experience of space is epitomized by the path across Ilkley Moor which contrasts, however, with Priestley's descriptions of Arcadia. Herbert Whone's photograph conveys the loneliness, space and bleakness of the moor (Figure 8). From Priestley's descriptions his experiences seem visceral, not simply responses to views or places that only appear attractive. For example, he was not looking at carefully composed picturesque views of valleys with clumps of trees and at ancient ruined buildings which provided interest and variety, and which conformed to theories of what was thought to be beautiful (Birmingham, 1986, pp.63-73). He was not responding to landscape in a way related to the visual bias in geographical thinking which approached landscapes essentially in terms of what can be seen (Cosgrove, 1998, pp.27-33).



Figure 8: Photograph of path across Ilkley Moor by Herbert Whone (Whone, 1987, p.130)

3.4 Bradford and the Provinces

Priestley created a personalized image of Bradford's provincial landscapes through his likes and dislikes. His attitudes challenged the representation of the industrial provinces as being generally inferior to London and Southern England (Wiener, 1985, pp.41-42). He showed that the South of England did not have, for example, a monopoly on the accessibility and experience of nature. Since his readers were living in, and around, Bradford, these comments are not really attempts at bolstering positive attitudes towards the provinces because the *Bradford Pioneer* was not sold in London and the South of England. It seems that he wanted his readers not to regard provincial life as inferior, even though improvements were required. For example, in a short review of a book titled *Memories of a Spectator*, he drew attention to what its author, J.S. Fletcher, had written about the provinces. For Fletcher – as quoted by Priestley – there was 'only one town in England which is fit to live in, and that if you cannot live in London there is nothing to do but to live in Arcadia. Manchesters, Birminghams, Bradfords, Newcastles, in spite of their airs and graces and their literary and philosophical societies are only half-baked loaves of mental bread' (JBP, 1913b). Priestley reacted by regarding Fletcher's pronouncement as 'a typical example of the contemptuous references to the provinces' by people, especially writers who have moved to London (JBP, 1913b). He continued his criticism by pointing out that the 'provinces make London!' and that '[p]ractically every new movement, artistic or political, has originated in the despised, much-maligned provinces'. He claimed that these writers are not really fond of London but have been attracted there by the prospect of social networking, something which he was criticized for doing rather than returning to Bradford. A few weeks later Priestley referred to Gissing's work on the 'sordid life of the Cockney lower middle class' (JBP, 1913d). This reference perhaps helped the readers of the *Bradford Pioneer* to feel a little less inferior as provincials. However, in the description of Copenhagen he noted, unfortunately for his local readers, that the people he chatted to assumed he came from London because he was English (JBP, 1913i).

Chapter 4 After the ‘great gold Maytime’

At the end of the novel *Bright Day*, the main character Gregory Dawson – whose fictional history is very similar to Priestley’s – is shown a painting which opens up the past for him and his attachment to landscapes and events. Reflecting on it he says that ‘[I]t’s all that’s left of that great gold Maytime...another world and another time; and now all gone, lost forgotten’. These few, but immensely significant words summed up the meanings which Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside held for Priestley and which originated before the First World War – ‘the great gold Maytime’ (2006, p.282)⁹. The purpose of this chapter is, however, to show how he responded to this ‘great gold Maytime’, in particular how his attachment to Bradford and Yorkshire developed from 1919 up to his starting to write about London, beginning with the publication of *Angel Pavement* in 1930. Priestley continued to comment on Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside significantly in several novels, in particular *Bright Day*, as well as in ‘The Swan Arcadian’ and in the film *Lost City*. All this work deserves further attention outside the scope of this research. However, a summary of some examples of the later work is included at the end of this chapter. Since Priestley was skilful as a writer he was able to represent his attachment in his vast output while maintaining contact with the rest of England and developing a national reputation. I believe that the War also compelled Priestley to write much more after he was demobbed in order to realize his writing talents and not to waste them as so many of his friends were forced to do through death or disability.

4.1 Landscapes and *The Yorkshire Observer*

Priestley left the army in the middle of March 1919 when he was 25. At last released into the ‘civilian daylight’ he thought about writing for *The Yorkshire Observer* and ‘shrugged the shoulders of a civvy coat that was a bad fit, and carried on’ (Priestley, 1963b, pp.85 & 136-137). *The Yorkshire Observer* articles are the first stage of shaping his attitudes to the relationship of Yorkshire and London during the Inter War years before writing *Angel Pavement*.

Writing for *The Yorkshire Observer* certainly meant a step up for Priestley. It had Sir James Hill Bart, businessman and politician, as its proprietor, and although firmly established in Bradford had a London address in Fleet Street. Politically, socially and

⁹ *Bright Day* was published originally in 1946 by Heinemann. The edition published in 2006 by Great Northern Books has been cited throughout this thesis.

geographically Priestley's environment was suddenly widened by writing a regular column for this well-established newspaper.

The Yorkshire Observer, which was published in Bradford, had begun in 1834 as the *Bradford Observer*. By the time Priestley had started writing his articles *The Yorkshire Observer* had developed a reputation as an important provincial daily paper. Moving from the *Bradford Pioneer* – with its close association with the Independent Labour Party and comparatively localized circulation in Bradford and the towns along the Aire valley – provided Priestley with a wider readership for his literary talents, even if they were concealed behind a pseudonym, Peter of Pomfret. *The Yorkshire Observer* had a circulation across Yorkshire and the neighbouring counties with recognition abroad in relation to the worsted and woollen industries. Unlike the *Bradford Pioneer* this was a liberal paper and was therefore less closely related to Priestley's political leanings. Many readers would have no doubt responded to his musings in their leafy suburbs while enjoying their whiskies and sodas.

The Yorkshire Observer articles are an eclectic mix of topics mostly under the title of 'Musings of an idle fellow'. A number of these contain comments which have implications for, or refer to, landscape. However, this is the focus of only 'The moors' and 'A vindication of suburbia'. The articles continued from 30 April 1919 to 12 January 1921, and comprised all Priestley's contribution to newspapers and periodicals during this period except for a couple of writings published in *The Silver Crescent* (Day, 2001, pp.80-6). This chapter only considers a selection of those articles that contain comments which have some relevance to landscape. Some articles were initialled 'JBP' but all those considered in this chapter (the 'Musings of an idle fellow') were published under the pseudonym of 'Peter of Pomfret', except two articles on Wensleydale which were written by 'J.B. Priestley'. By using a pseudonym, Priestley avoided being associated with particular towns and the rivalry between them. He also did not have an identity that could have influenced how his readers responded. Peter of Pomfret could be almost anybody and more like a medieval monk than a recently demobbed squaddie.

The articles considered in this chapter were included inside the newspaper, usually on page 12. They were positioned on the page next to what would have been eye-catching photographs showing topical images, many of which, not surprisingly, had a relationship with the War. For example, Priestley's musings appear alongside photographs of the inspection of the Bradford Grammar School Cadet Corps, a

crashed triplane, a local MP in his military uniform and another plane with intrepid airmen.

It is not surprising that the articles lacked comments on Priestley's personal attachment to Bradford and his descriptions appear depersonalized. He wrote about his responses to landscape-related themes in a variety of ways, but generally did not refer to particular landscapes and places by name. The articles considered in this section were written during the year before Priestley went up to Cambridge, with ambitions to develop his career in London, so that overt expressions of attachment would probably have been low in his list of priorities. However, since he had recently returned to Bradford, and had no experience of another large British city, it is likely that he was really commenting on his hometown. Bradford was the only city that had existential meanings for him at the time he was writing.

4.1.1 The modern city

On 11 June, Priestley (Peter of Pomfret, 1919d) was confident enough to speak for everyone when he asserted that 'we are all agreed to loathe the town at this season. The bright, sunny mornings bring us a passionate disgust of the streets, where we are blinded with dust, choked with fumes, and nauseated by the constant proximity of innumerable other pushing, sweating humans'. Later in the same article Priestley observed that the 'streets in the centre of the city are, on the whole, a melancholy sight, these fine evenings. They are filled with drifting, restless crowds'. This comment is not directed at Bradford specifically and could be viewed as applying to any city where people were suffering from the War. Town life was definitely something to leave behind and it was easy to envy the man 'rapidly making his way toward the station!' (Peter of Pomfret 1919 d). In 'Progress' (Peter of Pomfret, 1920b) he created the image of someone being 'utterly weary of the dark streets... [who is determined] to see the open fields once more before he dies'. However, a cabman took this person to the 'gasworks and the slag heaps' since there was no country. Like the cab, progress rumbled on to destroy what Priestley valued and to what he wanted to draw his readers' attention.

Architecture, history, or the qualities of public space play no part in making Priestley's description more positive, for example in proposals for making the town a better landscape in which to move around, either as a pedestrian or a passenger on the trams and buses. He did not attempt, it seems, to emphasize the existing and potential landscape qualities in towns such as fine architecture, streets and squares. By not writing specifically about great architecture, such as Bradford's Wool Exchange and Town Hall, he indicated that he wanted – or was told – to write about topics that would

not cause hackles to rise, for example by pointing out that he thought that architectural designs based on historic models were better than others. He had at least objected to what he regarded as ugly buildings in the *Bradford Pioneer*. Alternatively, his approach indicates that he did not want to engage in discussing provincial architecture that did not match the architectural wonders of London. Also, he did not engage in what is perhaps more contentious and difficult for him to accept: a defence of capitalist iconography. He was avoiding the issue of what architecture meant by not engaging directly in issues of architectural design.

However, 'The sham' (Peter of Pomfret, 1920a) reads like a plea for modern design and as such he appears to have endorsed a form of modernism, at least in this short article. All design, he commented, should bring 'a new pleasing shape before men's eyes, as it certainly would have done in former times'. He wanted a 'thousand fine styles' rather than being satisfied with 'drawing what little nourishment we get from past eras'. This is clearly a rejection of a backward looking attachment to English landscapes which shows, at least in this short article, that Priestley wanted to distance himself from nostalgia with regard to new development. He regarded this looking back as an unacceptable basis for creating new landscapes, such as those resulting from suburban development. In his criticisms of design he implied that Bradford's architecture, which had largely been inspired by historic exemplars, was not valued by him despite his relationship to the city.

He was at pains to praise the relief to the built environment given by parks with band concerts and views of the distant hills (Peter of Pomfret, 1919f). The identity of the park was not revealed – which somehow emphasized the value of music in urban parks generally – but it was likely that he was referring to the concerts in Lister Park. These were described at length in 'The Swan Arcadian' (Priestley, 1963a, pp.57-60), and in the article in the *Bradford Pioneer* on 2 May 1913 (JBP, 1913f) although his visit to the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen may also have been at the back of his mind (JBP, 1913i). The concerts were not only significant because they were an opportunity to listen to music. They also served as a social leveller – 'a truly democratic venture' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919f) – for established citizens who wanted to listen to the music as well as a place where young men and women could meet each other. In the same article, Priestley was also keen enough to point out 'that the tall chimneys and the roaring machinery have not quite blotted out every trace of feeling and taste in us'.

4.1.2 The experience of nature

Priestley returned to the arcadia he had valued so much in some earlier writings. The trauma of his suffering in the War no doubt intensified the importance of his pleasure in rural landscapes and the special qualities of nature. In the 'Pageant of towns' he wrote of being 'dazed with the continuous roar of cities; exhausted with dwelling on the appalling activity of towns'. He added that if 'hawthorn be in bloom, and the woods still thick with anemones and celandine' he wanted to leave the city (Peter of Pomfret, 1919a). In a later article he referred to the 'surging, holiday crowd, striving and clamouring for the common birthright of men and animals – the wind and the sun' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919b).

On the whole, Priestley's writing was about experience rather than the differences between one landscape and another. He was creating vicarious experiences for his readers and was consequently drawing attention to what was really of value. Significantly his references to peace are associated with images of landscapes. He commented that he had 'known something of the horrors of war', but he knew that he could find 'peace...on the distant, purple hills' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919c). In 'A retrospect' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919g), he described seeing the 'soft, peaceful landscape' from the 'hospital train' and his experience of the 'old-world rose-garden with its worn sundials and little pools where the carp splashed among the water-lilies'. At the beginning of this article he and his companions are smoking in a 'shack at the edge of the moors' – similar to the hut he had described in one of his 'Round the hearth' articles (JBP, 1913k) – where, because of the dedication to peace, 'old times were being born again'. At the end of the article he mused about 'the beacons of peace' which 'glowed and flickered far into the night upon the distant hills'.

In 'The moors' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919c), he ecstatically described his experience of nature, reiterating and complementing, it seems, in essence his response to woodland in an article in the *Bradford Pioneer* (JBP, 1913c). For him the

moors are your true lounging places in the warm season. The very closeness and texture of the moorland grass invite one to recline and fret no more. There is no dust, no bustle, no confusion; all is sweet and pure, and as comforting as the face of an old friend seen in a strange, far place...God gave us the moors to be a sign and a symbol in our darkest hours. The traces of man's handiwork are hardly visible; they come fresh from the mint of heaven, and are the same to-day as they were 2,000 years ago...Here we are happy children once again, and almost recapture the laughing ecstasy of a child's long, long summer day, when buttercups and daisies seem like suns and moons...The winds that sweep across the heather; the sweet carolling of the birds; the untroubled expanse of sky; the melting, purple distances; the pure, almost intoxicating air; the glowing

atmosphere of happy sanity; these go but a short way in comprehending the spell of the moors.

This description deserves quoting at length because it sums up a culture of nature in terms of how Priestley thought moorland should be experienced and valued. It is available to everyone who can respond as he has done. Rather than explaining the differences between particular upland landscapes in Yorkshire and comparing them with those in other counties, he was representing the experience and meanings which were important to him as a Romantic poet or painter would have done.

There is of course a political dimension to Priestley's attitude to landscapes and their relationships with industrial towns and cities since he considered them as only being tolerable because of the accessibility of the uplands to where temporary escape was possible. However, it is questionable whether such opportunities for leaving the cities for a day out was a sufficient compensation for the hardships and inequities experienced by those working in environments resulting from the power of capitalism. Although a socialist, he appears to have proposed that although people live in the 'districts, blackened by the mechanical activity that has lately overtaken the world, we are not so badly off as we often think we are. There are, thank Heaven! always compensations. The valleys may be largely besmirched and fouled, but the high places are still inviolate' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919c). The workers lived in dirty streets, worked long hours in dangerous jobs but they could at least visit the moorlands and experience them like him. He regarded this as not only sensory but also an existential experience, as a palliative for an urban malaise which lay deeper than the economic troubles of the day. Few of the aimless wanderers around the city centre he noted

would admit a definite longing for the sight and sound of hills and woods, moors and seas; yet I believe this alienation from the abiding joys of the blossoming springtide, the great solace of Nature, to be at the root of the strange unrest in their hearts (Peter of Pomfret, 1919d)

This attitude to rural landscapes reaffirms and strengthens his descriptions of the uncontrolled sensory experience of nature which is prominent in other writings.

In May 1919, Priestley produced two short articles which described Wensleydale under his own name, at the same time as the Peter of Pomfret series. These two articles are less imaginative than the others, in my opinion, and are a form of travel writing. Priestley (and his editor) was perhaps confident about there being no need for a pseudonym for this reason. The first article is entitled 'A Wayfarer goes to Wensleydale' and in the second he has become 'A Wayfarer in Wensleydale'

(Priestley, 1919a & b). Unlike the other articles there are no controversial issues and he did not express his feelings to the same extent or include ideas and allusions. He named the places he visited and as a result his descriptions to some extent read like extracts from a guide-book. The articles have a rather obvious content which the reader would have expected, comprising waterfalls, historic villages, castles, and stereotyped characters. This is an idealized landscape, where hardship is absent, isolated from the industrial cities and their technology 50 or 60 miles away. He was very attached to the Yorkshire Dales as he indicated, for example, in writings published during the 1930s including a section in *English Journey* and those collected in a compendium by W.R. Mitchell (Priestley 1939; 2009, pp. 162-165; Mitchell 1987, pp.69-93).

4.1.3 Suburbanization

One of the 'Musings of an idle fellow' articles is titled 'A vindication of suburbia', which Priestley claimed as the 'real spirit of England' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919e). This appears a strange topic for someone who has written so ecstatically about the moors. It seems that Priestley preferred moorland and suburbs, not the urban landscapes in the city. The first paragraph exists of one of his earliest unpublished writings titled 'In defence of suburbia', thus indicating that this was a longstanding issue for him (Bennett, 2008, p.39). Priestley claimed that suburbia – which was printed with a capital letter throughout his article in *The Yorkshire Observer* – has been the target of many criticisms. He commented on suburbia being conveniently positioned to benefit from being near to both the city and the countryside. Suburbia was where it was possible 'to live the fullest possible life, and as such it is a symbol of real enduring civilisation'. It is not clear, however, whether or not this is a genuine promotion of a particular type of urban landscape that relates to the contemporary trends in garden city design. There also appears to be a hint of irony, for example, when he referred to '[p]essimistic young novelists, in London flats, [who] may dip their pens in gall and pour out streams of abuse...[and] dramatists, in the smoking rooms of Manchester cafés, [who] may conjure up...nightmare scenes of dull and drivelling suburban life'. There is an indirect comment, it seems, to urban sprawl when Priestley claimed '[s]uburbia is not on the wane; it is gathering strength, and in a few years' time will be more powerful than ever'. Later in the article he commented that suburbia is 'not big enough'. However, in a subsequent article he appeared to be critical of suburban housing and its phoniness by drawing attention to the 'suburban lover of the picturesque, who ... is too often entirely surrounded by foolish parodies of useful and beautiful things...His house is designed

and...begun in the twentieth century, and then, with the aid of imitation timbers and sham gables, tries to end at the seventeenth' (Peter of Pomfret, 1920a).

4.1.4 Provinces

The first of the 'Musings of an idle fellow' ('A pageant of towns') was directed at describing the provinces for provincial readers (Peter of Pomfret, 1919a). It is a humorous essay which anthropomorphizes various towns. In 1919 at least Priestley dismissed London as being 'too gigantic and diverse to be treated in this manner; it is something between a Polyphemus and an Epimetheus, a vast, uncouth figure towering to the clouds'. In contrast 'Mr Bradford' is a 'very plain fellow...nothing ornamental about him...[but] he is making money fast enough, knows a trick or two, and enjoys his walks abroad' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919a). Priestley said nothing about the achievements that the city had made, and was continuing to make, as the reader would expect. One can imagine that his readers would recognize and laugh at Bradford, Leeds or Eastbourne, for example. In this sense at least this article shows Bradfordians that they had an identity that they could recognize and which differentiated them from other provincial cities and towns and London.

When he commented on provincial qualities Priestley was largely preoccupied with the moors. Since the majority of his readers were in Yorkshire one assumes that he was exercising his literary abilities rather than celebrating Pennine moorland to promote the provinces for the benefit of Londoners and other Southerners. Praise for the moors reinforced a regional identity without attempting to vindicate the industrial cityscape. Uplands are superior to the windswept flatness of Salisbury Plain to which he referred (Peter of Pomfret, 1919c). In 'Two visions' (Peter of Pomfret, 1919h) an anonymous person was taken by music from 'Café X' in the heart of the British Empire ...[to] the sunny meadows of Merrie England'. This person, however, was not content with this romanticized lowland England since it was the 'time of the Morrice, [when] pipe and tambour are heard in the villages; and the last fairy has not yet taken ship to Ireland'. Then the 'shattering chord of the orchestra brought him back to earth'. He said to his companion: 'I will take leave of you and your horrible city... [and] will go and walk among the great hills of Yorkshire'. This is exactly what Adam did in *Adam in Moonshine*.

4.2 Novels about rural Yorkshire and Bradford in the 1920s

4.2.1 Adam's experience of Arcadia and wilderness

During the 1920s and 1930s Priestley wrote several novels which explored provincial identities and the relationship between the provinces and London. After *The Yorkshire Observer* articles, his first significant engagement with Yorkshire is the novel *Adam in Moonshine*, which was first published in 1927, some eight years after Priestley had left Bradford. This novel was also published later in 1934 with a collection of plays, stories, and essays, and it is this edition which is referred to here. Priestley avoided representing industrialized landscapes entirely and instead set his novel in a remote corner of The Dales. He pointed out later that what was 'truest in the tale' was his 'feeling for its background, the Yorkshire Dales country', for which he retained a 'deep affection' (Priestley, 1963c, p.178). The descriptions of the Yorkshire countryside are comprehensive and philosophically interesting. The landscape is the main reason why Adam Stewart was going away for a holiday to escape the pressures of London and to experience the 'North-country hills and moors, lifting up their long clean edges; the huddling grey villages; the heather and the close springing turf that turned walking into dancing; and all the little streams that you could drink and drink' (Priestley, 1934, p.2). Most of the novel is set in this remote landscape and there are no contrasting descriptions of London, except for St. Pancras Station which is described briefly. Nelson (2009, p.7) has referred to the novel's 'one definite quality, which is its evocation of the beauty and grandeur – a sometimes forbidding grandeur – of the Dales'. However, Priestley cleverly combined picturesque lowland landscapes with moorland in his narrative. His descriptions of the lowland compare to the Arcadian images that feature in some of his early newspaper articles. These descriptions also resemble those in Southern England although the uplands are obviously in the northern Pennines. By combining two contrasting landscapes Priestley was able to overcome the geographical separation of Arcadian countryside, usually associated with Southern England, from a Northern wilderness. However, Adam Stewart briefly expressed his preference for the moorland rather than the 'fat settled land in the southern counties and his female companion Peter agreed with him (1934, p.126). In much of the novel Priestley, however, appears to be engaging with a definition of Englishness that was to a large extent disassociated from bleak moorlands and dark stone Pennine villages. In this respect his descriptions of landscapes resemble the extracts from the topographical writings which Brace (1999) has quoted relating to the Cotswolds between the end of the nineteenth century and about 1940. Priestley can therefore be seen as participating in a trend in fictional topography without asserting the identity of

the Yorkshire Dales. In effect he created a landscape character for the Dales, combining descriptions of rural and upland landscapes, while engaging in stereotypes of Englishness associated with the South of England. He clearly wanted to represent Yorkshire as attractively as possible. The fictional Rannerdale is truly a rural idyll (1934, pp.62, 72, 102 & 185). The North can be seen as not entirely a separate region in terms of its landscape qualities but part of one England, a theme which Priestley developed later in *Angel Pavement*.

Sounds, smells and the effects of light are described poetically and it is possible to visualize these images as paintings. Some of the landscape images appear as if he were seeing them with a painter's eye. For example:

[S]unlight was flooding the road. A few paces to the right brought the greater part of the dale into view. The light was still so clear that High Moor and the surrounding fells looked rather small and bare, clean, newly swept; but already a noonday haze was beginning to trouble the bright fields and lower slopes and to add a quivering touch of blue to the heights. A little below him was the green floor of the dale, along which the Runner rippled and winked back at the sunshine. It might have been an outlying arm of Arcadia if it were not for the low grey walls' (Priestley, 1934, p.62).

This scene contrasts with the description of Adam and his companion Peter hiking across the moors. Their experience is not what they can see and admire but of cold, rain, wind and being lost in the mist. In this respect Priestley seems to be engaging in a sublime, rather than picturesque response to landscape, which involves experiencing the forces of nature. Adam and Peter walk from a picturesque valley into a wilderness, what Andrews (1999, pp.143-144) has described, in the context of the Romantics, as going between a 'social state and the state of nature'.

Priestley's interpretation of the sublime landscape is, however, one that simply gives Adam a 'thrill' (Priestley, 1934, p.126) and is rather muted and fairly ordinary, consisting of 'wet rocks and mist sodden leagues of moorland' (1934, p.125). At one stage in their hike '[a]ll direction was obliterated; they could only make for the steepest practicable slope within sight' and to make their predicament worse 'they were badly bogged and had to pull squelching shoes out of the brown slime and then jump from one hard tuft to the next' (1934, p.127). To reach safety they 'ran and slipped and staggered down a track that was rapidly becoming a rushing mountain stream' (1934, p.130). The characters move through the landscape which they experience at ground level. As such these experiences complement, and in a sense introduce, the panorama of wilderness at the beginning of *The Good Companions*.

4.2.2 Leaving the North

The Good Companions was published only two years after *Adam in Moonshine*. Although the novels are very different they share descriptions of the Pennine landscape and to some extent are complementary in relation to rural and urban landscapes in Yorkshire. The panorama at the opening of *The Good Companions* is a most evocative encapsulation of Priestley's attachment to Bradford and its setting in the wild Pennine landscape (Priestley, 1962, p.11). He interpreted a provincial identity which does not involve stereotyping. Bradford – or rather its fictional equivalent Bruddersford – was described as a 'smudge' in this panorama, not somewhere that had irrevocably spoilt this wilderness. Priestley described Bruddersford with some apparent affection in the novel and identified a variety of places using real names. Light is significant in his descriptions. The 'roof of the Midland Railway Station glitters in the sun' and a few pages later Jess Oakroyd can see that '[a]ll the spaces of the town were filled with smoky gold...The facades of Market Street towered strangely and spread a wealth of carven stone before the sun. Town Hall Square was a vast place of golden light' (1962, pp.12 & 19). However, there is also a 'streak of slime [which is either] the Leeds and Liverpool Canal or the Aire and Calder Canal, one of the two [near] a little forest of mill chimneys' (1962, p.12). Priestley, however, identified canals which are several miles from the city centre and what he probably meant was the Bradford Canal which was well-known as a polluted waterway. Although *The Good Companions* contains some vivid images of Bruddersford, the novel is mainly about a diverse group of people from different parts of England who succeed by working and developing together. Priestley looked on the fictionalized Bradford with mixed affections since it was from Bruddersford that Jess Oakroyd left to develop a new life and, significantly, did not return. His leaving was depicted humorously by Charles Buchel in his poster which showed Oakroyd striding off to catch the train to London (Figure 9).

The first third of *They Walk in the City* (1936) is set in a fictionalized Bradford, which Priestley called Haliford. Edward Fielding, one of the two main characters, has a strong resemblance to Priestley, which he reaffirmed with the description of the moors that Nelson (2009, p.29) considered to be 'an autobiographical touch'. Essentially the novel is about the contrasts in urban life between London and the industrial provinces. Edward's girlfriend Rose departed Haliford to improve her job prospects and he left in order to find her in London. Although she had been made redundant their reasons for leaving were- like Jess Oakroyd's – not only for economic or environmental reasons or because they believed London to be superior. Priestley appears to have used *They Walk in the City* to revisit and reaffirm his attachment to Bradford. However, he need

not have done so. The novel could simply have been about the experience of London by two people from the provinces. In this respect the Haliford section can be regarded as narrative padding with the purpose of appealing to readers in cities like Bradford. The experience of London by Edward, Rose and Charlie Hubble in *Wonder Hero* is particularly unpleasant (Priestley, 1933). They encounter the bright lights, decadence, viciousness and oppressiveness of modern metropolitan life. London appeared from the experience of the characters to be different from, but not a model, for the provinces.



Figure 9: Theatre poster by Charles Buchel (Reproduced by permission of Bradford Libraries)

4.3 Relationships with Bradford and rural Yorkshire in later work

After the Second World War, *Bright Day*, 'The Swan Arcadian' and *Lost City* are unequivocal and complementary declarations of Priestley's attachment to Bradford. Each of these works deserves detailed analysis but this is outside the scope of this research since they were written after 1930. They are all concerned to some extent, and in different ways, with topophilia becoming nostalgia and with Priestley's continued sense of dwelling in Bradford. The brief consideration of this work rounds off this and the previous chapter.

4.3.1 *Bright Day*

In *Bright Day*, which was first published in 1946, Priestley was affirming, developing and interpreting the meaning of memory by exploring its literary potential through the experience of a young writer, Gregory Dawson (Priestley, 2006). The novel is about the past meeting the present, and provided an opportunity to access a city redolent with memories and to develop their literary potential. Priestley has given form to the effects of time on the human consciousness. Nelson (2009, p.88) has noted the 'vivid and moving evocation of a particular place and period and of the gradual disintegration of a seemingly euphoric existence'. The picture of attachment has become tarnished: it is rich in imagery but full of pain. Rural Arcadia was shown as symbolic of how new and horrible meanings could change this perfection. This is symbolized by the beauty and meaning of Pikeley Scar which is transformed by the death of Eva Alington. There was the loss of youth and its pleasures, the death of young lives, firstly Eva and then her brother Oliver and their friends in the First World War.

4.3.2 *Lost City*

The documentary *Lost City*, screened by the BBC in October 1958, is unique visual evidence of Priestley's responses to Bradford¹⁰. Unlike *Bright Day*, the film shows his engagement with a local and national issue concerning the adverse effects of changes to urban landscapes which, in particular, were essential to his geographical imagination. For this reason the film is given prominence in this chapter. The initial idea for the film came from Priestley, since in October 1957 the Deputy Director of Television Broadcasting referred to him wanting a programme on Bradford¹¹. At the beginning of the film Priestley made it plain that, to him, Bradford was a 'lost city'. In an article in the *Radio Times* he remarked that 'of course what I mean by *Lost City*, [is] a city lost to me through the sheer lapse of time' (1958). The film is, in effect, an assessment of the city as it was in 1958 in contrast to the 'great gold Maytime' before the First World War. Priestley showed the value to him of his sense of dwelling when he referred to the 'programme' as an opportunity 'to look for old haunts' and as a 'kind of sentimental journey' (Priestley, 1958). The producer of the film, Richard Cawston, stated in a letter of 22 October 1958 that *Lost City* 'is not a documentary film about Bradford. It is essentially a personal programme about J.B. Priestley. The title *Lost City* refers to the passage of time and to Mr Priestley's memories of his boyhood'¹². Although this was obviously the purpose of the film I believe it can be read in ways that diverge from simply considering it as nostalgia.

¹⁰ *Lost City* can be accessed from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/search>

¹¹ Memo on file T 32/889/ 1Lost City at BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading.

¹² Letter on file T 32/889/ 2Lost City at BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading

At the beginning of the film Priestley arrived at Forster Square Station and was met by Mavis Dean, a Bradford school teacher who acted as his companion. She was not a guide, however, since Priestley knew where he wanted to go. Instead she commented, asked questions and gently criticized his assertions. They went to several places that were meaningful to him and which brought back memories from the years before the First World War. He visited Saltburn Place where he lived, Swan Arcade, Kirkgate Market, Theatre Royal – the props store – and Lister Park. The Cathedral, City Hall, Market Street and the Wool Exchange, for example, appear to be absent from his memory although they are all major elements in the urban landscape and are shown in the film. He did not follow a route across the city centre connecting the places that were significant to him and his response to urban landscape is essentially static. He neither walked to any of the places he visited, nor described their settings. For example, the viewer was not told that his home was located in a northern suburb, which places could be reached by walking or by catching a tram, or that the largest mill in Bradford was only about five hundred yards from where he lived.

It is not surprising that Priestley visited Swan Arcade early in the film. He and Mavis Dean walked through it and up the stairs to one of the upper floors to find the office where he worked before the First World War. There was no discussion of the origin and design of this building, however, and how it related to Market Street, although this was important in Priestley's memory as he commented in 'The Swan Arcadian' (Priestley, 1963a, p.18). As he and Mavis Dean wandered through Swan Arcade they remarked on the type of shops and how they had changed, not the structure of the building, its historical significance or the provision of a sheltered space for shopping. However, the photography draws the viewers' attention to the design of the staircase and its metalwork, although Priestley made no comment. He then went to Kirkgate Market but he did not stroll there along Hustlergate and Bank Street and climb up the steps from Kirkgate or enter from Darley Street (Figure10). Instead the viewer was taken directly to Power's book stall, to watch a man selling crockery, and then to have a bite to eat at Pie Toms. There was no discussion about the architecture of the Market or its age and contribution to the urban landscape. In Lister Park Priestley described the band concerts which he liked and the promenading by the young men and women before the First World War. The viewer was, however, not taken through the open spaces or to Cartwright Hall, a museum and art gallery, which was new when Priestley was a young man. His attention in the film was almost entirely focussed on places in, or close to, the City centre.



*Figure 10: View along Darley Street, Bradford, circa 1900
(www.bradlibs.com/localstudies/vtc/lostbradford. Reproduced by permission of
Bradford Libraries)*

Priestley remembered and valued his home, where he worked, the bustling lively market, music in the park, the art club meetings and socializing afterwards in the pub. For him these are essential to the identity of Bradford. A memorandum from Grace Wyndham Goldie, the Assistant Head of Talks, Television, stated that in 'Priestley's view what makes a city interesting is the liveliness of its artistic life'¹³. At the end of the film Priestley reaffirmed and developed this view. When Mavis Dean asked why we have such dull, ugly cities, Priestley answered that we must 'settle down to a civilized urban life'. He did not comment on architecture and urban design, however, nor criticize what was happening to Bradford in terms of modernization. He stated that people wanted to move out to suburbs and neighbouring towns. They were reluctant, he claimed, to improve urban life since they aspired to live outside the city. As a consequence the quality of urban living and its cultural, social and creative life was diminished. What had been lost was the life of the city he remembered. In this respect he was implying that the future of the city depended on attracting people back as a prerequisite of modernization.¹⁴

The film not only comprised Priestley's visits and his reflections. Following his arrival a panorama of mills, chimneys and smoke are shown which convey the impression that the film is about a grim industrial city and subsequent shots supported this view by

¹³ Memo on file T 32/889/ 1Lost City at BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading

¹⁴ This is a summary of Priestley's comment to Mavis Dean when he was departing from Bradford at the end of *Lost City*. A summary of his comments are included in a review of the film which can be accessed at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/search>.

showing smoking mill chimneys and waste land. However, there were few people in these images of rundown areas. A more positive image was created, however, by showing important elements in the urban landscape such as the City Hall, Forster Square, Godwin Street, the Alhambra Theatre, Darley Street and the footpath connecting Church Bank and Bolton Road. There appears to be recognition that these buildings and spaces make an important contribution to the identity of Bradford and therefore should not be swept away. The streets in the centre are busy with lots of movement and Bradford did not appear to be a moribund provincial city, even if the buildings were blackened. The film is also sensitive to the details of the urban landscape such as street lamps, lighted windows, trolleybuses and the transport of wool bales. None of the places were named, however, and the viewer is left to assume their significance.

The film appears to consist of two distinct but complementary parts: a visual definition of Bradford's identity and a selection of the places that Priestley valued. He did not engage with the physical landscape which the film shows so powerfully. It indicates how cities should be respected during the process of change by maintaining their life, conserving architecture and respecting places because they are meaningful for individuals such as Priestley. The film made it clear, however, that Bradford had inner areas that required regeneration and redevelopment to use the waste land outside the city centre and prevent the smoke. By showing two distinct images of the urban landscape, the film, in effect, challenged the stereotype that Bradford was an entirely grim city. *Lost City* also introduced the value of meanings and activities that are vital to the urban landscape and which complement Victorian architectural design. The qualities of place are not simply important to the identity of individuals like Priestley, and the opportunities for bringing memories to life, but for him were also a source of his creative work in and outside Bradford.

At a superficial level the film was simply about a visit by a celebrated writer to a city that is important to him and a means of showing images of urban England to a national audience. More specifically the film was also about provincial identities, as John Braine made clear in the film when he said that the 'provinces are England' and that Bradford was losing its identity and that 'we can all do something about that'. In this respect it is impossible to avoid considering *Lost City* in the context of the modernization of Bradford's city centre. It is not, however, the purpose here to trace the history and context of the film in this respect, but simply to comment on it as an example of Priestley's continued sense of dwelling that he was prepared to affirm publicly to a wide

audience. However, *Lost City* can also be regarded as a positive attempt to present an alternative to the City Council's proposals and, more generally, to contribute to the debates on the value of Victorian urban landscapes and their aesthetic qualities and meanings. What was happening to Bradford was a national problem (Stamp, 2010, pp.1-12 & pp.21-25). The Deputy Director of Television Broadcasting pointed out to senior colleagues that, although Bradford has a special meaning for Priestley, it 'is not only one single town. It represents changes taking place all over Britain...Bradford would be pin-pointed but the programme would be more than a sentimental "return journey" to one small place in the world'.¹⁵ In this respect Priestley – and *Lost City* – can be seen as being in the vanguard of conservation thus complementing the efforts of the Victorian Society and the Civic Trust, which were established at the same time as *Lost City*, and the introduction in 1967 of the Civic Amenities Act (Cherry, 1988, p.168; Rydin, 1998, p.31). Priestley's membership of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings shows his particular concern for conservation (Priestley, 2008, p.21). In this respect the film can be regarded as a rhetorical statement on the changes to valued landscapes which resulted from the indiscriminate juggernaut of town-planning, modernization and redevelopment. Priestley's main concern appears to have been focussed on recognizing that changes had a dimension relating to personal meanings. Swan Arcade was especially important for Priestley and was demolished several years after the film was made (Figure 11). However, some fifteen years after it was screened Priestley (1973) claimed that he did not 'much care' about what 'planners and property developers have brought or are bringing into the city'. But there is a cry of resignation when he commented in the same article that the 'Bradford I knew best can't be condemned and bulldozed. It lives on in my affections' (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Swan Arcade looking towards Market Street (www.bradlibs.com/localstudies/vtc/lostbradford. Reproduced by permission of Bradford Libraries)

¹⁵ Memo on file T 32/889/ 1Lost City at BBC Written Archives, Reading



Figure 12: Bradford in the 1970s
(www.bradlibs.com/localstudies/vtc/lostbradford. Reproduced by permission of Bradford Libraries)

4.3.3 The Swan Arcadian

'The Swan Arcadian' is the clearest and most detailed statement of the origins of Priestley's attachment to Bradford because he described the real places, people and activities that comprised his lifeworld (Priestley, 1963a). What stand out are social activities (family, school, work, travelling on trams, social networks, leisure). People are at the centre of his memories not the physical spaces in which these activities occur, except Swan Arcade, Market Street, Lister Park and the moors. We can read about what was significant for him but unfortunately only a selection because of the sieve of memory. 'The Swan Arcadian' is particularly important since it provides a context for the writings published before the First World War. It can be read almost as a compendium of *Bradford Pioneer* articles that Priestley did not have time to write in 1913. He not only defined his attachment but also re-engaged with the issue of provincial identity and the relationship of Bradford and London. He referred to 'a kind of regional self-sufficiency, not defying London but genuinely indifferent to it' (1963a, p.29). Subsequent experiences of living in Hampstead and Highgate appear not to have diminished his view of Bradford as it was before 1914.

His praise for Swan Arcade is not simply a personal memory, I believe, and should be considered in the context of redevelopment proposals like *Lost City*. He actually directed one of his comments specifically to the value of the Arcade and described it in detail. He claimed an 'unsleeping evil principle, forever at work among us English,

prevents our having more of them' (1963a, pp.21-22). He removed doubt that his purpose was the conservation of the Swan Arcade, with its architecture and mixed uses, since he commented that 'even now machines, secretly directed by that evil principle, may be clawing it down to spread the glass-and-concrete monotony from Brasilia to Bradford'. The 'evil principle' is not defined, however, but clearly means indiscriminate modernization fuelled by the development process, the lack of imagination by local politicians and the aim of realizing the monetary value of land.

Bright Day, Lost City and 'The Swan Arcadian' can be seen as developing Priestley's sense of dwelling in different directions. He has thus avoided interpreting dwelling narrowly like a regional novelist writing from the inside and has shown how his experiences in his early life were developed, with imaginative skill, to promote awareness of what had disappeared – and was disappearing – not simply through the passage of time.

Chapter 5 The contexts of *Angel Pavement*

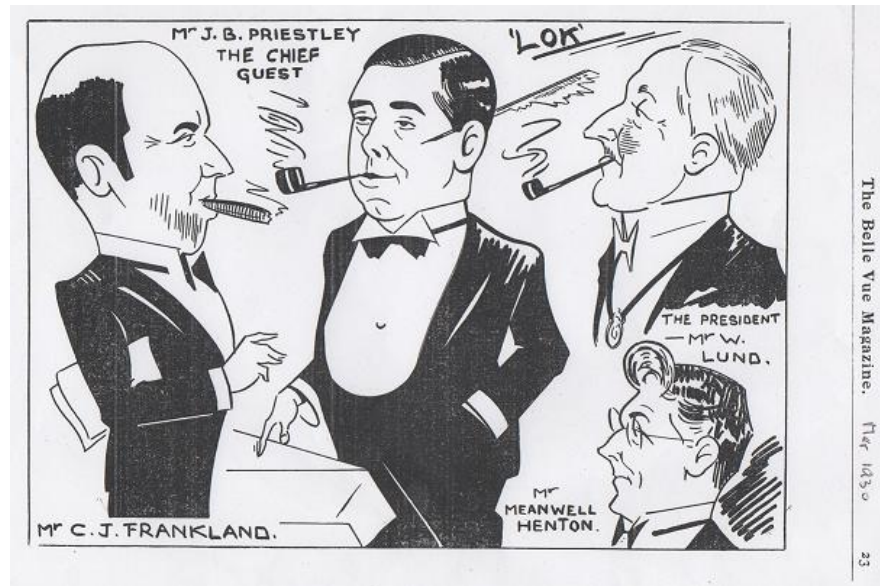


Figure 13: Cartoon of Priestley from *The Belle Vue Magazine*, March 1930 (West Yorkshire Archives)

5.1 Priestley's attitudes to London

When the first edition of *Angel Pavement* was published in 1930 Priestley was already established as a writer in London where he had lived for almost ten years busily developing his career (Figure 13). He made no secret about his liking for London and how important it was to his early development during the 1920s (Priestley, 1957). In an article in *The Spectator* he was prepared to publicize nationally his preference for the stimulus provided by the social environment in London rather than contact with nature in what he termed the 'wilderness' of the Chilterns (Priestley, 1925). At about the same time he described London as exhilarating and referred to the variety of districts which he had visited by bus and tram (1926) (Figure 14). He was able to make comparisons between London and provincial cities while developing his career as a successful author. He allowed his sense of dwelling to evolve creatively rather than letting it constrain him.

Angel Pavement clearly marks an important stage in Priestley's writing career and is an essential source for discovering how he related to London, although this was represented in fiction and was obviously linked to his concern about remaining a popular novelist. It is clear from the first pages of the novel that he wanted to locate his characters in metropolitan landscapes that he had not simply observed in detail but which he wanted to represent imaginatively and with feeling. He would not have

wanted to do this if London was simply an interesting and advantageous place in which to live, but otherwise meant little to him. In this respect his representation of London landscapes can be viewed as complementing Bradford, the moors and the Yorkshire Dales.



Figure 14: View along Fleet Street in the 1920s (Adcock, St. J., 1926)

At the time *Angel Pavement* was published, the dominance of London and preferences for landscapes in Southern England were central to discourses about Englishness. Bradford had been proud of its provincial status as a major industrial city with its own cultural identity, but during the Interwar years the importance of London continued to be reinforced as the centre of the nation and the Empire. How Priestley engaged in these discourses is the core of this and the following chapters. Their purpose is to identify and interpret his responses to landscapes in London at a particular historical moment, and how he took the industrial provinces into account in shaping his narrative. Priestley brought with him experiences of urban landscapes in Bradford, a personal history including socialism, his early journalism and the success of *The Good Companions*. His attitudes – as the narrator – are inevitably present under the surface of *Angel Pavement*.

The idea that the lives of Priestley's characters and their metropolitan landscapes were relevant to his provincial readers is at the heart of my reading of *Angel Pavement*. I want to show that the novel demonstrates that urban landscapes in London, which were experienced by the characters in the novel, were comparable to, or worse than,

those familiar to Priestley in Bradford and rural Yorkshire. In these respects I believe that *Angel Pavement* was Priestley's attempt at boosting the morale of his provincial readers at a time of economic decline and when London was growing in importance. My proposition, therefore, is that *Angel Pavement* contributes to revising an established, positive image of London – with its impressive, historical but modernizing metropolitan landscapes – and to represent it as a city that could be recognized by readers in the industrial North. It appears that Priestley was provincializing London so it could be seen as mundane rather than special. However, he was at pains to recognize, especially through his rich visual imagery, what was impressive about London, such as its lights, variety, the Thames – and also the problems of urban life – but not the superiority of the Capital. He succeeds in avoiding an ambivalent attitude to London and it is clear that he is viewing it from a provincial viewpoint while engaging with the metropolitan landscape. Priestley approached *Angel Pavement* by creating, as far as possible, an image approximating to one England, as he had with the heterogeneous group of characters in *The Good Companions*.

Angel Pavement is about people working for a small firm selling inlays and veneers based in a back street in the City of London. An image of such a street is shown on the cover of an edition of *Angel Pavement* published in 1980. The artist, Jooce Garratt, has depicted vividly Priestley's description of the dingy back street where his characters work. This street appears as if it is in an industrial town rather what one expects to see in the heart of London. The image shows that even there working environments are not necessarily modern or architecturally distinctive (Figure 15). The characters represent a cross-section of society in the late 1920s, as in *The Good Companions*. These characters work in an office for Mr Dersingham and include Mr Smeeth the cashier, Miss Matfield the secretary, Mr Turgis a clerk, Stanley Poole the office boy, Poppy Sellers the typist, as well as several minor characters such as Goath who was made redundant early in the novel. The story is essentially about the relationships which become centred on Mr Golspie, an interloper, who dupes Dersingham causing the downfall of the firm resulting in an uncertain future for the characters. Golspie leaves them in the lurch and makes a hasty departure for South America. The novel ends with a big question about how the characters coped with their predicament during the Depression. The climax of the story is about the prospects of the characters in a morass of economic uncertainty.

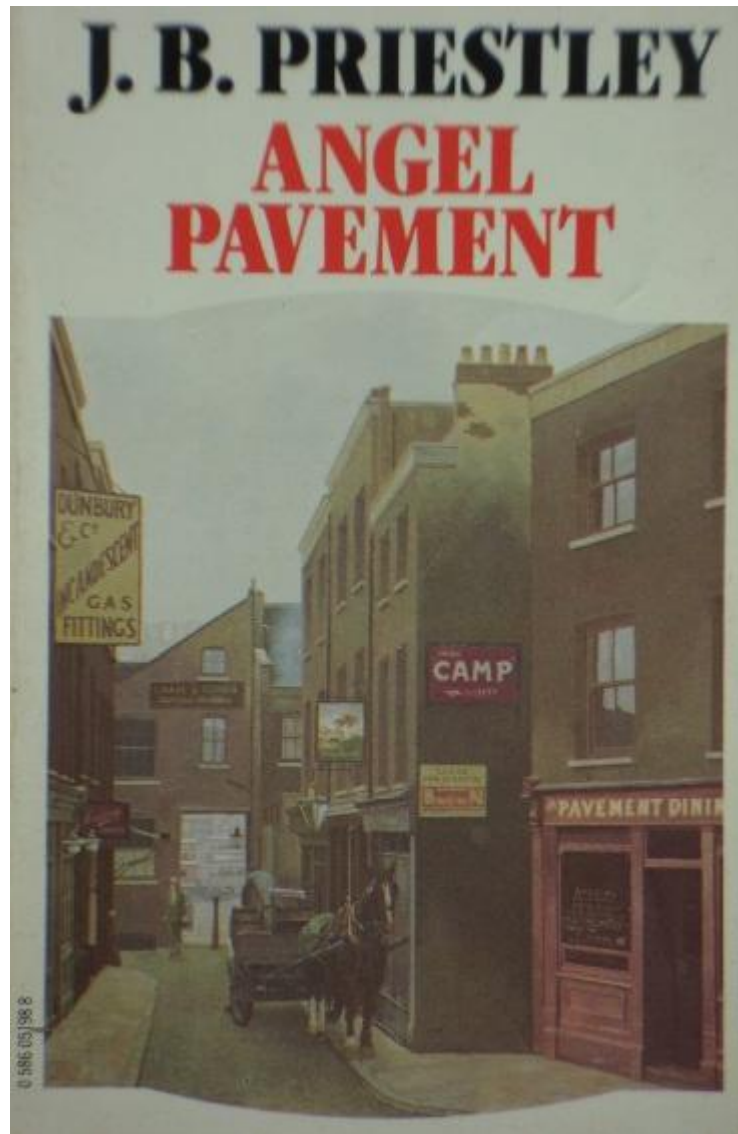


Figure 15: Cover of *Angel Pavement* (Reproduced by permission of Harper Collins Publishers © 1980 (J.B.Priestley))

Although my emphasis is directed at metropolitan landscapes and their experience, the idea of considering the comparability of the characters in *Angel Pavement* with those in the provinces has been introduced previously. Smith (1974, p.23), for example, pointed out that in this novel Priestley, and Bennett in *Riceyman Steps*, ‘completely ignore...[London’s] corridors of power, its smart set and artistic cliques, and dwell on those lower-middle class people among whose provincial cousins they have been brought up’. Smith has also commented that ‘*Angel Pavement* may deal with moods and events related to the economic depression of its times, but at a deeper level it grapples with the sheer weight and presence of London itself’ (1974, p.63).

Angel Pavement was written in anticipation of, or in response to, the Wall Street Crash of 1929, which unequivocally pointed towards economic crisis and its human impacts.

Priestley was commenting on the capitalist system at its worst, which was represented essentially by Golspie's manipulation and disregard of the lives and prospects of the other characters. The real victims were Smeeth and Goath because of their age and limited potential for finding other work. The other employees were likely to have been better off because of the economic opportunities in London, which was prospering since new industries were being developed and there was no reliance on one vulnerable, major industry (Porter 1996, pp.326-343). The quality of life of the characters would have probably improved. This view is supported by the findings of the *New Survey of London Life and Labour*, which was produced between 1928 and 1935. This found that Londoners were benefitting from 'higher incomes, a shorter working day, improved health and literacy', as well as a two-thirds reduction in poverty and a growth and diversity of leisure (Alexander 2007, p.296). However, Priestley chose to depict his characters with uncertain futures to create a good story, and to alert his readers to what could happen if they did not look out for people like Golspie. The effect was to create the impression that 'we're all in it together'.

By creating landscapes for his characters to experience, move through and derive meanings from, Priestley became a major writer of imaginative geographies. Besides the literary and narrative purposes of the novel it is an expression of the author's particular position. This means considering his values, background and preferences. Buttimer (1983, pp.12-14) has provided a theoretical text for orientating the assessment of *Angel Pavement* in this direction and has commented that

there are at least three major interlocking voices ...in each author's story: (1) *Meaning*: values and convictions expressed concerning thought and life and the practice of geography; (2) *Metaphor*: key modes of symbolic expression and modes of argument...; (3) *Milieu*: physical, historical, social, linguistic, and political contexts deemed significant in the thought and experience of an author.

With his theatrical interests, an appropriate metaphor would be to think of landscapes in *Angel Pavement* as scenery or, perhaps more specifically, as backstage. Rather than presenting London as a show he was more interested in the landscape behind the scenes with its infrastructure, dark corners and 'stage hands'. 'Milieu' overlaps with 'meaning' and refers to the contexts that Priestley considered to be significant.

Priestley denied any 'autobiographical element in *Angel Pavement*' in the Introduction to the Everyman Library edition (Priestley, 1937a, p.x). However, creative work can be influenced directly or indirectly by a writer's past without it being autobiographical as the biographer Vincent Brome (1988, p.130) pointed out in relation to Priestley's job as

a clerk. Priestley himself admitted that his experiences of London as the 'world of City offices, crowded buses, tubes, cheap tea-shops, little pubs in decaying old City streets, with the docks and the seven seas just around the corner' had been haunting him for a long time. The writing of *Angel Pavement*, he claimed, provided a relief from the pressures of the Capital (Priestley, 1937a, p.xi). Elsewhere in this introduction he compared his relationship with London with memories of his past in Bradford (1937a, pp.ix and xiii). He commented sentimentally on Power's bookstall in Kirkgate Market, for example. *Angel Pavement*, he seemed to be claiming, was the outcome of a process of which his earliest efforts at writing was the beginning. He believed that his novel 'may possibly have set more readers challenging the present system' (Priestley, 1937a, p.xiii). If so this aim was directed not only at Londoners but also at all those readers in Bradford and other provincial cities.

Priestley did not want to be a provincial novelist and never considered himself a Yorkshire writer. Some major novelists had already walked provincial paths, notably the Brontës, Hardy and Bennett, and had gained national reputations. Priestley wanted to be viewed as 'metropolitan' but without necessarily distancing himself from, or demeaning, his provincial origins. Priestley was an insightful and clever novelist who acquired a detailed knowledge of London, not simply an enthusiastic provincial incomer with only a superficial awareness of its celebrated places and tourist venues. I believe he would not have wanted, for commercial and literary reasons, to write openly as if he were a resentful, provincial author, thereby putting himself in the awkward position of being negative about what many considered to be the World's greatest city. He had moved to London so he could foster his writing career by developing a network of literary contacts such as J.C. Squire and John Lane, whom he acknowledged in 'I had the time', the last section of *Margin Released* (1963c, pp.144-147; Day, 2008). The possibility of alienating his metropolitan readers – by the overt championing of the North – was an unacceptable direction in which to go. To have done so would have seemed that he was simply a regional novelist writing in exile in London.

5.2 The Provinces and *Angel Pavement*

Angel Pavement helped readers in the provinces to see their declining industrial towns and cities as not the only examples of second-rate and run-down places in which to live and work. Dirty buildings and mediocre streets also existed in London because Priestley, their local writer, told them so. Londoners were also being told that – even outside the East End – their city was not special and, by implication, needed

improvement. Maybe this was what Priestley meant in the rather mysterious dedication of *Angel Pavement* to C.S. Evans. Priestley indicated that the reasons for the dedication were 'because he is not only a good friend and a fine publisher, but also because he is a London man and will know what I am getting at in this London novel' (Priestley, 1937a).

At about the same time as the publication of *Angel Pavement*, Priestley (1929) explained to readers of *The Yorkshire Post* where he stood in relation to the provinces and London. Although his explanation is only in a short newspaper article it is significant in terms of my approach to the novel. He asked

What is there to compare with London?...This kind, grey old roaring place is the very flower of the cities. Only to wander about in it is always a satisfying adventure. [But t]he city that the average Londoner sees is not the shining, adventurous place of our provincial imagination (Priestley, 1929).

He thought that his Yorkshire readers would be aghast at this idea because their image of London was confined to places such as Piccadilly Circus, Hyde Park and Kensington, as well as the theatres, museums, restaurants and shops. However, London was less advantageous in his opinion for the 'great bulk of good citizens'. He thought that such people 'if they live in London...lord it over their provincial cousins, but it seems...they are definitely worse off, and not better' (1929). He was particularly concerned about Londoners having to commute from suburbs. Most leisure time was being spent in such districts where the opportunities were less favourable than in 'any ordinary provincial town' from where it was possible to reach the moors easily, at least from cities such as Bradford, Manchester and Sheffield. He reaffirmed this view in an article in 1931 in *The Heaton Review* when he described Bradford as 'the dark ugly place where you can take a threepenny tram to Arcadia'. To some of his readers in Yorkshire, however, his attitude to the provinces and their relationship with London might have appeared ambivalent since he criticized it but lived there.

Despite this positive attitude, Priestley was reported as saying to a meeting in London of the Old Bradfordians Club that Bradford was a melancholy place that made him feel depressed (*Yorkshire Evening Post* 1930b). It is not surprising that he was depressed because of what was happening to the Bradford he had commented on in his early writings and was to recollect later in 'The Swan Arcadian'. However, when these early writings were being written, there is evidence of provincial decline. Although not referring specifically to Bradford, Briggs (1990, pp.355-361) pointed out that the social and cultural importance of northern industrial cities had begun to decline towards the

end of the 19th century relative to London. This led to 'the devaluation of both the locales of, and the qualities that had made, the industrial revolution. Such places and such characteristics became "provincial"' (Wiener, 1985, p.42). This did not simply mean outside or remote from London but referred specifically to industrial cities. For this reason an issue when reading Priestley's work is the contrast between the modernization and progressiveness of Bradford, which had been achieved by about 1900, and the subsequent negative attitudes to the industrial provinces and their decline. By the time *Angel Pavement* was written people in Bradford had begun to feel the impact of the Depression. In the four years after 1928 approximately 400 textile firms in the city went out of business and unemployment reached a peak in 1931 (Duckett and Waddington-Feather, 2005, p.112).

Priestley was not the first writer to see London in provincial terms since, for example, the editor of the *Builder* had commented in 1897 that it was 'almost entirely devoid of the qualities of spaciousness and stateliness. It is not so much like a capital city as like a very large and overgrown provincial town' (quoted by Driver and Gilbert, 1998, p.16). The idea of looking at *Angel Pavement* as not simply about London, but also in its provincial context, relates the novel to the issue of two nations. Priestley can also be seen as part of the tradition of novelists who interpreted metropolitan and provincial differences and increased knowledge of 'the other nation' by people living in cities such as Bradford (Briggs, 1990, p.100). My argument is that Priestley offered a literary contribution to alleviating these differences. The idea of the North-South Divide, however, has deep historical and literary antecedents (Jewell, 1994) and worked its way into novels that widened the separation of the two regions. Literary images of the North based on themes such as the distinctiveness of the people, smoke and land disfigurement have had a significant effect on how the North has been perceived (Pocock, 1979). Remoteness from the Capital and the absence of museums, galleries and cultural life, which are comparable to those in London, are also relevant when thinking about the industrial North. Industrial cities were perceived as inferior because of their urban landscapes of slum housing and mills. However, the Pennines was distinct landscape, wild, separate and almost another country. In effect, *Angel Pavement* challenges the stereotype of the industrial North as being completely different from London but draws attention to it being isolated from rural landscapes which can provide relief from the pressures of urban life and the overpowering presence of the built environment.

Russell (2004, pp.95-99) commented that the relationship between the North and London has been written about extensively in a variety of novels that were contemporary with *Angel Pavement*. From his small selection of examples it is possible to posit two types of relationship: 'they're better off down south but it's not special', for example in Walter Greenwood's *Standing Room Only* (1935), and 'it's much better up north' as in William Riley's *Windyridge* (1928) and Lettice Cooper's *National Provincial* (1938). A further type of relationship can be added: 'like some of us some of you are not doing so well'. Although Russell has not made the connection, I think that *Angel Pavement* to some extent is an example of this last category.

5.3 Responses to *Angel Pavement*

Responses to *Angel Pavement* have featured prominently in assessments of Priestley's work and in biographies. Summaries and detailed commentaries on the narrative have been provided, for example, by Smith (1974, pp.65-84), Klein (2002, pp.103-131), Braine (1978, pp.41-55), Waddington-Feather (1999, pp.28-32) and Baxendale (2007, p.50-52). Various commentators have referred to the significance of landscape in a variety of ways in the content and structure of the novel. These comments are insightful but none have been based on detailed surveys and assessments of what Priestley wrote within a provincial context. In an appreciation of Priestley's work, David Hughes (1958, pp.109 & 111) made some pertinent references relating to landscapes. He indicated that Priestley presented his own experiences of the 'chilly hostile lengths of London streets' through the 'eyes of his characters'. He then commented that

Priestley's descriptions...pull the reader irresistibly into the thick of the atmosphere. His territory spreads all over London, from Maida Vale through the West End to dockland, from Earl's Court across to Camden Town and Hampstead, and the subtle mood of all these regions, their secret essences, are perfectly caught and knitted into the action. Such an obsession with places and weathers on the writer's part can often drive humanity away, but save for brief moments, the characters, though dominated by London in their lives, climb on top of it for the purposes of the narrative, and Priestley never relaxes in his tender and patient study of them.

For example, Nelson (1999) has noted the 'meticulously observed background'. Macrae (1967, p.x) commented on Priestley's startling and unsentimental representation of London with regard to it being 'involved in the flux of the world through its river...its metropolitan desolation, its people worn thin on the margins of the City and feeling the pulse of times growing worse and less'. Susan Cooper and Holger

Klein described *Angel Pavement* as a novel about place (Cooper, 1970, pp.66-67; Klein, 2002, p.120). In Klein's view '[d]etailed descriptions of scenery are not often abundant [in Priestley's fiction]...and there is probably only one novel in which the environment is central: London in *Angel Pavement* (2002, p.14). Nelson (2009, pp.20-22) noted that the descriptions of London were achieved

with an artist's eye – streets and squares, highways and byways, the fashionable and unfashionable, the glitter and the drabness, river and docks and wharves, trams and buses, teashops, cinemas and pubs. London frames the story and permeates it, giving the novel a solidity and a reality to counterpoint the dreams, the frailties, the desperation and the humanity of the people who pass through it on their way to Angel Pavement.

Fiona Littlejohn (2000) compared *Angel Pavement* with a similar contemporary German novel by Gabriele Tergit, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendam*, which was published in 1931. Her paper is significant because it addressed issues concerned with the characters moving through the landscapes of the city. Her comparison of the two novels focussed on how middle-aged male characters and younger women accessed the city. Littlejohn's study showed that Priestley recognized the narrative value of moving his characters through the public spaces of the city. She concluded that the journeys by the male characters in both novels shared 'a negative response to transformations in the urban infrastructure which... [they]...perceive as alienating and dehumanising'. However, the 'women relished the opportunity to move through the urban public spaces'. In her opinion Priestley was less progressive than Tergit by not letting Miss Matfield wander through the city and without her journeys being limited to her desire to be with Golspie.

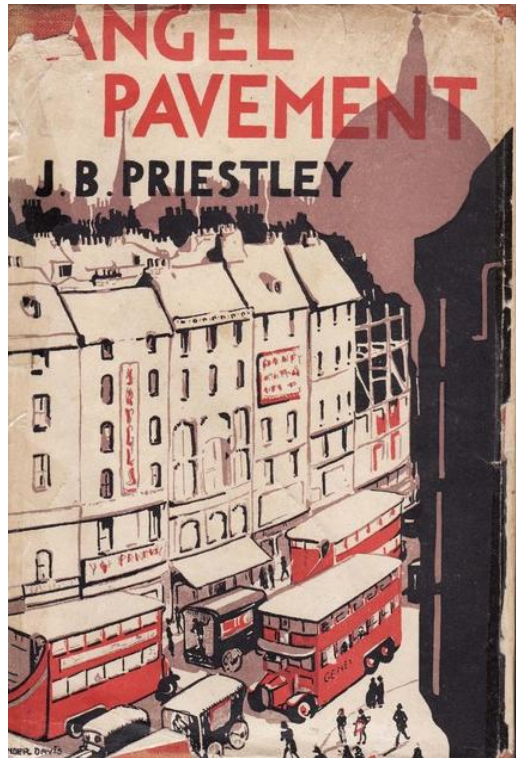


Figure 16: Cover of *Angel Pavement* (Reproduced by permission of the Random House Group © 1930 (J.B.Priestley))

The cover of the first edition of *Angel Pavement*, designed by Agnes Pinder Davis (Collins, 1994, p.62), provided an instant impression to the reader that the novel was firmly located within a congested landscape (Figure 16). We have not been shown a ground level view of a group of downtrodden office workers, however, but an elevated view of a street with double-decker buses and other vehicles and a few pedestrians. At the end of the terrace of buildings scaffolding indicates development, a minimal reference to urban change. Apparently this proposal was not going to be some grand modernist structure dwarfing its neighbours but a building which resembled them. Certainly the street bears no resemblance to Angel Pavement and the only reference to London and the City is the rather ominous silhouette of St Paul's. Except for the dome, this looks like a busy street in a provincial town.

Angel Pavement provoked interest in Yorkshire but less because of the landscape setting than the narrative and characters. For example, Fausset (1930), a reviewer writing in *The Yorkshire Post*, omitted any reference to landscape. Another commentator believed that *Angel Pavement* had a 'cosmopolitan atmosphere' but accepted that some readers may be disappointed by the book's setting (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, 1930a). At least one commentator was not pleased with Priestley's response to London. Sterndale Bennett (1930) claimed in a short, apparently unfair and

perhaps sarcastic review, the failure to represent London adequately. J.C. Squire (1931), one of Priestley's literary contacts, was, however, understandably fulsome in his praise for *Angel Pavement* and made some interesting comments relevant to its interpretation of everyday London. For him 'place and people are illuminated with a gentle and searching ray whose play must make the London kaleidoscope more fascinating for everybody who watches it at work'. He credited Priestley with opening the eyes of his readers to what would have been taken-for-granted and to the limitless 'possibilities of London life'.

5.4 *Angel Pavement* and other representations of London

Angel Pavement can be seen within a process of representing London. However, the literary relationships between Priestley and his predecessors, contemporaries and subsequent authors are extensive and it is not relevant in this research to present a comprehensive and detailed review. The following, therefore, only aims to identify some signposts. The most obvious relationship of *Angel Pavement* is with the novels by Dickens. The characters and their names have a hint of Dickens about them, not least Smeeth, Turgis, and Goath. However, in the Introduction to *Angel Pavement* (p.xiii) Priestley confirmed that his characters have resulted from years of observation not by 'sitting at home, grimly reading Dickens'. Priestley also pointed out that when 'writing long novels he peopled the scene with scores and scores of minor comic characters' but not as an imitation of Dickens, and added that he was 'driven to it by recollections of my boyhood and youth'(1977, p.63). John Atkins (1981, pp.48-49) has not accepted this, however, and has asserted that '[t]here is no doubt that the Dickensian strand in JBP is, or was, very strong'. He claimed that Priestley 'managed to plait together into one strand the second-hand of his own percipient reading and the first-hand of his own personal discovery'. In his next sentence he also drew attention to the emotions in *Angel Pavement* of 'sadness', 'melancholy', 'hopeless loves', 'shabby misunderstandings' and 'familiar dreariness', but he did not comment on the landscape context of these feelings that was such a strong element in Dickens, for example as discussed by Collins (1973 and 1987). Robinson (1996, p.61) has referred to Dickens being a 'master of toponymies' and that at a 'literal mappable level the novels and the city are organized around particular locales that are Dickens's London'. This view seems very close to the creation of landscapes in *Angel Pavement* with the reliance on real place names which can be mapped. In this respect *Angel Pavement* – both as a street and a novel – cannot fail to be related to Dickens. What could be more closely related to Robinson's comment about the city being organized around particular places

than Priestley centring his narrative on *Angel Pavement* and positioning it in a clearly described London landscape? Klein (2002, p.113), however, dismissed a comparison between the two authors and claimed that

Priestley's world – because, like any major writer, he does create a world – remains, as far as his realist fiction is concerned, inside the world as we know it, though it presents it heightened and enlarged, while the world of Dickens is, in part at least, outside and beyond it.

Angel Pavement was written some 80 years after Dickens was active and the relationship between the authors may seem too facile. In 1930 Priestley was writing in a different context from Dickens. The characters in *Angel Pavement* are different people from those written about by Dickens. They were entering the Slump and had experienced the First World War. The landscape of London was continuing to be modernized, however, but not to overcome the 19th century problems of sewage or to find space for railway tracks and terminals (Nead, 2000, pp.14-26). As a consequence London became the major modern metropolis in Britain because of the scale and extent of change, geographically and as built environment. However, the characters in *Angel Pavement* moved through landscapes where change and improvements to the built environment, public spaces and transport continued to be required.

A context of other novels about London, which relate to the theme of landscape and place, has been provided by Gillian Tindall (1991, pp.135-157). She has pointed out that the importance of Dickens is so great that other writers about London would have found it difficult to avoid his influence. She has also identified examples of novels which compare in some respects with *Angel Pavement*. For example, Priestley's novel was 'firmly ensconced in...the...smoky London of Dickens, Huysmans, Gissing and Henry James and so many others'. Images of smoke occur throughout *Angel Pavement*. Miss Matfield saw the 'familiar smoky mass' of London (Priestley, 1937b, p.197) and on the last page of the novel 'the smoky haze of London city slipped away' from Golspie's view (1937b, p.460). Smoke was commented on at the beginning of the novel (1937b, pp.1 and 460) and on the last page. At least a reader in Bradford might have been reassured that Londoners were sharing a similar plight.

Gillian Tindall (1991, p.146) has also drawn attention to the attitude of some writers about London being 'vaguely alarming and unknowable'. Although this comment applies to the experience of the West End by Turgis, Priestley was at pains to map much of London for the benefit of his readers and to make it understandable. In addition, instead of creating an image of a frightening London – except for Turgis –

Priestley created a London which was commonplace but rather unpleasant. The Thames is significant in Priestley's representation of his metropolitan landscape and followed the example of other writers. As an example of these, Tindall (1991, p.135) has referred specifically to H.G. Well's novel *Tono-Bungay* that contains images of the Thames, which can be compared with those in *Angel Pavement*.

Angel Pavement seems to be positioned somewhere between the representation of a great city and as one of the cities which William Morris described as 'mere masses of sordidness, filth and squalor, embroidered with patches of pompous and vulgar hideousness' (Lees, 1985, pp.178-179). Priestley created an alternative image and one which was located not in the working class East End but in the financial heart of Imperial London and showed that it had another side. Problems persisted for ordinary people, however, and it was Priestley's mission to remind his readers of them. London went on ceaselessly 'rattling and roaring on, gathering momentum, through the dark little abysses of brick and smoke...the streets of London' (Priestley, 1937b, p.133). Significantly, this apparently unstoppable process was not channelled in *Angel Pavement* along ceremonial avenues, prestigious shopping streets, past stately buildings or through spacious parks.

Chapter 6 *Angel Pavement* and London

6.1 London

It is surprising when reading *Angel Pavement* how much Priestley has referred to London using real names, many of which would be meaningless to readers unless they were very familiar with London. A survey of the 460 pages in the Everyman edition published in 1937 shows that 46 per cent contain at least one reference to a named street, park, landmark or district, real or fictional. Priestley was much keener about identifying districts and places by their real names than he was in his early writings relating to Bradford. The use of real names gives a sense of authority to the novel and makes it appear that Priestley was writing more than realist fiction but also a kind of investigative journalism as he did later with *English Journey*.

As in *The Good Companions*, Priestley wanted to locate *Angel Pavement* in a distinctive landscape. However, his description at the beginning of *Angel Pavement* is more mundane and spatially restricted since there is no grand panorama of a sublime landscape with which readers were presented in the introduction to *The Good Companions*. London was not introduced within a vast landscape of southern England, although after a few pages we find out that Golspie was 'staring at the immense panorama of the Pool' (Priestley, 1937b, p.4). We are not made aware of the expanding vastness of London – as the geographical context of *Angel Pavement* – in contrast to how the natural space of the Pennines was used to locate Bruddersford. Priestley did not descend from high above the English Channel and then over the Thames Estuary and the North Downs, but was already waiting on the quayside as the steamship came gliding into the Pool of London with Golspie as a passenger. Priestley called the Thames London's 'broadest street' (1937b, p.1) thus creating an image of movement and activity although the scene is described as 'losing its bright gold and turning into smoke and distant fading flame'. This scene of wharves and cranes was not unique to London and was familiar in various provincial cities. There is a lot of pulling and lifting by a 'shabby and faintly derisive chorus' (1937b, p.1), which made the scene look as if the narrator is thinking of the handling of wool bales outside one the warehouses in Bradford. It seems that Jess Oakroyd, or someone like him, might be there. This introduction shows London as ordinary with a mixture of workmen and officials. Neither a city businessman nor a sophisticate has made an appearance.

To think of London simply as a mosaic of ordinary landscapes, however, is a grand misconception. Its extensive parks, impressive and stately buildings, famous

architecture, historical cityscapes, incomparable infrastructure (the docks, stations and railway network) and distinctive districts, cannot be matched by any other English city. Growth, which even considered critically as suburban sprawl, is not really ordinary because of its variety and extent. Yet Priestley clearly depicted London as ordinary and essentially as a landscape of streets. At ground level London has been summed up by him as 'the vast impersonal thunder and glare' where individuals were lost in the crowd rather than as the national and imperial heart (1937b, p.412).

Priestley noted that in *Angel Pavement* the 'chief character...is really London itself' (1977, p.95). Susan Cooper (1970, p.67) and Michael Nelson (2009, p.22) shared this view but Klein was a dissenting voice and thought that the idea was 'an exaggeration' (2002, p. 122). Priestley directed his attention to the Capital as the character in his novel by focussing on two districts which epitomized London – the City and the West End – which were summed up in terms of light and dark. The impression which has been created of the City is that it is dark and congested, which corresponded to images of industrial cities but without the mill chimneys. The West End was stereotyped as a place for entertainment and shopping. It was contrasted with the City by numerous descriptions of light. The working and residential environments are unrelieved by attractive centres or open spaces, except for Clissold Park. Although Mr Dersingham lived in Kensington, Golspie in Maida Vale and Miss Matfield in West Hampstead, the other characters did not return to leafy, clean and modern suburbs at the end of the working day. There is nothing in the novel that really celebrated the results of being in the Capital in terms of the representations of landscape distinctiveness and superiority. Some famous places were mentioned, however, such as The Tower, London Bridge, Albert Hall, St Paul's, Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus. However, there were no references to government buildings, Buckingham Palace and the parks in the centre of London, except Hyde Park.

6.2 The City

As a business and financial centre with its offices, banks, warehouses and show rooms, the City was more comparable to provincial central areas than the West End or London suburbs. The City was on a much larger scale, of course, with its own distinctive architecture, network of streets and variety of activities (Figure 17). One of Miss Matfield's friends was horrified at the thought of working in the City, which she could only tolerate for a week. She thought it was so awful she 'nearly died' (Priestley, 1937b, p.161). Much of the identity of the City was conveyed, however, through

comments on specific places that received a lot of attention, especially streets and roads. Angel Pavement was referred to by Priestley as a 'typical City side-street' (1937b, p.12) of which many remain. It is possible that Angel Pavement was not completely fictitious. The *AZ London Street Atlas* (2005) shows an Angel Street east of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, off Aldersgate Street and west of Gresham Street, and an Angel Court off Throgmorton Street near where it becomes Lothbury. An Angel Passage connects Thames Street with the river frontage east of Cannon Street Station. It is possible that Priestley had a real street in mind. He described the location of Angel Pavement clearly within a network of streets and roads that he was keen to map for his readers.

It seems that the location of Angel Pavement was important since clues were offered to readers who seem to be encouraged to look for it, even if it was actually called by another name. Priestley seemed to entice readers by claiming that they

could go wandering half a dozen times between Bunhill Fields and London Wall, or across from Barbican to Broad Street Station, and yet miss Angel Pavement...Everybody knows Finsbury Pavement, which is not very far away...You might bombard the postal districts of E.C.1 and E.C.2 with letters for years, and yet never have to address anything to Angel Pavement (1937b, p.11).

Priestley not only included this description but added that when Smeeth left the office he 'turned down Aldermanbury and Milk Street [and] caught a bus in Cheapside' (1937b, p.215). This suggests that the location Priestley had in mind was somewhere between Aldermanbury and Coleman Street or Wood Street. By not taking his readers to a real street he was able to retain the forcefulness of the novel's message. This would have otherwise been reduced since some readers would have been keen to compare reality with fiction. Priestley's indication of where Angel Pavement was located, and the references to other streets and roads, suggests that he was familiar with the places he identified. Broad Street Station – instead of the much larger, adjacent terminus at Liverpool Street – appears to be an odd choice unless it was more relevant in locating the real street on which Angel Pavement was based.

Angel Pavement epitomized the urban landscape of the City for rhetorical and narrative reasons. Priestley represented this centre for the novel as somewhere dark and dingy with a mixture of seedy businesses and premises, but separate from the 'crazy jumble and jangle' of traffic (1937b, p.12). In effect, he went behind the scenes by commenting on Angel Pavement. However, he was not content to describe it as even functional space ancillary to the showiness of the stage. Early in the novel when Smeeth arrived

at Angel Pavement it 'looked as if it had been plucked, grey and dripping, from the bottom of an old cistern', which is certainly not an image normally associated with the centre of London (1937b, p.67). But not content with this metaphor, Priestley reaffirmed his negative attitude to Angel Pavement as a working environment and public space by describing it as 'a deep narrow pool of darkness sharply spangled with electric lights' (1937b, p.46), and with a 'foggy, smoky, railway tunnel flavour' (1937b, p.76). This was not a foetid back street in the East End, however, but in the heart of London and where a group of people worked, similar to those working in offices in Bradford. However, when Priestley described Angel Pavement in such extreme language he effectively distanced it from what his readers were experiencing in Bradford, at least in offices such as those in Swan Arcade where he had worked as a young man. Angel Pavement was the location of several small businesses including one dealing in trivial carnival novelties and another in 'incandescent gas fittings' (1937b, p.12). These were not what readers would have expected to find in a novel about an increasingly dominant London. Why would Priestley have taken the trouble to describe Angel Pavement like this? The businesses in side-streets in Bradford were, to a significant extent, ancillary to a major industry which was essential to the economy of the nation.

Priestley was an imaginative creator of names which maintained fictional identity but clearly indicated where he had in mind, Bruddersford being the obvious example. Angel Pavement as a street name was not created in this way. 'Angel' suggests something heavenly and above criticism and 'pavement', by contrast, simply a surface, something low and basic to walk over, a means of access. Priestley was not above some religious irony, however, when he referred to an angel blowing 'the last trumpet' on the street and suggested that '[p]erhaps that is the real reason why the street is called Angel Pavement' (1937b, p.13). Angel Pavement can, however, be regarded as a misnomer because of what it was like to work in and walk through. For Smeeth it seemed to have become a habitat since Priestley described him as a 'creature of [this] little foggy City street' (1937b, p.24). The street had turned Smeeth into a 'creature' but he was a man with feelings and aspirations. Priestley, therefore, appears to have regarded Angel Pavement to some extent deterministically as a controlling environment. Clearly, he wanted to see the Angel Pavements of London – and presumably elsewhere – swept away in a process of improvement.

A number of streets and roads in The City have been referred to by their real names. However, only Moorgate (or Moorgate Street), Old Street and Cheapside are referred to more than twice. The *AZ London Street Atlas* (2005) only shows Moorgate, but the

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale map published in 1897 identifies Moorgate Street (Figure 17). Except for Aldermanbury, Milk Street and Finsbury Pavement, which each have a couple of references, all the other streets and roads are referred to only once. Some of the streets and roads identified in the novel are linked and where there are gaps it is possible to see clearly-defined routes into and across The City.

The fact that Priestley referred to thoroughfares that were connected – or almost connected – suggests that he was familiar with them and aware that they were linked. This indicates strongly that he wanted to present himself as an informed insider, not someone who simply wanted to write about characters in a generalized London setting. He could have referred to a variety of thoroughfares that had no relationship with each other but he chose not to do so, even though it was likely that relatively few readers would have been aware of what was, or not, connected. One of his routes runs east-west connecting the Strand with Aldermanbury and was used by Turgis to reach Angel Pavement (Priestley, 1937b, p. 391). Miss Matfield had a 'little jaunt' across London Bridge to the western end of Bermondsey along Moorgate Street, past the Bank and down King William Street (Priestley, 1937b, p. 196). Many of the thoroughfares have, however, been scattered around the text and simply help to convey a sense of reality. Priestley's descriptions suggest that he had taken the trouble to work out routes and the location of streets before he began writing the novel. However, he pointed out that he had 'never lived or worked in the City of London', and did not know much about it (Priestley, 1937a, p. x).

The landmarks to which Priestley referred appear disparate and perhaps rather dismissive of the huge selection available to a novelist who is keen to locate his characters in the cityscape of London. It would be difficult for any writer to avoid referring to The Tower – although there is only one reference – or to St Paul's. The Tower was noticed, not as a part of the clichéd image of historical London, but as if its 'stones ... were faintly luminous, as if they had contrived to store away a little of their centuries of sunlight' (Priestley, 1937b, p. 4), as one might expect to see in an Impressionist painting. Although St Paul's is an important landmark for Smeeth, Golspie and Turgis, there are no comments about it being a symbol of Christianity, Wren's genius, artistic skill, manual labour or high finance and a symbol of 17th and 18th century endeavour, all of which are relevant, directly or indirectly, to the condition of the characters and to the creation of the metropolitan landscape. Consideration of such issues in a contemporary context could have contributed significantly to the main theme in the narrative, namely the rather pointless and uncreative work of the

characters and their virtually non-existent effect on the urban landscape, except as commuters, or in the case of Turgis as a seeker of entertainment. Their lives – in comparison with those who built St Paul’s, the other great buildings and the entire metropolitan landscape – was trivialized since they only work for a firm that supplies inlays and veneers for the furniture trade. Despite the City becoming the ‘financier to the world’ (Porter, 1996, p.203) the Bank of England received only one reference in the novel, once as a building that Miss Matfield passed *en route* to see Mr Golspie (Priestley, 1937b, p.196). It apparently had no iconographic significance since Priestley did not seek to interpret it as the epitome of capitalism.



Figure 17: Detail from Ordnance Survey Middlesex sheet XVII.II published 1897 (original scale 1:2500) showing a central part of the City of London (The Godfrey Edition 1986.)

6.3 Other London Districts

Although Priestley centralized his response to London on *Angel Pavement*, he commented throughout the novel on other districts and places. This is important for Turgis's venturing into the West End and Maida Vale, which is essential to the form and interest of the narrative. Most of these references are 'in passing' and simply add an element of reality to the novel.

6.3.1 Central London outside the City

It would have been inappropriate not to have commented on the West End, especially since one of the main themes in the novel is the way it demoralized, rather than developed, poor Turgis. Priestley clearly wanted to draw attention to much of the West End as being vulgar and meretricious. For Turgis's modest aspirations the West End was the place to find 'giant teashops and picture theatres' (1937b, p.133). One of these teashops 'had gone mad and turned Babylonian, a white palace with ten thousand lights. It towered above the older buildings like a citadel, which indeed it was, the outpost of a new age, perhaps a new civilization, perhaps a new barbarism' (1937b, p.134). Teashops seem provincial, rather tame, but this one appears very different from those visited for light refreshment in Bradford. Priestley's recollections of 'café life' in Bradford certainly sounded very different from the experiences of Turgis and were more casual and Central European (Priestley, 1963a, pp.73-74). This London teashop is, however, a symbol of accessible luxury in the everyday landscape. Inside was 'a warm, sensuous, vulgar life flowering in the upper stories' but this was a diversion from the 'cold science working in the basement' (Priestley, 1937b, p.135). Priestley did not want to let Turgis visit such worldly delights simply as entertainment but wanted also to show him moving through 'crazy coloured fountains of illuminations, shattering the blue dusk with green and crimson fire' (1937b, p.134). Piccadilly Circus was 'where against the night sky, commerce was clowning it royally in a multi-coloured fantasy of lights' (1937b, p.391). Central London is typically a city of bright lights that attract, but not always with the best outcomes. Oxford Street and Regent Street are 'like a glittering frieze' not distinctive examples of the modernization of London but as a minor diversion for Turgis as he travelled back to *Angel Pavement* (1937b, p.390).

Later Turgis visited the 'Sovereign Picture Theatre, which towered at the corner like a vast spangled wedding cake in stone. It might have been a twin of that great teashop he had just left; and indeed it was; another frontier outpost of the new age' (1937b, p.137). Priestley seemed to be suggesting that these new building types were replicating themselves like great architectural amoebas. This cinema was like 'other

monsters that had suddenly appeared in New York, Paris, and Berlin' (1937b, p.137). Great cities were becoming alike and their special qualities were being transformed. Since this was happening in London, the same effects could suddenly be felt in provincial cities with their solid, functional architecture. Turgis's visit to the cinema also provided Priestley with an opportunity for a tirade against the aestheticizing and selfishness of the capitalist system. He was unequivocal in this respect when he asserted that the entrepreneurs who were responsible for the Sovereign were ready to take the 'one-and-sixpence in Turgis's pocket and, with a swift gesture, resolving itself magically into steel and concrete and carpets and velvet-covered seats and pay-boxes, had set it in motion and diverted it to themselves' (1937b, p.137).

Although Priestley referred to several streets in the West End, such as Baker Street, Old Compton Street and the Strand, it is Oxford Street and Regent Street that, not surprisingly, received most attention, but not significantly. It may not have been appropriate for Priestley to have commented favourably on the distinctiveness of London's two most important shopping streets. These streets could not be matched in the industrial cities and, for this reason, it seems likely that Priestley did not want to represent them in ways that would have demeaned provincial sensibilities. However, it would have been difficult for Priestley not to have included Oxford Street and Regent Street in the narrative. They characterized the West End and were alien territory for Turgis. Atkins (1981, p.149) pointed out that for Priestley a 'vision of Hell would be a very long Oxford Street with no side-roads at all'. To compound this nightmare 'whole suburbs burst upon Oxford Street, Holborn, Regent Street; the shops themselves were full, the pavements were jammed, and the vehicles on the crowded road could hold no more' (Priestley, 1937b, p.303). This is an experience remote from strolling along Market Street in Bradford or travelling on the Duckworth Lane tram. This metropolitan landscape is also a long way from the combination of streets, suburbs, parks and moorland which are described in Priestley's early writings and in 'The Swan Arcadian' (1963a).

6.3.2 North London

Maida Vale was commented on a number of times because it was where James and Lena Golspie lived and was therefore important in the narrative. The fact that they had chosen to live there gave this district a rather undesirable image of somewhere where people live who have pushiness without principles. Priestley indicated that villas and blocks of flats were typical of this district (1937b, p.388). Bradford certainly had large Victorian villas but flats were an unfamiliar type of residential building there in 1930.

Then as if transformed into an older predecessor, Maida Vale 'turned itself into Edgware Road, and immediately became bright and crowded, a gleaming medley of shop windows, pubs, picture theatre entrances, hawkers' barrows, and pale faces' (1937b, p.389). This description indicates that Priestley was familiar with travelling through Maida Vale and that he wanted to show that upper class London could not really be separated and was close to an ordinary landscape represented by Edgware Road.

Priestley's familiarity with North London can be expected because he lived in Hampstead and Highgate (Glinert, 2007, pp.273 & 304). However, he identified a variety of districts that can be summed up as scruffy and dreary. At the centre of Camden Town is where Turgis was 'plunged at once into the noise and litter of High Street' (Priestley, 1937b, p.126). Other streets in both Camden Town and Kentish Town 'were like echoing slaty tunnels' even when the weather was fine (1937b, p.144). Camden Town, Islington and Finsbury Park were described as 'little centres that broke the desert of North London with oases of flashing lights and places of entertainment' but were inferior to the West End (1937b, p.133). North London was a barren territory, by implication waiting to be irrigated by change and improvement. Briefly Swiss Cottage was identified as a 'sudden sparkle' (1937b, p.180) but was on its way to becoming the 'mess' which Pevsner saw 20 years later (1952, p.201). Although Stoke Newington was identified several times, because that was where Smeeth lived, its contribution to the North London landscape remained unconsidered except that it involved a 'a long and dreary way' to reach (Priestley, 1937b, p.222). St John's Wood shared in the dreariness by possessing a 'genteel gloom' (1937b, p.180). Priestley must have been particularly familiar with St John's Wood because he was aware of the very short and insignificant Nugent Terrace which he introduced once for no real narrative reason (1937b, p.389).

London was seen as generally a built up landscape without the benefit of open spaces and links into the countryside. However, the reader was taken to Stoke Newington and allowed a brief visit to Clissold Park (1937b, p.352) which was a pleasant relief from the surrounding 'miles and miles of slates and bricks, chimney-pots and paving stones'. However, Priestley was at pains to point out the thoughtlessness of those North Londoners who did not appreciate the park and had left a 'litter of peanut shells and paper bags'.

6.3.3 South London

South London is a kind of *terra incognita* in the novel. It is puzzling why Woolwich was singled out and specifically 'a misty Shooters Hill' in the description of Golspie's departure (Priestley, 1937b, p.459). This hill is distinctive because of its height and the imposing 18th century Severndroog Castle on the top. This is probably the reason why Priestley knew about Shooter's Hill, which had been referred to by several writers including Dickens, Wells and Celia Fiennes. However, it was not nationally famous and therefore Priestley could refer to it casually, as a South Londoner would, rather than drawing attention to a more celebrated landmark that provincial readers might have expected. However, by identifying a local landmark such as this and the streets with which only Londoners would be familiar, Priestley clearly identified himself as a Londoner not someone confined to Market Street, Bradford or Ilkley Moor.

6.3.4 East London

Most of the districts in East London were only referred to briefly. The 'old piers and gasworks' in North Woolwich received a comment but not until the Epilogue (1937b, p.459). Only Golspie recognized the port that he thought to be 'a bit of an eye opener' (1937b, p.456). His acquaintance, Mr Sugden, was keen to enlighten him and referred to it as 'tremendous – oh tremendous!' and then took the trouble to name the West India Docks, the London Docks and in particular the size of the Surrey Commercial Docks. Priestley knew these were on the south side of the Thames and also appeared to be aware of their complex layout which Sugden alluded to because he thought they were 'a hard day's work looking round' (1937b, p.457). The docks have not, however, featured in the novel as a huge, unique infrastructure at the centre of the world and the nation but only as background landmarks that Golspie happened to be made aware of when sailing out of London. This was Priestley's last attempt to engage with a modern London typified by growth and construction (1937b, p.457). The key theme, however, in Priestley's description of East London is its apparent isolation (Jenness, 2007).

Golspie and Sugden 'were still in London, and no great distance from the buses and trams, the teashops and the pubs, yet all that London seemed to have disappeared long ago' (Priestley, 1937b, p.456). However, before provincial readers could distance themselves from this particular London, Priestley located it in an urban landscape similar to theirs, the working landscape of the East End. He remarked that it '[h]ere was another city with streets and squares of dark water, a city of wharves and sheds, masts and funnels and cranes, barges, tugs, and lighters' (1937b, p.456). This 'city' was really like the industrial cities. There is symmetry in the novel since Priestley described a

workaday London at the beginning and at the end. The East London dockers have not been described, however, but those on the quayside in the Prologue were not only unloading the steamer but they were doing this in the Heart of the Empire. If not to reassure provincial readers that London had a lot in common with the industrial provinces it would have been unnecessary – simply within the context of Golspie leaving London – to comment on the port of London and East London by naming specific Docks and commenting on them. Otherwise these descriptions look superfluous at this late stage in the narrative when the real issue is Golspie's behaviour and the circumstances and future of his colleagues he had left behind.

6.3.5 West London

West London also received attention but there are only passing references to Bayswater, Fulham and Walham Green, specifically the Red Hall Cinema (1937b, p.81). Fulham was assessed critically as part of that 'south-western wilderness of vanishing mortar and bricks', an indictment of metropolitan sprawl (1937b, p.81). Although Priestley was not reluctant to name places throughout the novel he evidently did not want to show he had any attachment to a district such as this. In some respects more information on Walham Green might have been expected since Priestley lived there when he first moved to London from Cambridge in 1922 (Brome, 1988, pp.65-66).

6.4 Regeneration of London

Angel Pavement can be seen as a preliminary to *English Journey* since they both deal with landscapes in need of regenerating not celebrating, like the historical heritage of London, pastoral idylls in Southern England or the uplands in the North. Priestley did not simply describe contemporary London but also pointed out that the metropolitan landscape should not be approached with complacency. He implied the need for improvements not within some utopian vision but by indicating that ordinary landscapes should be better. This may explain why modern London was unappealing as experienced by his characters and why they were not allowed to visit grandiose places within the narrative. Since London was continuing to modernize, *Angel Pavement* had become an anachronism. Priestley referred to deterioration and hinted at the eventual clearance of streets like *Angel Pavement* with its 'sooty stone and greasy walls, crumbling brick and rotting woodwork' (Priestley, 1937b, p.11). However, he did not allude to the planning of outer London and the modern industrial development. It is doubtful whether he could have achieved the purpose of *Angel Pavement* if it had been

set in a modern industrial estate – like the development in West London which was described at the beginning of *English Journey* – that readers in the declining industrial provinces would have had difficulty in recognizing from their own experiences,

Chapter 7 Landscapes and the experiences of the characters in *Angel Pavement*

Priestley's work is concerned significantly with theories and the experience of time (Priestley, 1964; Collins, 1994). The novel contains references to change, continuity, rhythms of routines and the movements of the characters through the spaces of the city. The most significant allusion to time is that the events in the novel and the shift from the characters' acceptance of their circumstances to despair were packed into only a few months (Priestley, 1937b, p.458). As well as these changes to people much of London has been represented as time-worn, although the West End was almost exclusively an example of modernity.

7.1 Meanings

The characters experience London throughout the novel and Priestley focussed on what it meant for them. This chapter is concerned specifically with the experiences of three of the main characters. Herbert Smeeth was about 50, quiet and conscientious with a head for figures and dependable, just like thousands of others throughout Britain who adapted to normality after the First World War. Lillian Matfield was about 30, equally reliable, and a spinster with an upper-middle-class background and who came from outside London. Harold Turgis was from the Midlands, was in his early 20s and wanted to define his identity by accessing the entertainments of London. Smeeth had fewer prospects than the others largely because of his age and potential for adapting to the modern city. Miss Matfield provided romantic interest in the novel because she expected a love affair with Golspie but was let down at the last minute. Turgis contributed another element of drama by attacking Lena Golspie because she intensified his feelings of inferiority which were associated with his failure to engage successfully with the modern city. Smeeth, Matfield and Turgis were enmeshed in different ways in routines and ordinary landscapes. There is an uncertainty at the end of the novel and what Priestley expected to happen to the characters and their counterparts throughout Britain. Did Smeeth, for example, metamorphose into an office-worker equivalent of Jess Oakroyd (in *The Good Companions*), go in a new direction and realize a potential totally unrelated to inlays and veneers?

Priestley commented on particular landscapes and places at a specific period of history. He mediated his own experiences of London into those of the characters for particular literary purposes. As such he was performing the role of a phenomenologist by seeking to 'empathize with the worlds of other people' (Buttimer, 1976, p.281,

quoted in Seamon, 1979, p.20). In this respect I want to consider what Priestley wrote about the experiences of his characters in the everyday landscapes which shaped their lifeworlds (Seamon, 1979, p.20; Hubbard *et al.*, 2002, p.40). Lifeworlds can also be termed existential space (Relph, 1976, pp.12-15) or, more appropriately for the research, as existential landscapes. These are the extent and shape of the geographical area and the physical spaces – such as buildings and streets – which the characters occupied, used and moved through, and which were differentiated physically and by experiences and personal meanings. Johnston (1983, p.66), for example, has pointed out that attitudes to the 'physical world and others in it 'have been depicted in fiction by existentialist writers such as Sartre'. Although Johnston (p.66) draws attention to freedom, decision and responsibility, he is at pains to see these characteristics of existentialism being constrained or prevented for individuals by social, political and economic conditions at particular historical moments. Priestley engaged completely with this process. He only allowed the conman Golspie to really exercise freedom that had the effect of changing the lives of the other characters. He then left them to deal with the consequences, thereby hampering the choices they could make for themselves. The characters created their own individuality when separated from their social group and by their responses to the situations in which they found themselves. For example, Mr Smeeth angrily asserted his feelings of despair at home. Miss Matfield expected an affair with Golspie but then aimed to realize her employment potential after he had let her down. Turgis decided to commit suicide but failed because the gas ran out.

7.1.1 *Monstrous London*

Golspie realized that he had arrived in the 'genuine old monster, London. He felt the whole mass of it, spouting and fuming and roaring away' (Priestley, 1937b, p.5). Although this idea was prompted by a 'glimpse of St Paul's', what he saw seems like an industrial landscape with mills and steam which is alien and frightening. Describing London as an 'old monster' makes it appear dangerous but at the same time almost likeable, for example as someone not to be antagonized but to be respected on their own terms, such as the wild creatures on the plains of Africa. London was also described as a 'rabbit warren' (1937b, p.9), which Golspie went 'straight back into' and then adds 'God, what a place'. It is not really clear what Priestley meant by putting these words into Golspie's mouth. Was it an expression of wonder, surprise, despair or opportunism? In comparison to Golspie's reaction to London, Smeeth toils in a landscape in which he was described as 'a typical troglodyte of this dingy and absurd civilization' (1937b, p.24). By implication this indicates Priestley's concern for

monumental change to the whole civilization to make the city better for ordinary individuals like Smeeth. The crowds, that the monster of London has created, make Miss Matfield feel like a 'shivering and bruised ant' (1937b, p.304). Nothing about London made her feel better and she had '[n]ever...hated London so much'. For her London was dismissed as a 'nightmare' (1937b, p.305). The sinister image of Cannon Street Station with its 'cavernous, immense [and] great black arch' (1937b, p.5) was similar to the description of workers using Moorgate Tube Station, which 'seemed like a monster sucking them down into its hot rank inside' (1937b, p.125). The tube was not presented as an example of modernity but as a very unpleasant routine experience. It was 'far easier getting out of the world altogether than taking a train to the City at Camden Town Tube Station' (1937b, p.401).

7.1.2 Security and escape

The ways out for the characters are not immediate – except for Golspie and his daughter – but this is because of economic and social circumstances, rather than the landscape and condition of London. For Golspie, London provided the security for his deception, but he needed to escape and did so at the end of the book. For Smeeth escape meant leaving the city vicariously through music, while Turgis wanted to escape from his mundane life by engaging in the new experiences of the West End. Leaving work meant escape and Angel Pavement provided access 'towards liberty', either to home or to the enticements of London (1937b, p.46). However, there are no descriptions of journeys into the countryside for recreation although the experience of nature is a prominent theme in Priestley's creation of distinct provincial identity combining rural with urban landscapes.

Mr Smeeth lived in a modest house in a street – like many of those in cities such as Bradford – but in a district of which readers outside London would not be familiar (1937b, p.52). Like many of them his home is a place of security, separate from the pressures of work and the dirty, cold and damp urban landscape. Smeeth relaxed in front of the fire – like the readers depicted in the heading for the *Bradford Pioneer* articles – and is taken away to the Hebrides by Mendelssohn. Without the risk of being there, however, a 'phantom sea rolled about his chair: the room was filled with foam and salt air, the green glitter of the waves, the white flash and the crying of great sea birds' (1937b, p.66). This experience is for Smeeth a cerebral access to a remote, seemingly mythical wilderness. Readers in Yorkshire would, of course, have been familiar with orchestral music and would no doubt have shared this experience, but unlike him they were also able to access the moors and cliffs directly. Mr Smeeth did

not apparently want to leave the city and visit the expanse of the Downs, the Chilterns or the Sussex coast. He did not appear to have any interest in walking in rural landscapes – which was a popular activity during the 1920s – nor in cultural improvement and escape through visiting museums and galleries. What was available in provincial cities did not match any of those that were accessible in London, and this may have been one of the reasons why Priestley did not refer to them in the novel. Bradford had opened Cartwright Hall in 1904 (Taylor and Gibson, 2010, p.75), but this was not in the same league as the British Museum, the National Gallery or the museums in Kensington. Smeeth did not see an opportunity for escape by visiting the great planned parks and other public spaces in Central London, for example the Thames Embankment, as an alternative to the constraints of home and work. In the novel he only visited his local Clissold Park to which he was directed on one particular occasion by ‘fate’ (1937b, p.352). Smeeth appeared content with his humdrum family life. According to Golspie, all Smeeth ‘wants is to be safe’ which seems to him like a weakness (Priestley, 1937b, p.318). When Smeeth heard that he was redundant and found himself unsafe, he wanted to return to his domestic enclave but found it too noisy (1937b, pp.451-454).

Miss Matfield lived in a hostel (Burpenfield) for young women somewhere near Swiss Cottage off Finchley Road (1937b, pp.160-161). Priestley’s description of where she lived shows that it is very respectable but ordinary and indicated that even upper-middle-class women cannot expect special accommodation in London. They ‘were compelled, by economic conditions still artfully adjusted to suit the male, to live in London as cheaply as possible’ (1937b, p.162). In this comfortable environment with its social contacts, she had a secure enclave within the metropolis. However, she wanted to escape to the country in winter – to the dismay of Poppy Sellers, the office girl – but to an unspecified place (1937b, p.123). Later Miss Matfield travelled westwards out of London for Christmas to avoid the nightmare of staying there (1937b, p.305).

In contrast to Mr Smeeth and Miss Matfield, it was Turgis’s misfortune to live in cheap and unpleasant lodgings in North London off Kentish Town Road near Camden Town (1937b, pp.126-127). He did not have social contacts with people of his own age but with an elderly couple, unlike Miss Matfield and Mr Smeeth. After Turgis had attacked Lena Golspie it was to Angel Pavement that he returned, however, not to his lodgings. Generally, he found the City ‘like a big cellar, a cave’ where he could hide and because it ‘made his head feel better’ (1937b, p.391). In Angel Pavement it was the steps and the ‘stout little iron post’ which were mildly reassuring because of their familiarity. He

'disappeared into the dark doorway' which was the only space available as a form of instant security (1937b, pp.392-393).

Turgis was determined to enjoy the West End but was gauche and ill-equipped to realize the social potential which London offered. He 'was just a chap in the crowd' (1937b, p.249) and despite his efforts was a lonely individual as a result of trying to use a London that was unfamiliar to him. Priestley suggested that Turgis could have easily become entrapped by political activists, clergymen, leaders of ethical societies or alternatively the mass of male Londoners like him. These young men 'were for ever packing themselves into tubes and buses, eating hastily in corners of crowded teashops, and then using the music-halls, picture theatres, saloon bars and lighted streets as their drawing-rooms, studies, and clubs' (1937b, pp.249-250). These Londoners were like Turgis, except they had accessed what the city had to offer.

7.1.3 Jungles

The districts and places in *Angel Pavement* have not been described as a jungle of buildings and streets. The characters follow routes between various destinations, and the spaces they move through are often unpleasant for various reasons but are not really intimidating and therefore inaccessible. Miss Matfield ventured to the quayside where Golspie's ship was moored. She liked to be transported by books to 'jungles and lagoons and coral reefs' and thought that the worst story in an exotic setting was better than a good story about 'Marylebone' (1937b, p.307). In this respect at least the attractions of the Capital, its culture and history, were not allowed by Priestley to compete for Miss Matfield's attachment, her sense of topophilia for London or the district where she lived.

Turgis travelled to Maida Vale, which was unfamiliar to him, and wandered through the modern metropolitan landscape of the West End. For him it was a 'brilliant jungle' (1937b, p.252) which later in the novel became 'an illuminated jungle' because of the 'winter magnificence of lighted lamps and shop windows, golden buses, glittering night signs, and shining wet pavements' (1937b, p.377). This is clearly another example of Priestley's use of pictorial imagery.

By visiting Clissold Park it was possible for Smeeth to hear the sounds of the jungle and glimpse an exotic bird from the Orinoco. The park was not simply an open space, accessible and a relief from the built environment, but somewhere that also offered a special experience. There was a 'spectacle of birds' which are 'so fantastically fashioned and coloured that it is impossible to believe that both they and North London

are equally real' (1937b, p.352). This scene seems like a 'crazy dream', as Priestley pointed out, but by implication he was justifying the inclusion of extraordinary and accessible places in the urban landscape for people like Smeeth (1937b, p.352).

Priestley did not create an image of a city controlled by violent and dangerous criminals, a metaphorical jungle, and a place of adventure and danger. However, he did introduce Golspie who influenced how London could be experienced and what it meant for the lives of the characters in the novel. In this respect Smeeth thought 'life was a journey, unarmed and without guide or compass, through a jungle where poisonous snakes were lurking and man-eating tigers might spring out of every thicket' (1937b, p.205). He felt he was 'surrounded by demons that he was powerless either to placate or to vanquish' (Priestley 1937b, p.206). Golspie personified this fear.

7.1.4 Juxtapositions

After leaving Battle Bridge Lane, near London Bridge Station, Golspie was suddenly introduced to the mixture of London, the combination of the distinctive and the ordinary. Past the windows of his taxi he saw

a crazy frieze, glimmering, glittering, darkening, of shops, taverns, theatre doors, hoardings, church porches, crimson and gold segments of buses, little lighted interiors of saloon cars, railings and doorsteps and lace curtains, mounds of chocolate, thousands of cigarette packets, beer and buns and aspirin and wreaths and coffins, and faces, faces, more and more faces, strange, meaningless, and without end (1937b, p.10).

Like any city landscape London can be characterized by the variety of juxtapositions, and Priestley was concerned with these from the beginning of the novel. He has juxtaposed a mixture of dockside activities and the landmark of Tower Bridge. Somewhere as ordinary and functional as the 'Cold Storage place' was described and juxtaposed on the same page with a description of St. Paul's (1937b, p.5). The buses moved across London Bridge 'like a flood of molten gold' (1937b, p.1), thus adding something special to the mundane scene. For the enthusiastic Miss Matfield her view of London from Golspie's ship was 'a multicoloured host of vague but rich associations, a glittering jumble of history and nonsense and poetry... only a stone's throw from the shops and offices and buses' (1937b, p.197). The Londoners in their big cars were juxtaposed with a dejected Turgis (1937b, p.142). The scene he was walking through looked as if it was straight out of a Hollywood romance but the streets contributed to his sense of isolation. A similar juxtaposition between metropolitan prosperity and ordinary life has been described for Mr Smeeth who also saw some 'big cars of the rich' as a preliminary to the dreary streets on the way to Stoke Newington (1937b, p.222).

7.1.5 Weather

Weather is described in a number of parts of the novel. In the West End it was 'drizzling, and miserably cold and damp' for Turgis (1937b, p.148), and for Smeeth there 'was a cold drizzle of rain outside in Langham Place' (1937b, p.222). Just before Christmas Miss Matfield's shopping in Oxford Street was on one of '[t]hose damp, dark afternoons [when it] seemed to rain people down into the shopping streets' (1937b, p.303). Mr Smeeth had to squelch his way to the tram stop (1937b, p.66). This shows that it is not only industrial towns in the Pennines where rain is an unpleasant aspect of urban life. Rather than depicting London as a landscape where the sun always shines, it is drenched with dirty rain. Priestley compared London rain to a military invasion. He described Smeeth facing 'one of those dark spouting mornings which burst over unhappy London like gigantic bombs filled with dirty water...There is no end to their malice. They sweep, lash, and machine-gun the streets with rain' (1937b, p.66). These are extreme and peculiar metaphors for Priestley to use in such an ordinary context since he and millions more had suffered so much in The War.

Turgis, for example, was described as looking as if he 'lived in a world without sun and clean rain and wandering sweet air' (1937b, p.20). Miss Matfield claimed that there is '[n]othing like so filthy as London is in winter' (1937b, p.123). Fog in the City caused a 'raw yellow morning for Angel Pavement' (1937b, p.177). Streets like Angel Pavement were 'too hot and airless in summer, too raw in winter, too wet in spring, and too smoky and foggy in autumn' (1937b, p.24).

Snow was not, however, presented negatively by Priestley who devoted a long description of how it whitened a rather drab London, a symbolic cleansing (Priestley, 1937b, pp.372-373). This description echoed the poem 'A Winter Evening' by the Austrian poet Georg Trakl who was a contemporary of the young Priestley. In his existential analysis of the poem Norberg-Schulz (1980, pp.8-10) pointed out that Trakl referred to what is familiar in every landscape when it snows: the quietness, the appeal of cosy indoor spaces, the decoration of the ordinary and familiar by the snow. and brought together places across the city 'from Hampstead Heath on one side to Wimbledon Common on the other' (Priestley, 1937b, p.373). By describing the snow Priestley was able to bring characters together across the metropolitan landscape. For Smith (1974, p.83) the 'snow is that which the characters experience in common, at once unifying them and arousing in each one an individual response of a very private nature'. The social mix that is so important for Priestley in *The Good Companions*

reappears here, not through chance, the compatibility of individuals or because of their shared employment problems, but briefly because of the snow.

7.1.6 Travel

None of the characters experienced London extensively by visiting more than a couple of districts within the expanse of metropolitan London. Mr Smeeth appeared to be confined to a corridor between Stoke Newington and the City. Miss Matfield had a similar routine between her hostel and work. However, Priestley did allow her to go south of the Thames – unlike other characters – to visit Golspie on his steamer. From the ship she saw the expanse of the river (Priestley, 1937b, p.200), which contrasted with the confines of her routine world. Priestley commented on the experience of public transport several times in the novel, almost as if he wanted to draw attention to the unpleasantness of commuting in London. His characters did not benefit from luxurious motors or even comfortable trains, trams and buses. Smeeth travelled to Moorgate and was 'bumped by the conductor, jostled by outgoing and incoming passengers, thrown back or hurled forward by the tram itself, an irritable and only half tamed brute' (1937b, p.51). On another occasion his tram was especially crowded and steaming from wet clothes. One of Miss Matfield's friends described commuting on the bus as 'revolting' to which the response was that it was 'Absolutely foul!' (1937b, p.161). Public transport infrastructure was not described as special, neither in terms of the accommodation nor the extensiveness of the network. Commuting was not represented as an acceptable price for living in suburban landscapes. In northern cities there were relatively short tram or bus routes between the city centres and the suburbs. London had a unique form of public transport – the tube – unlike the other English cities, but unpleasant experiences of commuting were not mitigated by speed or by the impressiveness of the engineering. There are no descriptions of journeys into the countryside although Priestley was familiar with the Chilterns having lived in Chinnor. The London he imagined in *Angel Pavement* completely ignored the river valleys and picturesque villages in Kent and Sussex, even though these were accessible by train and bus.

7.1.7 Despair and disappointments

Priestley was not concerned exclusively with the routines and ordinariness of city life. Special events in the lives of the three characters are key elements in the novel, not least the sudden failure of the business where they work. They have been compelled to look at taken-for-grantedness differently, in effect to reposition themselves outside their lifeworlds. The changed meanings for the characters depended on the extent to which their lives were disrupted by the actions of other people. In this respect the meanings of

physical landscapes for the characters are important in the narrative. For example, Miss Matfield was excited when she arrived at Victoria because Golspie had invited her to spend the weekend with him in a 'hotel on the Sussex coast' (1937b, p.427). Her response to the station itself was significant. It had become an 'irresistible' place, part of the 'dark cocoon of the city' (1937b, p.428). The locomotives were no longer frightening beasts and their 'rumbles and shrieks and snortings are only part of the tuning up' so they sounded like some modernist orchestra (1937b, p.428). She thinks that the 'smoky smell has the savour of adventure' (1937b, p.428). Her positive response to the station changed, however, when she realized that Golspie was not going to arrive, turning it into a boring space full of people performing mundane activities: coming, going and buying things. On her way back to Burpenfield even the smart places in the West End such as Hyde Park Corner, Park Lane, Oxford Street and Baker Street 'go lumbering past' and were a 'meaningless jumble of light and dark, offering...no more than if it had been some Chinese river flickering past on a cinema screen' (1937b, p.431). Golspie's actions submerged the feelings of being part of the great power and status of London.

Priestley described the City in winter to reflect Smeeth's despondent state. He looked at the urban landscape differently as a result of visiting an acquaintance, Mr Benenden, in hospital (St Bartholomew's). Hospitals are great factories of suffering and healing and symbolize the finality and fragility of life. They were no doubt especially meaningful for Priestley because of his war-time experiences and as a consequence of the death of his wife and his father. Other than for this reason, why did Priestley include Benenden's hospitalization, illnesses and the details of the hospital environment into the narrative? St Bartholomew's seems to symbolize Priestley's feelings that he needed to share via the responses by Mr Smeeth towards his surroundings. At first his mood was positive. He had taken St Paul's for granted previously but it was as if he was seeing the dome for the first time 'massive and majestic; it was almost frightening' (1937b, p.367). However, the hospital was like a 'fantastic little town' and its 'mysterious silent traffic within the roaring city, terrified him' (1937b, p.368). He thought that soon he would be one of the patients. Benenden's illness was much more severe than had been expected which understandably depressed Smeeth. His expectation that Benenden was going to die meant the loss of the ordinary and familiar activity of visiting his shop and chatting. Benenden's condition caused him to experience the city as 'having a clammy air of dissolution and mortality [which] clung to him. Barbican and Golden Lane...spoke to him only of decay...The air was chilled and leaden. The sky above the city was a low ceiling of tarnished brass' but the ordinary din of trams and

carts was still there 'yet it seemed as if every sound was besieged by a tremendous thick silence' (1937b, pp.370-371). He experienced 'something slowed down and muffled in the heavy air, the brooding yellowish sky, the stone buildings that seemed to be retreating into their native rock again, that impelled a man to linger and stare and lose himself in shadowy thought' (1937b, p.371). At Bunhill Fields Burial Ground his attention was attracted by the ordinary, not the impressive.

There was something very mournful about the sooty soil, through which only a few miserable blades of grass found their way. It was very untidy. There were bits of paper there, broken twigs, rope ends, squashed cigarettes, dried orange peel, a battered tin that apparently had once contained Palm Chocolate Nougat. This dingy litter at the foot of the gravestones made him feel sad (1937b, p.371).

He thought that all this litter meant 'as if the twentieth century was burying itself there too, and not even doing it decently' (1937b, p.371). There was nothing that stood out to excite Smeeth's imagination positively. Priestley described his feelings in detail as a combination of sadness, mess and the absurd.

Later in the novel Priestley put antagonism to the economic system into Smeeth's mind when his anger was 'against the whole world, the very nature of things' (1937b, p.447). Smeeth's feelings were then no longer simply personal but Priestley appeared to be using them for a bigger political purpose. Smeeth had become a political and economic victim. His reassuring and familiar world of routines, buildings, districts and trams had suddenly changed. He thought to himself movingly that

[y]ou are quietly finishing off for the day, and then suddenly – bang! What was the good of trams going up and down the City Road...what was the good of having a City Road at all and lighting it with street lamps and opening shops and sending policemen to walk up and down it? (1937b, p.447)

Smeeth peered at the 'familiar panorama of the North London roads and saw not a glimmer of it. His gaze was really fixed on the crazy structure of things...Now the lights had gone, blown out' (1937b, pp.447-448). This image of North London contrasted with the 'immense panorama of the Pool' that Priestley introduced at the beginning of the novel (1937b, p.4).

By comparison with Smeeth, Turgis at first wandered around the West End north of Oxford Street 'without thinking where he was going' desperate to find someone he might like (1937b, p.148). Later in the novel he wandered through a similar area, seeing tantalizing and exciting images that Priestley identified as a 'Venusberg' which

Turgis wanted to experience (1937b, p.378). However, when he was escaping from the scene of his crime the readers are not only informed about his feelings of guilt, panic and remorse. Priestley also considered it necessary to describe the urban landscape where there were 'great blocks of flats that were like illuminated fortresses'. (1937b, p.388). These modern buildings, which were anonymous and alienating, were described by Priestley to reinforce Turgis's feelings of desperation in what was for him an increasingly hostile city. After he had left the bus – specifically 'at the corner of the Strand and Wellington Street' – Turgis 'drifted on

up Ludgate Hill, turning his face towards the old grey ghost of St. Paul's, then curving in its shadow round Church Yard, up Old Change, down Cheapside, along Milk Street and Aldermanbury. [He thought to himself that he] was better here in the City; not so much glare and noise (1937b, p.391).

The purpose of describing the route Turgis took in detail added a depth to his feelings just as the descriptions had for Miss Matfield coming back from Victoria and when Mr Smeeth left St Batholomew's Hospital. The reader can be there with Turgis and the urban landscape he walked through took on a special significance and meaning that went beyond stereotyping and capital city imagery.

Chapter 8 Priestley's geographical imagination: 1913-1930

At the heart of Priestley's geographical imagination are his responses to the modern city, the provinces and London and the experience of nature. This concluding chapter analyses and assesses the survey and interpretation of these themes which have been explored in the previous chapters. The aim is to do this by reviewing the usefulness of landscape, place, dwelling and belonging as concepts for studying Priestley's work geographically and, in particular, by showing the bridge between his work and the concerns of contemporary cultural geography. This bridge is based firstly on the strength and diversity of his geographical imagination as indicated by its clear purpose, scope, form and content, secondly on its relationship with critiques in contemporary cultural geography and thirdly on potential directions for future research.

8.1 Landscape, place, belonging and dwelling

8.1.1 The usefulness of these concepts to the study

Landscape and dwelling formed the central theoretical directions for the study and were defined in Chapter 2 in relation to phenomenology. One of the main findings of the study is the significance of the related concepts of place and belonging. These four core concepts have been particularly useful to the study by providing Priestley's geographical imagination with a distinct identity. The concepts have enabled the differentiation of different aspects of Priestley's geographical imagination, including its purpose, scope and content.

In comparison to landscapes, places are localized and have special meanings for Priestley and his characters within a landscape setting. Landscapes relate to districts within cities or areas of countryside. They include central London, with its network of streets and architecture, and the upland landscapes of the Pennines. Places contribute in different ways and degrees to landscape identities and the attitudes, values and emotions which comprise geographical imaginations and their representations. By comparison with landscapes, places are essentially *centres* of meanings. The town where I live has its own landscape identity, but places include my home and the sites of memorable events, such as meeting friends.

The landscapes and places which Priestley identified and commented on provide a geographical shape to his narrative. It is possible to see a narrative linking the examples of his work rather than the identification of unrelated information and ideas. By using the concepts it has been possible to develop a language for Priestley's

imagination which links it to the various discourses, histories and critiques within landscape studies in geography relating to meanings, use of space and the factors shaping place and landscape. The concepts of landscape, place, belonging and dwelling specifically in a geographical context are new to Priestley scholarship which has tended to be less theoretically informed than this study. The concepts are prominent landmarks for orienting future research by Priestley scholars. New areas have been opened up by the use of the concepts and some related issues can be identified. Priestley has been given an alternative identity by this study and can be viewed as being more than a great literary writer and social commentator.

It has been possible to identify what was important to him in geographical terms from his non-fiction and to infer his attitudes and values through his descriptions of the experiences of characters in his novels. These experiences were no doubt introduced for narrative reasons, of course, within the traditions of twentieth century literature. However, his inclusion of particular descriptions and comments cannot be divorced entirely from his positionality in relation to his own lifepath, national events and the discourses on the provinces and London.

8.1.2 The purpose of Priestley's geographical imagination

Landscape, place, belonging and dwelling help to articulate Priestley's geographical imagination in terms of its purpose. Writing about landscapes and places essentially identify his existential belonging to Bradford as his home town in terms of its significance, symbolism and memories. All the writings I have considered share the purpose of demonstrating how directly and indirectly, Bradford and the Yorkshire countryside were continuing and essential elements in his life, literary development and achievements. Bradford was not, however, the only place for which he developed strong attachments. His sense of existential belonging was no doubt intensified by contact with other places such as the Isle of Wight (Collins 1994, pp.25-26 & 66).

Metaphorically, Priestley continued to dwell in Bradford in his literary imagination by experiencing it in his memory and as a source of inspiration, settings for his novels, and the subject of substantial non-fictional work. His choice of other places to live paradoxically reaffirms this link by showing that they were not sufficiently attractive or had literary potential to supersede his attachment to Bradford which could have been diminished by staying there and not experiencing other cities as sources of inspiration and comparisons.

In his early writings Priestley clearly demonstrated that it was his purpose to draw attention to those places which were important to him for different reasons. Some places appear, however, to be valued less for their personal meanings or interest and more because they are associated with significant local issues, for example the development of the Alhambra, the inadequacy of St George's Hall and the deterioration of Shipley Glen. Places also offered literary potential, such as in *Bright Day*, when a key scene in the novel is set at Pikeley Scar, a fictionalized Gordale Scar, Malham Cove or Kilnsey Grag.

In 'The Swan Arcadian' he described Bradford with an individual – if selective – identity as an urban landscape comprising specific places. Considered as a collection of writings rather than as individual articles, his early journalism is an overview of the urban landscape he had experienced. His concerns were extended beyond individual places and were directed at landscapes and to the changes which were altering how they could be experienced and remembered. His concern with landscape change is, of course, exemplified by *English Journey* which, however, was published originally after 1930 and for this reason has not been included in this study. His purpose for writing about landscapes and places also appears to be the opportunity to relive the past and to try and overcome the passage of time. In *Bright Day* some landscape descriptions symbolize an arcadia before the First World War and have the purpose of emphasizing the irrevocable changes it caused to the lives of individuals. This important novel might thus be considered a call for peace in the future. Some writings possess a sharp polemical edge. *Lost City*, and the contemporary 'The Swan Arcadian', can be viewed as much more than nostalgic musings but also as polemics against the loss of the sense of place and the resulting impacts on memories.

8.1.3 The scope of Priestley's geographical imagination

By using landscape as the theoretical focus of the study the scope of Priestley's geographical imagination becomes clearer. However, up to 1930 at least, Priestley was selective in defining its scope and it is clearly demarcated in his work. Significantly, however, he was not constrained by prioritizing the presentation of provincial landscapes, as he would have been as a regional writer. The places and landscapes considered in this study are mainly urban and are related to central areas and inner residential districts. He was not particularly concerned with suburban landscapes and their expansion into the countryside. The characters in *Angel Pavement* do not commute from country areas. Some of the early articles are more concerned with experiencing the moors rather than with their accessibility for urban dwellers using

particular paths and tram routes. Travel-writing, associated with praise for the attractions of named Yorkshire towns, villages and landmarks, is only a minor element in his work.

Bradford's distinctive industrial landscape of mills, chimneys, modern public buildings, infrastructure, agricultural land and peripheral villages is not a significant feature of his work. The landscape of industrial and civic success combined with a degraded environment for many residents of Bradford is not prominent in his writings. Back-to-back terraces and gloomy streets in working class districts are a relatively small part in his work, despite his living near this type of housing. Mills as either monuments to capitalism or as impressive examples of architecture and engineering are also largely absent in his writing. Despite the nearness of where he lived as a young man to Lister's (Manningham) Mill he did not comment forcefully on it, as might be expected, despite it being essentially a multi-storey machine clad in stone and impressive architecture. Such a structure offered much potential for polemical and fictional writing in terms of the impact of routines and dispiriting work, and the attempt to make it have an acceptable public face through architectural design.

What Priestley has written about real places and landscapes – whether they have been described with fictional names or not – is central to the connection of his work with contemporary cultural geography. His detail, imagination and insights provide a degree of clarity which is relevant for some future theoretical discussions, which in the past have had a tendency to be rather opaque and abstract. He was writing as an observer, not a theoretician, to produce work which is related directly to people's lives and experience.

8.2 A lexicon of Priestley's geographical imagination

Landscape, place, belonging and dwelling help to shape Priestley's responses to the modern city, provinces and London and his experience of nature. These themes stand out as shaping the form of his geographical imagination. The diversity of places and landscapes, and how he approached them in terms of belonging and dwelling, comprise its content. Priestley did not use this specialist terminology in his approach, of course, but it is inappropriate to turn this geographical study into a form of literary criticism. For these reasons the concepts discussed below are in effect a lexicon of themes – the essence of his geographical imagination – for interpreting, assessing and discussing his work.

8.2.1 Anti-modernity

It is possible to consider Priestley as critical of modernity on the basis of his comments in the writings considered in this study. It is too convenient, however, to regard him as rejecting modernity entirely, although several authors have considered his work in terms of his criticisms of forms of modern life. Baxendale (2007, pp.105-139), for example, has written at length about Priestley's responses to different types of modernity after 1930. Priestley engaged with the modern city positively before the First World War and then later by creating an alternative picture of London. He defined what a Capital city was like by adding to the traditional discourses on its darker side. He avoided describing the achievements of the modern city, however, in terms of architecture, public space and infrastructure. He was concerned with the detritus of modernity, for example, in his descriptions of sprawl on the edge of Bradford and by referring, at the beginning of *The Good Companions*, to the 'smudge' on the unspoilt Pennine landscape. His ideal modern city in the form of industrial Bradford was not an achievement but simply a landscape where he felt at home.

8.2.2 Life narrative

The work in this study is a chapter in the narrative of Priestley's life. Since his work was produced in response to readers' expectations and the literary opportunities which they represented, I am not claiming that Priestley consciously set out to write a life narrative through a sequence of writings – except in *Margin Released*, of course. My study has shown that, in this respect, his work can be considered as an autobiogeography, for example, as discussed by geographers such Pamela Moss (2001). His work can also be compared to the life narrative written by the geographer Edmunds Bunkše (2004, p.13; 2007), which is based on what he has termed 'geographic sensibilities' which are a 'fundamental part of how we live in the world'. However, Bunkše's geographical settings, concerns and memories are very different to Priestley's, except the prevailing sense of loss which they both share.

8.2.3 Empathy

Priestley's relationship with Bradford is marked by a quality of insideness which Relph (1976, p.54) regards as 'seeing into and appreciating the essential elements of...identity...To be in a place empathetically is to understand that place as rich in meanings, and hence to identify with it, for these meanings are not only linked to the experiences and symbols of those whose place it is...but also stem from one's own experiences'. It is important not to marginalize Priestley's individualism in this respect since it enabled him to draw attention to meanings and feelings which his readers

might not have considered. However, there appears to be a dilemma in Priestley's life and writing. On the one hand he was striving to return to Bradford and in effect to be inside it again, but on the other is a desire to share in the literary environment in London and to experience landscapes in the South of England.

8.2.4 Romanticism

Since Priestley's landscapes and places are expressions of his feelings, sensory responses and sensibilities, he can be compared to writers associated with Romanticism. Matthew Johnson (2007, pp.24-25) has identified the key themes in Wordsworth's understanding of landscape, several of which relate to some extent to Priestley, such as his solitary experiences of nature in his early writings. As the narrator in *Angel Pavement* his observations are obviously solitary. Like the Romantics much of his work described local senses of place in a national context. Adam and his friend Peter, in *Adam in Moonshine*, experience the uplands by trudging for miles. Johnson (2007, pp.34-69) has compared the work on landscape history by W.G. Hoskins to Wordsworth's approach. Priestley was a contemporary of Hoskins although their involvement with landscapes was very different. He claimed that 'poets make the best topographers' and thus has an affinity with Priestley's imaginative writing (Hoskins, 1970, p.17). Although Priestley was not a poet, he aspired to be one early in his career and a poetical quality is evident in his later work (Priestley, 1927). Of special significance in the particular context of Romanticism, however, is the potential for exploring the issue of the Romantic discourse of the self and nature involving male perspectives, and in the case of both Priestley and Hoskins their position in the English middle class. This approach to Romanticism also provides a bridge with cultural geography in terms of the assessment and appraisal of Priestley's work in relation to discourses concerned with the experiences of those who are without the opportunities or the ability to express themselves like him.

8.2.5 Pictorial imagery

Painting was one of Priestley's pastimes and it is not surprising for this reason, at least, that his writing includes a number of pictorial images, as if he is trying to describe the essential qualities of important paintings from the history art. Some examples of pictorial imagery in his work have been alluded to in previous chapters. However, art in Priestley's work warrants more detailed and comprehensive attention than has been possible in this study. A further study would be linked to discussions on art and geography, notably those by Cosgrove (1998) and Daniels (1993) and more recently, for example, by Cosgrove (2006) and Hawkins (2012). Representations of art in literary

writing in effect supplement paintings and other illustrations as sources for cultural geography. Pictorial images introduce a sense of colour into narratives and complement artistic forms of geographical imagination.

8.2.6 Bradford and London

The survey of *Angel Pavement* shows that Priestley challenged the stereotyping of London's superiority in a number of ways. He retained a connection with Bradford and his narratives intended that it was not eclipsed by London. However, it could never be truly like one of the big provincial cities. *Angel Pavement* only contains relatively few comments on East London and only one brief reference to Woolwich, an industrial town south of the Thames. East London is a specialized landscape on a vast and unique scale. Since Priestley apparently wanted to draw allusions between the industrial provinces and London, it was more appropriate for him to centre his narrative on an office. Many of his readers would be able to identify with office workers.

A successful writer like Priestley could easily have said farewell to Yorkshire but instead he kept referring to it in recollections and fictional settings. To what extent his motivation was a deep sense of dwelling or something more pragmatic is, however, difficult to ascertain exactly. Arguably, the real motivation for writing about London, as he did in *Angel Pavement*, was the narrative potential of a small group of people, similar to, but less enterprising and adaptable – and therefore apparently more vulnerable – than those in *The Good Companions*. Also his experiences in Bradford offered him ideas and issues for writing about London from an alternative position, down in the streets and residential districts, with an emphasis on the mundane and the everyday, from where it was possible to see much of England. In this respect my study shows that it was possible to challenge the discourses about the industrial cities and London. In particular he challenged the increasing distance between the status of London and the provinces which had fallen on hard times from a position of industrial greatness. Priestley did not follow established approaches by representing London, either in terms of West End sophistication, as a World City, or as a degraded East End. He was concerned with the 'provincialization' of London rather than simply contrasting it with provincial towns and cities. He was not promoting an image of its 'grim up North', nor that 'London is where the opportunities are'. London is not represented as divorced from the realities of the industrial regions.

The novel is essentially about individuals who are neither worse, nor better off, than their compatriots in other regions. Priestley relied on his provincial readers to make connections and to realize that he had brought something of Bradford with him but without saying so. Otherwise he would have risked alienating himself from those in London who had already realized what an important and popular author was in their midst. *Angel Pavement* gains by not celebrating London. Priestley did not let his connection with Bradford constrain his engagement with London but to simply let his earlier experiences provide a context for developing a narrative.

8.2.7 London identities

Priestley's London is not characterized by wealth, progressiveness and superiority, and a form of debased modernity has been described. Out of the three novels set in London and published during the 1930s, it is *Angel Pavement* that is packed with comments and examples relating to metropolitan landscapes. London was represented in more detail than Bradford or rural Yorkshire in the work between 1913 and 1930. However, there is evidence from *Bright Day*, *Lost City* and *Margin Released* that Bradford – or a fictional equivalent – and rural Yorkshire were emphasized much more in later work. Although themes and issues are evident in the *Bradford Pioneer* and *Yorkshire Observer* articles, Priestley's comments do not convey geography in spatial terms like *Angel Pavement*. An awareness of what exists is preliminary to what might, or should, succeed it. In this respect I see *Angel Pavement* pointing out directions to follow, or to avoid, as the metropolis and other provincial cities continued to change. This is especially relevant because of Priestley's socialist background and consequently his concern for change to improve quality of life. In this respect *Angel Pavement* can be seen, in effect, as a first volume of *English Journey*. In both these major books he was concerned deeply with the condition of England

8.3 Priestley's imagination and critiques in cultural geography

This section is only concerned with critiques that are particularly relevant to the assessment and interpretation of Priestley's work. They have also been selected from the wide range of critiques that it would be inappropriate to introduce at this late stage. A detailed and comprehensive appraisal of these critiques in terms of their relevance to imaginative geography needs to be the subject of a separate study. This would enable the theoretical complexity of these critiques to be addressed fully.

8.3.1 Post-phenomenology

The study has been based firmly on phenomenology because of its emphasis on personal meanings, but it is evident that Priestley's empathetic relationship with Bradford is really an example of post-phenomenology. He was concerned not only with writing about his own responses to landscapes and places but clearly wanted to develop his relation to Bradford in wider, social, economic, historical, political and national contexts. John Wylie (2010, p.145) has referred to 'post-phenomenology' in relation to Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy and Emmanuel Levinas thus providing it with strong philosophical foundations. Steven Conner (1999, p.18) has described a form of post-phenomenology which he has termed 'cultural phenomenology'. He has defined this as aiming 'to enlarge, diversify and particularise the study of culture... [as well as being] interested in...processes and patterns of feeling. Such interests would be at once philosophical and poetic, explanatory and exploratory, analytic and evocative'. He sees 'cultural phenomenology' inheriting 'from the phenomenological tradition an aspiration to articulate the worldliness and embodiedness of experience – the in-the-worldness of all existence... [while attending to] the affective, somatic dimensions of cultural experience'. A shaping process is particularly noticeable in the London novels, which are set in the context of the Depression, and Priestley's concern with collective meanings centred on the value of Bradford as a modern city undergoing indiscriminate redevelopment. The development of a bridge between his geographical imagination – and those of other writers and artists – would translate the philosophical arguments centred on post-phenomenology into the real or fictional experiences of places and landscapes.

8.3.2 Interconnectedness of places

One of the main critiques of the discourse in humanistic geography on place is concerned with the marginalization of interconnectedness between places as discussed, for example, by Castree (2003, pp.173-179). Examples of interconnectedness might include Bradford and London or a woodland glade and the dark back streets. The interconnectedness of places over time through memory is also relevant to Priestley's work, notably in *Bright Day*. However, his writing can be regarded as having an air of reductionism by drawing attention to Bradford before the First World War and by using this particular emphasis as a criterion for later work. It is also important to avoid the tendency towards narrowness associated with humanistic geography with its emphasis on individualism. The recognition of the political dimension of experiences is also required, for example the ideologies and professional attitudes to city centre redevelopment which located different types of places together

through the process of modernization (Relph, 2000). In this respect the progressive modern city that Priestley remembered before the First World War becomes the model for valuing what is being subjected to modernization and the creation of new places. It is misleading to discuss Priestley's attachment to Bradford without considering this in terms of the interconnections between all the places which have featured in his life. After the early journalism he was writing as an outsider wanting to show how the places and landscapes he was living in were connected to Bradford and Yorkshire.

8.3.3 More-than-representational theory

The term 'more-than-representational' was introduced by Lorimer (2005) as a reaction to the less positively sounding 'non-representational theory' (e.g. Thrift, 2007). Lorimer's (2005, p.84) definition refers essentially to 'multifarious, open encounters' through usual ways of acting, working or behaving combined, with a degree of voluntary choice. He clarified what this meant by referring to 'how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers...enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions' (Lorimer, 2005, p.84). All these criteria can be regarded, in one way or another, as relevant to Priestley's work. However, Lorimer's definition cannot be detached from the meanings, significances and attitudes that are also all relevant, not least Priestley's attachment to Bradford and to the predicament of Dersingham's employees. Priestley ensured that the representation of a physical setting did not take precedence over lived experience and movement within geographical space. He was not diverted away from describing embodied experience and everyday life while challenging contemporary cultural discourses on the provinces and London. However, he did not regard nature or landscapes as cultural constructs or conventionalized ways of seeing. In *Angel Pavement* the characters are not reacting to representations of London, or in response to stereotyped images, but to a landscape experienced through a lens of uncertainty, inferiority, rejection, and failure.

8.4 Potential Research Directions

The purpose of the bridge between Priestley's work and cultural geography is essentially to open up areas for future research. This bridge is not only for one-way traffic, however, since it is important to consider how Priestley can influence cultural geography as well what it can do for studies of his work. Concepts in cultural geography can help to shape new interpretations within and beyond existing Priestley scholarship. The following ideas are suggested as potential directions in which to look

and are directly or indirectly related to Priestley's geographical imagination as explored in this study.

8.4.1 Other contemporary geographical imaginations

In this study Priestley appears to be a lone voice in discussions about landscapes during the first half of the twentieth century. He needs to share his ideas with others who are also concerned with landscapes and places, such as Hoskins and Jacquetta Hawkes, in a 'round the hearth' chat. Some contemporary artists and writers on planning and urban design might also be interested in joining them, especially if the chat is focussed on modernity, anti-modernity and landscape change. Such a group would be established thinkers on landscapes but their approaches have been superseded by theories in cultural geography. After Priestley and his companions have shared their imaginative geographies these might be considered further in terms of the development of landscape studies, for example in relation to geographical theories on the experiences of public space.

8.4.2 Mapping Priestley's geographical imagination

This study has not emphasized the mapping of Priestley's landscapes and places as Franco Moretti (1999) has done, for example, in his critique of approaches to the geography of the European novel from his particular academic position in English literature. His approach offers some interesting directions for considering work by Priestley, including the work in this study and *English Journey*. This research would, for example, include other authors including travel writers contemporary to Priestley.

8.4.3 Popular geographies and landscape awareness

This idea is concerned with how people became aware of landscape through cultural practices relating to education, reading, maps, public transport and information such as travel guides and posters. We can read about Priestley's awareness of landscapes but there is scope for a study which focuses on the lifeworlds of those people whose experiences of everyday urban landscapes and countryside were expanded but who did not have the opportunity or ability to write down their thoughts and feelings like Priestley. There may be potential, for example, to look at the experiences of people in Bradford, at the same time he was writing his early articles.

8.4.4 Empathy in visual art

Priestley's sense of empathy and attachment could be developed and complemented by exploring the empathetic geographical imaginations of painters. Some artists appear to have simply represented beautiful or socially significant landscapes and places or

explored new techniques and theories. However, other artists represented their special and meaningful attachment to particular landscapes and places. This research would consider how empathy has been addressed in theories and histories of art in the context of humanistic and cultural geography.

These four ideas are only broad directions for developing studies of Priestley's work. No assessment has been made at this stage to determine the feasibility, originality or the availability of sources of information to enable the ideas to be developed.

8.5 Priestley scholarship

The research complements existing studies and adds some new ideas and information to the large field of Priestley scholarship in relation to geography, landscape, place, belonging, and the relationship of Bradford – and other industrial cities – with London. It has been possible to show the connection between his imaginative writing, as a gifted teenager, and his achievements as a mature and popular author. Although this is a geographical study of literature, history and architecture have also been taken into account to provide contexts and perspectives.

Although the research has focussed on writings produced during only twelve years (1913 and then 1919 to 1930) it has shown the extent and variety of Priestley's responses to landscape and places and the rich sources of information, ideas and experiences contained in his work. The study of examples of Priestley's output has shown his significant contribution of detailed and rich descriptions, strong attitudes, sensitivities, assessments and meanings, which are all relevant to cultural and historical geographies.

It is difficult when writing about Priestley not to engage with him directly, person to person, by sharing ideas and issues. He seems to want his readers to respond to his ideas and talk with him about local issues while championing the local landscape. In particular I have been able to engage with him since he has made it possible for me to access landscapes that are important in my personal history and to become more aware of what Bradford was like in 1913. I have been able to see Bradford City Centre, the moors and Central London differently. It is unfortunate for me, however, that Priestley's geographies did not extend to the villages on the edge of Bradford, to the neighbouring towns and in London to places south of the Thames. In all these landscapes Priestley would have had much to write about, to describe and assess.

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