CHAPTER 3

DRINKING PLACES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

In order to understand the social as well as the economic importance of the drinking place for the inhabitants of Victorian Norwich, the historian needs to have an understanding of the events and activities associated with these buildings. It is obvious that the working class drank and met together in their public houses and beerhouses, but other issues related to their leisure-time are less clear. How many drinking places also served food? How important was musical entertainment? How many women went out to drink? Which sporting activities took place there? What other kinds of activity may have taken place there – legal or illegal? How many drinking places also served as brothels? What kinds of societies and clubs were associated with drinking places? Not all such questions are easily answered – there are occasional contemporary references to the provision of food, for instance, but the extent of the practice remains problematic – but they do all bring into focus the wider issue of how the working class used their leisure time and raise the further question of how far this use changed during the Victorian period and, if there was change, for what reasons.

A number of sources shed light on such questions.[1] Newspapers provide a vital primary source and can help establish a hierarchy of social importance for the drinking places of Norwich. It is clear from newspaper reports that throughout the Victorian period a few

select inns are the venues for the dinners of various political, business and trade organizations at which members of the urban elite are in attendance.[2] Careful reading of other items can provide glimpses into the social world of the drinking places of the working classes: the public houses and beerhouses that comprised the great majority of the drinking places of Norwich. The reports of court proceedings – criminal, civil, and of the coroner – can offer insights into the games played, the music heard, the relations between the sexes, as well as the relations between drinkers and the police. With respect to Victorian Norwich, the pages of the *Norfolk Chronicle,* the *Eastern Daily Press* and the *Norwich Mercury* have been informative.[3]

Working-class memoirs and diaries that shed light on the social world of the drinking place would have provided valuable evidence. In the absence of any discoveries of these, I have nevertheless been fortunate in being able to use two early secondary sources – Hawkins (1910) and Wicks (1925). Both provide evidence for the social world of the public house in the Victorian period, particularly in the second half of the reign, but also, in the case of Wicks through his research for example on 'The Pleasure Gardens of Old Norwich', in the first half too.[4]

A comparative perspective is also important. Knowledge and understanding about the importance of the drinking place in other urban locations during the Victorian period helps provide a context for the analysis of the social importance of the Norwich drinking places. Mark Girouard's study of Victorian pubs, focussed on London, offers conclusions about their social importance in the capital and is of particular value.[5] At the end of the Victorian period, most of London's working population still walked to and from work, often several miles a day, along such main thoroughfares as Bishopsgate, Shoreditch and the Mile End,

Bethnal Green, Tottenham Court and Old Kent roads which were 'studded and in places crowded with pubs' whose function was to provide drink and comfort for weary workers. Girouard's description of such a vista is both scholarly and evocative:

'As the street lights dimly lit up in the twilight the pubs lit up far more brightly; long rows of monstrous lanterns stretched out into the street on curling and caparisoned tentacles of wrought iron and underneath them walls of sinuously bending and elaborately engraved glass were lit from the inside by an inner row of blazing globes.
Innumerable glass-paned doors swung open and shut to reveal the warmth and glitter inside: little secret sparkling private bars, big public bars with deal-lined walls and sawdust on the floors, or saloon bars rich with ferns, carpets, mirrors, a glowing fire and a view through to the billiard room and to distant figures leaning out of the dark over the brilliantly lit tables.' [6]

Most drinking places in Norwich would not have matched the opulence of their London counterparts but a description of the vista along Norwich thoroughfares like St. Martins Street (Oak Street) and St. Augustines Street in the north, and King Street, Ber Street and St. Stephens Street in the south, would have been similar in essentials.[7] Engraved glass, decorated plasterwork, and the bold pub sign and advertisements for the brews and spirits on sale inside are all evident in surviving photographs, and the game of billiards was an essential part of Victorian pub life in Norwich too.[8] These Norwich drinking houses were offering access to a world of solace and comfort far removed from the still unsanitary and crowded conditions of much working-class accommodation at the end of the Victorian period.

Girouard acknowledged the importance of the London pubs not just for travellers but also for residents who would become 'regulars' at their 'local':

'The pubs on the main thoroughfares usually had a residential hinterland behind them which they served as well; residential areas had their quieter and smaller neighbourhood pubs … Markets, barracks, the docks, business and commercial areas … produced their own drinking pattern in the surrounding areas.' [9]

The pattern of drinking places in Norwich was similar to that of the capital. There was, for instance, a greater density of public houses on the main thoroughfares and around the markets, and around the Pockthorpe barracks and the docks area to the south. Sales and profits could be significantly higher in some of these pubs – as for instance at the 'Queen Caroline' in St. Martin Oak, the 'Light Horseman' in Pockthorpe, and the 'Clarence Harbour' in Thorpe.[10]

Despite the introduction of Sunday morning closing in 1839, and the further curtailment of opening hours in 1864, 1872 and 1874, London pubs were still open for fourteen and a half hours from Monday to Saturday and for seven hours on Sunday at the end of the Victorian period. As Girouard pointed out, these long opening hours were one reason for their intensive use by the Victorian working class at a time when many alternative attractions and meeting places now taken for granted were not then in existence:

'Pubs were local centres for sport and entertainment and for dissemination of information, as well as meeting places for innumerable local groups and societies. Inquests and auctions were held in them. In spite of bitter opposition from Lord Shaftesbury and others, wages were still often paid out in pubs: workmen went there to pick up jobs or read the newspapers and tradesmen to change banknotes. Most pubs let rooms or took lodgers, often on a sufficient scale to justify their calling themselves hotels.' [11]

As in London, so too in Norwich – sport, entertainment, societies, inquests, letting of rooms to lodgers: all these played their part in Norwich pub life. However, before continuing with the analysis of Norwich drinking places, a study of pubs and beerhouses in two other urban locations with some points of similarity in terms of density of drinking places and size of population will help widen still further the comparative framework and demonstrate the degree to which the social importance of the drinking place for the working classes was universal. Bradford in the industrial north of England had around 600

drinking places at its peak in the late 1860s serving a population of 140,000; Portsmouth on the south coast had nearly 900 public houses and beerhouses in the late 1860s serving a population of around 118,000. Norwich at this time had a smaller population of nearly 80,000 and around 675 drinking places.[12]

In Bradford, Paul Jennings has shown how the public house functioned as an informal information exchange for the various trades as well as a source of more general news because of the newspapers kept there.[13] As elsewhere, public houses were also used by working men for more organized activities, in particular the friendly clubs or societies, formed to provide collective insurance against unemployment, illness, disability and death. Already well established by the beginning of the Victorian period, their numbers grew. By 1883 all but six of the forty-one trade societies in a directory listing gave a public house as their place of meeting.[14] Talk, music and games were the basic activities at any time in any public house or beerhouse in Bradford; in this respect Jennings noted an underlying continuity through the Victorian period but also suggested that sport and gambling together seemed to have assumed a greater importance in the later years. By the 1880s the use of the electric telegraph provided starting-price odds and speedy results for betting on horse racing and pubs came to be used extensively for such betting, despite its illegality.[15] Nearly two-thirds of the publicans in Bradford applied for a licence when a licensing system for public performance of music and dancing was introduced in 1881 and a decade later eighty-three beerhouses and 147 public houses had music licences.[16]

Administratively, the importance of the public house declined sharply from the 1830s as alternative public buildings were constructed, with the one exception, as in Norwich, of the practice of holding coroner's inquests in drinking places. However, in 1877 a room was

allocated in the new Town Hall for that purpose although it remained convenient on occasion to use public houses for inquests until it was finally forbidden by the Licensing Act (1902), but even then only if other suitable premises existed.[17]

Politically, the public house in Bradford played a key role in the electoral process in the early and mid-Victorian period, as it did in Norwich, although in Bradford there is a clear decline in importance from the 1870s unlike in Norwich where drink and corrupt practices remained prevalent into the 1880s and beyond.[18] Jennings noted that the Ballot Act (1872) had abolished nomination day, replaced open voting with the secret ballot and ended the hourly announcement of the progress of the poll; he argued that the old methods were expensive and inefficient and saw a definite shift in Bradford away from electoral links with the drink culture, a trend confirmed by the national legislation in 1883 banning committee rooms on licensed premises for parliamentary elections, extended the next year to cover municipal elections.[19]

In Portsmouth, too, the social importance of the drinking place is clear. As R.C. Riley and Philip Eley have shown, the majority of beerhouses and public houses exemplified two of the three major roles that Brian Harrison has traced for drinking places in nineteenth century society: those of recreation centre and meeting place. It was left to the coaching inns of old Portsmouth and Portsea in the early Victorian period, and later those premises linked with the railway passenger traffic, together with the few others that lined the principal walk-to-work routes in the town, to represent their third role: as transport centre.[20]

Some forms of recreation seemed particularly important. Riley and Eley noted that skittle alleys were ‘remarkably common’, and by the mid-century the provision of a room for dancing, often larger than the bar and bar parlour combined, had become ‘typical’. The 1850s and the 1860s saw the rapid rise in the popularity of the music hall. In addition, working men’s clubs and societies used the accommodation available in drinking places, normally free of charge on the expectation of the drink to be consumed, since public buildings were few in number.[21]

The presence of the Royal Navy and the garrison in Portsmouth explains the remarkable number of beerhouses and pubs in that town, the importance of recreational activities like skittles, dancing and music hall entertainment – and the fact that ‘Unquestionably, the foremost recreational activity associated with drinking houses (in Portsmouth), more particularly beerhouses, was prostitution’. [22] Government policy, by discouraging servicemen from marrying, had itself fuelled the custom of landlords supplying prostitutes in dockyard and garrison towns. Beerhouse profits may have depended on this auxiliary trade. The Public Housing Closing Act (1864), requiring premises in London to close between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m., was designed to address this issue of prostitution. Portsmouth Borough Council adopted this legislation in 1866. The 1860s was a decade in which there was much concern about sexually transmitted diseases weakening the military and naval forces; The War Office report into *The Prevalence of Venereal Disease in the Army and Navy* (1862) was followed by the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864,1866 and 1869), under which women suspected of being infected could be confined to ‘lock wards’ in hospitals – in Portsmouth, the Royal Portsmouth Hospital.[23]

The study of the drinking places of Victorian Norwich indicates many parallels with the research findings of Girouard in London, Jennings in Bradford, and Riley and Eley in Portsmouth. Walter Wicks' volume offers an appreciation of the drinking place in Norwich as a social institution, a meeting place for individuals and organizations intent on making meaning from their leisure time not only through drinking alcohol but also through social activities that mirror those in London, Bradford and Portsmouth.[24] Written at the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, his work contains hints of nostalgia for a leisure culture centred on the drinking place that had become less pervasive. Wicks saw 'the march of modern improvement' as the explanation for the reduction in the number of drinking places in Norwich. It had been the combination of:

> 'the tramways, the Royal Arcade, the Hippodrome, and other structural alterations, and the widening of some of our picturesque streets … and (the acquisition of their sites) as business places … Sunday Schools and solicitors' offices …(that had led to their removal) … leaving but a dim memory of the nights of revelry, the stirring and amusing incidents, social and political, which had been there enacted, the sports and pastimes and time-honoured associations which still cling to them'.[25]

Wicks had passed some of his own leisure-time in such drinking places in Norwich and his evidence has value for any assessment of their social importance.

Throughout Wicks' text there is substantial support for his claim that 'Practically every social and political function was held at a public-house'. He himself offered his own five-fold justification that has a particular value in highlighting the functions that seemed to him the most important. He began with the role of the public house in local politics, citing its use as a venue for dinners given to visiting politicians, for nominations of parliamentary candidates, and for meetings of committees of political parties 'less than fifty years ago'. There was also the role of individual public houses in serving the leisure-time needs of particular social groups. (Wicks cites, as an example, the use by the medical fraternity of the Norfolk and Norwich hospital of the nearby 'Rampant Horse' in St. Edmunds.) There

was the association of friendly societies with particular public houses, and also the use of public houses as locations for the coroner's inquests. Finally, public houses were used as venues for the 'exhibitions of plays and "drolls", of "natural curiosities", and fat oxen'. [26] All these roles, and others, are examined in the following analysis.

Certain public houses were associated with boxing, a sporting activity of particular significance in Norwich because of its link with both drink and politics. It was a leisure-time need that appealed not only to the working classes but other social groups too. Wicks related the stories of a number of boxers-turned-publicans in Norwich. The 'noted pugilist' Ned Painter, shortly after taking over at 'The Sun and Anchor' in 1820, fought his last fight beating Tom Oliver at North Walsham in Norfolk before a crowd of 20,000.[27] The attraction of such sporting spectacles, on which bets would be placed, was felt across all classes; for the working classes, such men as Painter must have been heroes from their own background, worthy of respect and admiration, and their fights brief periods of excitement in the course of a difficult existence; for brewers, such men were business assets attracting drinkers to their hostelries and their brews.

Later landlords who owed part at least of their popularity and trade to their former abilities in the boxing ring included "Cock" Blyth who was landlord at the 'Bulls Head' in Ber Street, a Morgan public house, between 1867 and 1872 and who then moved west, outside the walls, to the 'Villa Gardens' in Lakenham, privately owned by Edward Trafford of Wroxham, from 1872 to 1880. Blyth was one of several who brought together not only a connection between fighting and drink but also a link with politics since he served as a 'minder' for the leading Liberal politician in Norwich, Jacob Henry Tillett. Wicks stated:

'(his) abilities in the boxing ring made him a valuable asset at Liberal Party meetings, when disturbance was anticipated, and in the old roaring days of fifty and sixty years ago

(c.1865-1875), "Cock" Blyth usually followed closely in the wake of Mr. Jacob Henry Tillett, ready to deal with obstreperous opponents in the event of a fracas'.[28]

Blyth had served as a coadjutor for another boxer-cum-political 'minder', the Norfolk-born Jem Mace, who kept the 'Swan' in Swan Lane after retiring from the ring following his defeat around 1850 by John Pratt (henceforth 'Licker' Pratt), at Drayton outside Norwich, the police having intervened to stop the intended meeting on Mousehold Heath. Wicks wrote of seeing Jem Mace's 'magnificent form in Norwich streets'; he was evidently a contemporary hero. When Mace had fought his last fight he had been wearing the Whig colours of 'blue and white'; his opponent, 'Licker' Pratt, had worn the Tory colours of 'orange and purple'. The link between boxing and the world of politics is again clear. Even before parliamentary legislation had further widened the 'political nation' by extending the franchise to members of the working class, the political parties and their representatives within the urban elite of Norwich were 'adopting' boxing heroes from the working class for both political and business reasons. 'Licker' Pratt had been born in a public house, the 'Jolly Gardeners' in Pockthorpe, in 1825, and in adult life not only excelled in the ring but also became landlord in turn at the 'Jolly Skinners', the 'Rose', and the 'Prince of Denmark' – all within the city walls – and then the 'Brickmakers Arms' at Sprowston, before moving back into the city to his final public house – the 'Hampshire Hog' in St. Swithins Alley – where he remained the landlord of this Tory-supporting Steward and Patteson public house from 1880 to 1901, before retirement and his death in 1903.[29]

Another publican-cum-political 'minder' with a fighting pedigree was Richard 'Dick' Nickalls, landlord at the 'Arabian Horse' in Oak Street, a Morgan public house, from 1872 to 1886.[30] He was:

'… for several years connected with the Conservative Party in a minor official capacity as a guardian of the peace at meetings and demonstrations whenever rowdyism was anticipated. Dick was generally in charge of a band of tasty stewards engaged to render assistance in the tactful duty of ejecting turbulent interrupters; and judging from external appearances these gentlemen had in the days of the prize ring suffered heavy battery and apparently were equally capable of administering it.[31]

The link between the prize-fighting publican and the new democratic politics was not likely to last but for as long as it did survive Norwich remained the object of national censure and scorn.[32] With 'Cock' Blyth organising the 'protection' for the Liberals and 'Dick' Nickalls doing likewise for the Conservatives, the extension of the franchise and widening of democratic rights in Norwich got off to a troubled and fractious start in the late 1860s and early 1870s.

The connection between the worlds of fighting and drink was not just through individual publicans. The 'Green Dragon' in Little London Street in the centre of Norwich was 'another house of repute amongst the boxing fraternity' and was the scene of a number of contests, in particular that between "Bob" Cordran (still living in 1925 but approaching eighty) and "Northampton Jim". This was the 'grimmest fight' of Cordran's life according to Wicks who must have heard at first hand Cordran's account of how he had been having a 'friendly box' with a young man when "Northampton Jim" came in, issued his challenge, and the ensuing fight went on for 'longer than an hour'. "Northampton Jim" died two weeks later. Cordran further recounted many conflicts at the 'Spread Eagle' in the Haymarket, the 'Arabian Horse' in St. Martins, and other resorts 'celebrated in the annals of local fisticuffs'. [33] Since Cordran would have been born around the mid-1840s, his own fighting career must have been from around the mid-1860s to the early-1880s; thus, in the same period as the male working class were being enfranchised, individual heroes of the working class like Cordran were making meaning for themselves and their many followers in a more traditional, illegal, primitive and violent way.

Norwich was unlikely to have been exceptional in this link between the drinking place and the world of the pugilist, although it may have kept the tradition for longer than some urban centres. In Bradford, Jennings concluded:

'That more bloody human sport – the prize fight – seems to have declined like animal fights during the 1870s … (although) … A late local case, in which one of the contestants died, was one arranged in March 1878 at the Sun beerhouse …' [34]

London, however, like Norwich, maintained the link late into the Victorian period with Girouard noting:

'… many publicans were ex-prize fighters … and often had a boxing school and ring attached to their pubs'.

He further made the important point:

'A boxing match was still treated as a breach of the peace, and was therefore illegal, until the replacement of bare-fisted by gloved fights and the use of the Queensberry Rules gradually made it legally acceptable in the 1890s'. [35]

The demise of the boxing pub followed in this last decade of the reign, even in centres like Norwich and London that had maintained the link between fighting and the drinking place. Symptomatic of this significant change in the leisure-time pursuits of the working class, the licence of the 'Green Dragon' ("Bob" Cordran's former boxing centre) was not renewed in 1894; it was given up by the holders, Morgans, on the grant of a licence to the 'Museum Café Hotel', a name resonant of a new refinement.[36] As the social conscience of the governing classes became more sensitive, so they sought to refine the outlook of those beneath them in the social order.

If the 1890s saw the end of the boxing pub in Norwich, it also by coincidence saw the extinction of the licence of a former cricketers' pub, the 'Rampant Horse Hotel' in St. Stephens. This drinking place had achieved the reputation of being 'the home of Norfolk cricketers' when George Figg, a professional cricketer whom many could still remember,

according to Wicks, as a ‘tall, athletic figure’, had held the licence. Figg seems to have made money from cricket; he not only held the licence but also owned the hotel from before 1867. By 1879, Figg had sold the business which then ‘degenerated considerably’, changing its name from 1888 to become the ‘Crystal Lounge’. In 1892, the magistrates took the unusual step of refusing to renew its licence ‘on account of the bad character of the house’, the chief constable, Robert Hitchman, claiming that it was ‘a well-known resort of prostitutes’. [37] The charisma of the working-class sporting hero had created the popularity of the drinking place with which he was associated. But such renown could be transitory. The urban elite would applaud an upright figure like Figg as a model for the working class to emulate; the degenerate world of the ‘Crystal Lounge’ may not have been any worse than a number of other drinking places but would have seemed so when the memory of Figg’s halcyon days were so recent.

One former cricketing drinking place that did retain its popularity was the ‘Richmond Hill Gardens’ on the edge of the city at Bracondale, by the Ber Street Gates. This was one of the pleasure gardens-cum-drinking places that surrounded Norwich and had enjoyed their heyday in the first half of the century before the coming of the railway widened people’s horizons. In 1833, the proprietor had been Fuller Pilch, the ‘famous local cricketer … and lessee of Lakenham Cricket Ground’. It was one of several such gardens noted also for balloon ascents in the 1820s and 1830s. Perhaps watching cricket or ballooning appealed to less violent instincts than prize fighting and contributed to the long-term stability of this drinking place. Whatever the reasons, the ‘Richmond Hill Tavern’ as it became – a Bullards house – had only two licensees recorded in the later part of the century, Peter Youngs from some time before 1867 through to 1874, and then William Copeman from 1875 to 1900. In their time:

‘the house was a favourite resort of Mr. Robert Hitchman, a former chief constable of Norwich (from 1859 to 1897) … and others. Each had his own particular seat, and his own special churchwarden’s pipe’. [38]

Evidently, a public house graced by the regular attendance of the chief constable of the Norwich police was in a different social category from say the ill-fated ‘Crystal Lounge’. Yet there is a sense in which the ‘Richmond Hill’ remained a working-class drinking place, albeit an elite one. Hitchman had chosen to make this public house his ‘local’; although he served their interest he seemed to remain outside the drinking circle of his employers and social ‘betters’, the urban elite.

The ‘Richmond Hill’ had made a successful transition during the Victorian period, serving the leisure needs of the working class at both the beginning and end of the reign. Those needs, however, were not static and numbers of the public houses linked to the pleasure gardens did not maintain their popularity.[39] Wicks, however, provided a rare insight into the period of their working-class heyday and their links with family leisure-time and drinking:

‘The local pleasure gardens … used to be much in vogue during the first half of the last century, and as recently as forty years ago (c.1885), when few people thought of taking their families to the seaside on Bank Holidays, parties of six, or perhaps twelve, would be taken to some pleasant gardens outside the city. Sometimes (they) would be a mere quiet retreat, where the pleasure seekers would spend the afternoon playing harmless games – the younger children gambolling on the green, fathers at bowls. These gardens were attached to public houses, but those who sought them did not necessarily spend all their time and money in consuming alcoholic drink. There were tea gardens …’

Wicks’ perception, as ever, is shaped by nostalgia but his explanation for the loss in popularity of several of these gardens sounds plausible:

‘As time went on, several of these gardens deteriorated … and were consequently avoided by the more respectable class of citizen; others dropped out because of the increasing facilities for cheap railway travel to the seaside’. [40]

Radical changes in the transport infrastructure [41] and shifts in the definition of 'respectability' within the social groups that made up the working-class population of Norwich were clearly important in shaping the new developments in the use of leisure-time in the second half of Victoria's reign. The pleasure gardens were perceived to have 'deteriorated' once those who might have gone in the past would do so no more. Perhaps 'respectability' had had to be redefined by those making a relative social advance that took them beyond the world of the pleasure garden; perhaps those social groups within the working classes who once would neither have been able to afford to nor have dared to set foot in a pleasure garden were now confident enough to do so. What becomes more certain as the argument of this chapter develops, is the degree to which a man could be defined in social terms by the public house in which he drank. A full understanding of the social hierarchy of the drinking place in Victorian Norwich is probably no longer possible; yet there is sufficient evidence to point out that it once existed. Such nuances of social hierarchy were subtler than the crude division between rough and respectable that contemporaries made and some later historians have followed.[42] Drinking places and their customers gained their reputations not least because of the activities associated with them. All drinking places shared the convivial, pleasure-seeking features common to that way of life, but important social differences were registered by the leisure-pursuits that accompanied the drinking and those nuances became more significant in the last few decades of Victoria's reign as the range of leisure activities widened. If the Norwich drinker was watching fewer prize-fights or walking-matches by 1901, he might be more likely to be a a member of a pub-based cycling club, or caged bird society, or a club for fishing or bowling or gardening.[43] The pub remained the main organising centre for these new developments within the working classes and their ways of making meaning when not at work.[44]

Within the wider society, whatever the continuities, the pace at which developments occurred in the use of leisure in the late-Victorian period was without precedent. Hugh Cunningham has emphasised the importance of illuminating 'such changes over time', as well as 'the boundaries of class, of gender, of age and of geography', in any analysis. Leisure cultures were never static:

'(They) were constantly changing, both in themselves and in relation to other cultures'. [45]

With specific reference to sport, Neil Tranter has argued that there was a revolution in sporting practice in the late Victorian and Edwardian period that was evident not only in such areas as codification, institutionalism, commercialism and professionalism but also in the dramatic increase in the range of sports available and in the numbers of people who played and watched them.[46] Although some developments came later to Norwich than other cities – the Norwich City soccer club was not founded until 1902 – there is much other evidence for a significant widening of the parameters of involvement in sport in particular and leisure activities in general, with the public house continuing to play a pivotal role.

The pace of these late-Victorian developments was remarkable, but it is important to stress that leisure activities and sport, generally centred on the public house, had always provided significant ways for the working class to make their meaning in life. The evidence presented so far in this analysis of the social importance of the drinking place in Norwich supports Cunningham's argument that the twin processes of accelerating rates of population growth and rapid urbanisation were likely to encourage popular sport and leisure activity, and with real incomes rising in the last quarter of the century new commercial opportunities were available for the entrepreneur.[47] In Norwich, prize-fighting was one of the favoured sports from which the enterprising could make money throughout

most of Victoria's reign. Pleasure-gardens, too, had provided such financial opportunities for part of this period. But in the last decades the range of opportunities began to multiply.

Before considering further the range of leisure-pursuits, it is important to emphasise the physical attraction of the public house or beerhouse as an alternative place of temporary residence for an hour or more away from the squalor of the rented home. The drinking place remained the main leisure-time location for the working classes, the preferred space for their recreation, in part because the rate of urban growth and population increase in industrial Britain produced a nineteenth century housing problem that remained seemingly intractable. Martin Daunton's study of working-class housing has shed new light on the importance of the land question in the Victorian debate about the housing problem, especially in the 1880s when working-class accommodation in London seemed to have reached a crisis point. Housing policy was not shaped by an inexorable move towards subsidised public housing and municipal socialism; rather it was the land question that provided the ideological framework for those who sought to solve the continuing problems of inadequate and unsanitary rented accommodation for the working classes.[48]

The land question comprised a complex set of issues. Rents tended to exceed the ability of tenants to pay because of the high cost of urban land. A reduction in the charge for land, either by the reduction in the cost of transport to make a wider area available for residential use, or by taxes on the increase in site values to discourage land hoarding, seemed to offer solutions to two linked problems (although these 'solutions' were never successfully implemented). First, a sometimes inadequate housing stock was marketed at high rents by landlords who – faced with ever increasing demands from rates to meet mounting public expenditure – would seek to pass on the costs of rates increases to their tenants, and

secondly, a crisis in local government finance had arisen from the slow growth in rateable values as public expenditure increased, coupled with the crucial fact that local taxation fell wholly upon real property, and particularly upon houses. The owners of house property naturally complained that the rates fell directly on their source of income whilst others, like shopkeepers and manufacturers who did not pay local taxes on their turnover, were not contributing their share to local taxation. With the greater concern to provide sanitation, water supply, schools, and other public utilities for the common good, the cost of local government was rising. Since there was a point at which landlords would be unable to pass increased rates on to the tenants through a higher weekly rent (because the tenants could not afford to pay the increase), that increased cost of urban government was falling very largely on these property owners.[49]

All this contributed to a housing problem that remained intractable in the Victorian period. It was the outbreak of war in 1914, wartime government action, and local authority housing policies after the First World War, which together signalled more effective action by local and national government in the twenties and thirties.[50] Only after the First World War did per capita consumption of alcohol fall significantly.[51] There seems to have been a causal link between an impoverished housing stock and a less than effective property market on the one hand, and the popularity of the drinking place and drink on the other.

Returning to the range of leisure-pursuits in the drinking places of Norwich, indoor sports like billiards and card games like whist provided regular entertainment throughout the Victorian period. Wicks' account of the whist played at the Morgans public house, the 'Freemasons' Arms' in Lakenham, when George Rye, a professional at the Norfolk County Cricket Club and a football referee, was licensee between 1886 and 1911, gives the

impression that Wicks himself had been present. It is also suggestive of the power of the public house culture. The older men are seen as characters in their own right, each with their own nickname and personal history of achievement usually associated with sport. Whist itself is raised to the status of a sport:

'The 'Freemasons' Arms' was the rendezvous of all classes of sportsmen: cricketers, footballers and boxers and whist players … and what games of whist were played between "Cock" Blyth, "Shindy" Betts, "Spider" Haylett (father of the well-known walker "Paddy" of "Hoppole Gardens" fame), "Bones" Howlett, the old Carrow Cricketer, and "Bob" Chadwick, groundsman at Lakenham! … there was no whist drives in those days, and the boys would stand around in absolute silence watching the old veterans play.' [52]

Billiards, too, was a popular indoor game in many public houses. The extent of that popularity is clear, thanks to the later Victorian need of the urban elite to record the licensing and control of the working class: the Register of Billiard Licences for Norwich drinking places from 1869 through to 1966 is extant.[53] The legislation that controlled billiards had been enacted in two stages, firstly through the Gaming Act (1845) and then through the Licensing Act (1872) (followed in 1910 by the Licensing (Consolidation) Act). The aim of these laws with respect to the place so licensed was: 'to maintain good order and rule therein'; the place of play was usually also licensed for the sale of alcoholic drink so 'drunkenness or other disorderly conduct' was expressly forbidden.[54]

It is difficult perhaps to realise fully the fear of disorder and loss of control that must have underpinned the original Westminster legislation and its implementation by an urban elite such as in Norwich. Those who had power were seeking to monitor the leisure-time activity of the working class to a degree that may almost appear paranoid, but is indicative of class suspicions that were prevalent throughout the nineteenth century. Cunningham has sketched the emergence of a male, intellectual, socially concerned and distinctly middle-class urban culture that saw the purpose of leisure as actually the re-creation of a person for

the serious business of work.[55] The urge to control the recreation of the working class was strong and had its roots in economic, social and political insecurities.

In 1869, there were seventy-one places licensed for billiards in Norwich; nearly all of these were drinking places. In other words, around one-in-ten of the premises licensed for the consumption of alcohol were also licensed for the playing of billiards. Its popularity had grown even more by the end of the Victorian period. By 1901, a total of thirty-two (45 per cent) of these original billiard licences had been held continuously over the previous thirty-two years, the remainder having been dropped or lost. A further seventy-seven new billiard licences had been issued, making a total of 148 licences issued between 1869 and 1901. At least fifty-two (67.5 per cent) of these seventy-seven licences were issued to pubs with off-licences which is indicative not only of the popularity of billiards but also of the growing importance of the off-licence retail drinks trade in beer, wines and spirits, and cider.[56] Forty – nearly a half – of these new licences were still held in 1901, making a total of seventy-two places licensed for the playing of billiards in Norwich at the end of the Victorian period and nearly all of them were connected with the drinks trade. Two licences had been issued to temperance groups who were endeavouring, unsuccessfully in these instances, to break the connection between leisure-time activity and alcoholic drink; the licences were soon dropped.[57]

Some public houses outside the city centre had outdoor bowling greens. The ‘Black Horse’ on the Earlham Road had ‘one of the finest bowling greens in the county’ and claimed the best local bowlers.[58] The ‘West End Retreat’ off the Dereham Road had been one of the noted pleasure gardens of the early-nineteenth century with four acres of ground; by the end of the century the house and the ‘excellent bowling green’ still remained.[59] In the city

centre, the ‘Hampshire Hog’ in St. Swithins Alley was the last house in Norwich in which the old English game of logats was played in which pins were tossed as near the jack as possible.[60]

The blood sport of cock-fighting had been banned through Westminster legislation in 1835 and 1849 as opposition to the cruelty inflicted on the birds developed in the early-nineteenth century. In 1806, the ‘Maids Head’ in Tombland had five cockpits that were ‘much favoured by local sportsmen’ but no references to cock-fighting surviving into the Victorian period have been found (although it would be surprising if there had not been survivals of the practice in a market city like Norwich). [61] During the Victorian period other less bloody spectacles were available. The ‘Maids Head’, like most of the principal inns, had:

‘its quota of itinerant performers, providing all sorts of sights and entertainments – panoramas, puppet shows, freaks and fire-eaters’. [62]

Wicks had singled out such entertainments and exhibitions as one of his five reasons for emphasising the social importance of the public house in Norwich.[63]

Pedestrianism, like boxing, was an exhibition-cum-sport that involved skill and athletic ability – and like nearly all other sports was the subject of bets. Unlike boxing, it did not seem to survive into the twentieth century but it was very popular in the Victorian period, not least at the ‘Green Hill Gardens’ off the Aylsham Road, where the gardens were:

‘much frequented by the sporting fraternity and dog and bird fanciers … while pedestrians and boxers exhibited their skills, an occasional balloon ascent provided enjoyment and diversion for the Norwich sightseers … and there was also plenty of amusement, with vocal and instrumental music on Bank Holidays’. [64]

In June 1841, these ‘Green Hill gardens’ were the venue for Coates, the ‘great London pedestrian’, to walk fifty miles in twelve hours each day for three consecutive days, half

the distance walking backwards, half walking forwards – which he did with ten minutes to spare. In 1842, at the same venue, Deerfoot of Brighton (wearing his Indian costume) met Long of Middlesborough in a walking match with the Duke of Wellington and Sir Samuel Bignold among the spectators. Walking matches were still very popular at the 'Hop-Pole Gardens' in St. Faith's Lane in Mountergate in the 1870s. In July 1874, Madame Angelo covered a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours. [65] However, the transport revolution created by the bicycle sounded the death-knell of pedestrianism since individuals could now perform their own feats of speed and stamina more easily on their cycle. By 1886, Morgan, the brewery that owned the 'Green Hill Gardens', had dropped the licence.[66]

Although the first music hall or variety entertainment in Norwich failed soon after its establishment in 1854 – 'in a room for 200 visitors, tastefully fitted up by the proprietor' at the 'Boars Head' in St. Stephens [67] – the leisure-time activities of the working class did become more diversified. Yet the association with the drinking place remained vital. In the late-Victorian period, public houses became the headquarters and meeting places for societies and clubs formed by those in the working class who were creating new institutions for their leisure-time roles as gardeners, fanciers (keepers of caged birds, particularly canaries), anglers and cyclists. This working-class link between public house and leisure-time society or club mirrored the middle-class association between hotel or inn and society or club that had been apparent in the first half of the century. The 'Swan Inn' in St. Peters, for example, had been the venue in November 1829 for the first show of the Norfolk and Norwich Horticultural Society that had been formed in October of that year.[68] Then, even before the 1850s, the first recorded Canary Show was organised at the 'Greyhound Gardens' in Ber Street in November 1846 when three hundred specimens were

exhibited.[69] Typical of the development in the later Victorian period of clubs and societies that were attached to public houses was the formation of the Norwich Amateur Bicycle Club at the 'Volunteer Stores' in Chapel Field Road in 1879.[70]

The research of Hawkins (1910) sheds further light on the world of working-class institutions serving leisure-time needs. His picture, informed by the trained eye of the sociologist, cannot be that different from the one that existed at the end of the Victorian period. He claimed that for the workingman:

'The popular amusement in Norwich is beyond doubt the royal art of angling … (with) at least 100 fishing clubs connected with public houses … with an average membership of thirty to forty … mostly from the ranks of the better-paid but with at least a dozen clubs amongst labourers earning less than 20s a week.[71]

Significantly, Hawkins had distinguished between an artisan elite and the mass of general labourers. But both groups had their own clubs or societies in their own local public houses. The attraction of the drinking place in Norwich was very often more than just drink.

There is a group just above the artisan elite that is represented by Hawkins as 'the clerk who wears a collar and tie'. They too had their own local drinking places, and their particular leisure-time activity seems to have been bowling. There were twenty-six bowling clubs in the city and publicans were responsible for an unspecified number of these. The Anchor Bowling League, with seven affiliated clubs, was organised by Steward and Patteson, the Pockthorpe brewers. Hawkins noted that generally working men did not take too much interest in the game of bowls since there were too many incidental expenses.[72]

Workingmen found a more popular amusement in either their allotments or 'the fancy', which in Norwich meant the breeding of canaries. Hawkins estimated that around two thousand men had allotments, and that they were between two and three thousand breeders in the city. Canary breeding apparently demanded 'a good deal of skill and infinite trouble, and on the whole appealed to the steady man who is in regular work'. It involved a considerable outlay on seed but the successful breeder could make enough from sales to pay his rent; in the shoe trade, men were said to save up against the slack season by selling their birds when they needed the money. There were thirteen canary clubs, meeting regularly in public houses to exchange information, with the publican usually a prominent official. Canary shows were held two or three times a year; Hawkins described these as 'solemn festivals, celebrated by a club breakfast and a half-day's holiday'. [73] Drinking would have been part of that ritual.

Hawkins' evidence from the end of the first decade of the twentieth century adds weight to the argument that the drinking place retained its central role for the working class, however diversified their leisure-time activities became. He noted the remarkable popularity of watching professional football and thought it likely that the 'increasing sobriety of Norwich' owed something to this new habit of devoting Saturday afternoon to the match. Hawkins did not, however, consider the time spent in the public house after the match although he acknowledged that 'it still remains true that the public-house is the centre of social intercourse amongst working men in Norwich'. [74]

Hawkins also acknowledged: 'in these hostelries the typical recreation of the Norwich working man go hand in hand with the serious business of his trade union and his friendly society'. [75] Even by 1910, the trade unions were not numerically strong in Norwich – there

were no unions in the manufacture of food, drink and in clothing – but Hawkins considered their influence was growing through the Norwich Trades' Council and the Labour Party.[76] The Friendly Societies, however, had sixteen to seventeen thousand members in Norwich; their ninety-one courts and lodges controlled funds in excess of nearly a quarter of a million pounds that had all been saved from wages. [77] The two largest in Norwich were the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity, and the Ancient Order of Foresters; such Friendly Societies had developed in response to the New Poor Law Act (1834) that forced working-class men to think of self-help. Financial contributions ensured sickness benefit, medical assistance, and funeral benefit.[78] As Charles Hardwick, a member of the Odd Fellows, emphasised, responding to criticisms of the link with public houses, Friendly Societies did not make people go to the public houses; they had "developed there spontaneously". [79] Gosden has noted that 'the local inn was the only suitable place for a number of men to meet together' and that landlords were often involved in establishing these societies that would also serve to benefit their business. Brewers also recognised their value.[80] Wicks (1925) gave an undated reference to the setting up of one such Friendly Society in the 'Red Lion' in London Street in Plea; very many of these courts and lodges began in public houses, and remained there, in the Victorian period – as in Bradford.[81]

The pub, as Cunningham has noted, 'was a major space for leisure, and the publican a major organiser'. However, the publican's main business 'was the sale of alcohol, and drinking in the pub was the main way most men spent their leisure'. [82] The issue of how much was actually spent on alcohol by the working class has been the subject of much debate.[83] Rowntree's figures from his survey of alcohol consumption in 1899 indicated a sample average of 3s 8d (18.3p) a week. Baxter's figures for 1869 are particularly significant since they distinguish between the 'temperate' urban labourer – the majority of

the working class – and the 'temperate' urban artisan – the minority that constituted the 'labour aristocracy'. The former was earning £50-60 a year and spending, with his wife, 2s to 2s 6d a week on alcohol, that is around £5-£6.50 a year on 75 gallons of beer a year and a modest amount (1-2 gallons) of spirits. The latter was earning £90-100 a year and spending, with his wife, 4s 6d to 5s a week on alcohol, that is around £11.50-£13 a year on 150 gallons of beer and 2.4 gallons of spirits a year. As Wilson observed, 'Both estimates … underline the fact that beer was the largest item of working-class expenditure, ranking well above amounts spent upon meat or bread'. Contemporary observers believed that between 14 and 25 per cent of working-class incomes was spent on drink.[84]

However, Dingle has made the case that from the 1880s onwards the range of commodities within reach of the working class was widening considerably, both in variety and price, at the same time as drink remained unchanged in price at 2½d per pint. It was therefore becoming proportionately more expensive relative to an increasingly wide range of consumer goods, and as prices fell and real wages rose between 1880 and 1895, the level of drink consumption stagnated. Around 1900, as money wages rose, there was some recovery in the figures for drink consumption per head, but after 1900 with stagnation in the level of real wages, the decline in the consumption of drink can be seen as an attempt to safeguard new patterns of consumption in which drink played a lesser, if still significant, role.[85]

Nevertheless, it does seem likely that at least until the late-nineteenth century the more a worker earned, the higher his expenditure on alcohol. Cunningham indeed argued that:

'… artisans were notorious for their drinking habits, both on and off the job. The celebration of St. Monday was particularly associated with artisans – and with drinking. Independent colliers, for example, regularly took a holiday on the Monday after pay day,

and spent it drinking, often associated with sport and gambling no respectable person would contemplate'. [86]

Giving evidence before the House of Lords Select Committee in 1877, Mr. J.E.Davis, legal advisor to the Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police but formerly a stipendiary magistrate in first Stoke, then Sheffield, explained:

'When trade is good, the number of complaints of absence of workmen increase. … Most of the men are on piece work … they begin drinking on Saturday and continue on Monday … apparently all over England, Monday, which ought to be the best working day is kept entirely as a holiday'. [87]

Within Norwich, members of the urban elite perceived the extended drinking 'binge' as a problem, even within the factory system that, with its disciplines of the clock and regular time, has been viewed by historians as a counterweight to such indulgences. Mr. Simms Reeve, a Norwich magistrate, in his evidence before the Lords Committee in 1877, argued that drunkenness was on the increase:

'Many complaints are made all round. I heard for instance a proprietor of a very large works complain very much of these extensions of licences at holiday times, because he said, it is so difficult to get our people back for two or three days; they get off drinking, and then they cannot get them back again.' [88]

Although anecdotal, Reeve's evidence is suggestive of a working-class culture in Norwich that had been shaped by the piecework traditions once central to its urban economy when textiles had been the staple industry. There was still, as late as the 1870s, resistance to the disciplines of more regulated forms of production. Dependence on alcohol had become assimilated into patterns of making meaning from leisure-time. Workers still sought – through absenteeism – to control and define the boundaries of their time away from work.

In Norwich, some could afford to drink more than others. The decline in the traditional staple textile industry that had once created a measure of prosperity for numbers of artisans had led to lower incomes. By the second half of the century, observers were commenting

on the relative poverty of the Norwich working classes. Simms Reeve, in his 1877 evidence, claimed:

'… the wages earned by the people in Norwich are much less than those earned by the people in the North'.

However, his figures do suggest the existence still of a labour aristocracy formed by skilled workers in the new staple industries, alongside the mass of low-waged general workers. In the new staple trade of shoemaking, wages varied from 9s at the lowest to 30s to 35s at the highest, with Reeve taking 18s a week as being 'a fair and ordinary man's earnings'. His report on incomes continued:

'The 1500 to 1600 who were employed at Messrs Colman's mustard and starch works were well paid, earning 24s to 28s a week, but still less than the average for Northern workers. A small portion of the 600 employed at Messrs Barnard and Bishop's iron casting works had good earnings but a large number were employed as general labourers and earned 14s to 16s a week. There were perhaps around 2000 weavers who earned not much more than 10s to 12s on average with many less than 9s a week'. [89]

It seems a reasonable conclusion to draw that within Norwich, as elsewhere, in all groups in the working classes the drinking that took place stretched in many cases the limits of family budgets. If as seems likely there was a slight trend to more temperate drinking towards the end of the period than the explanation lies, at least in part, in the development of that wider range of leisure pursuits that that been examined above.

For most of the urban working class, expenditure on alcohol was a regular daily outlay, an indispensable part of the ritual of relaxation when not at work. Yet for some, drinking and work were not separated. Those who worked in the markets – for example, the drovers of cattle – consumed drink as a natural part of the rhythm of the day.[90] Norwich was not only an important industrial centre; it was also the great market centre for East Anglia where livestock, fish, vegetables, groceries, and household items were sold, and on market days the population in the city increased considerably.[91]

Even allowing for the movement of population away from the centre of the city to the suburbs during the second half of the century, there was still a plethora of drinking places to cater for the market population of traders and buyers. Individual drinking places had their own connection with particular markets; for instance, when the fish market was closed in 1912, Steward and Patteson shut the 'Popes Head' in the same year, under the compensation scheme, because its trade had dwindled.[92] The market areas in the heart of the city were hard-drinking centres and likely to provide breweries with greater profits. Drinking places here could have a much higher consumption of spirits than those outside this inner area.[93]

Drinking, as well as being a regular daily occurrence and part of the cycle of work and leisure, was also for high days and holidays. The working class enjoyed their few holiday breaks throughout the period but with the arrival of the railway, the scope of the day out dramatically widened and the egress from Norwich was no longer limited to the pleasure gardens and pubs on the fringe of the city, but now extended to Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Conversely, of course, Norwich itself became the focus for those Norfolk and Suffolk rural and urban working class who made the journey in reverse. Correspondence in the *Eastern Daily Press* in 1900 indicated that a day out and drinking were inseparable for most.[94]

Sex and the drinking place were linked directly through prostitution in this Victorian period, as the evidence above for Portsmouth clearly revealed. The 'oldest profession' needs to be taken into account in any assessment of the social importance of the drinking place. It can, however, be a difficult area to research since many 'respectable' Victorians preferred that the trade remained disguised and unrecognised, but the evidence I have

uncovered points, as might be expected, to the significance of prostitution in Norwich. John Dunne, the Chief Constable from 1851 to 1853, was one Norwich citizen who did not conceal the existence of prostitution and brothels and the link with drinking places. His extraordinary testimony in June 1853 before the House of Lords Select Committee into Policing was an act of premeditated 'whistle-blowing' he seems to have prepared for by planning his resignation. His letter of resignation was received and accepted and a testimonial offered by his employers, the Watch Committee, on 10 June, before they would have heard about his testimony concerning prostitution in Norwich and the vested interest of brewers as magistrates and members of the Watch Committee.[95] Dunne claimed that:

'200 houses it is said are used for the purposes of prostitution … it is difficult to supervise them … some of these houses are kept by returned convicts, or by men who have been convicted of felony; and in many of these low public houses crime is fostered'. [96]

Yet twenty-four years later, in 1877, Simms Reeve, in his testimony before the Lords' Select Committee, was disclaiming any significant link between drinking places and prostitution in Norwich. Confronted by Lord Aberdare with an actual case that had come before the Norwich magistrates a few days earlier, he replied that until now he had been 'unaware that there was any drinking in brothels'; Norwich did not have a problem in this respect.[97] Dunne's 1853 figures may be exaggerated but his version sounds more plausible.

Wicks (1925) also provided other relevant evidence, noting that:

'a colony of disreputable houses were cleared away in 1862 … opposite the 'Golden Ball' and running down from the Castle to Rose Lane'.

He also pointed out that many taverns in the Castle "Dikes" had been swept away in recent years but gave no explanation. In fact, the 'Napier' was closed under the compensation scheme by Morgan in 1909, having had convictions against it in 1904 and 1908 for 'Harbouring Prostitutes', and the 'Cattle Market Inn' lost its licence in 1891 after its landlord was convicted of permitting the premises to be used as a brothel.[98] This was the

area of the market; it had been the site of the public executions that had drawn crowds by the thousands, coming into the city by 'cheap excursions', until the last public hanging in 1867. Here, there was bound to be bought-sex as well as heavy drinking.

Not only sex but death, too, had its place in the public house. As in London and Bradford and other urban centres, the drinking place served the needs of the Norwich coroner for space that could be designated temporarily as 'official' in the aftermath of sudden or unexplained death. Harrison has made the telling points that a modern Englishmen set back in the 1820s would immediately notice the lack of public buildings and that the explanation for this lay in the parsimony of the public authorities.[99] At the beginning of the Victorian period, coroners still had no alternative building in which to hold their inquests other than the public house and the inertia of this traditional practice ensured that inquests were still being held in public houses at the end of the period. The continuation of this practice in Norwich did not escape criticism. The journalist from the *Eastern Daily Press* who reported on the coroner's inquest held at the 'Waterman' in King Street in the parish of St. Julian on February 12, 1900, commented the next day that there had to be:

'more convenient accommodation than the limits of a small room in a private house yesterday created near … (the unhealthy) … Shuttle Alley'.

The coroner himself, Mr. R.W. Ladell, made an appeal to the Corporation of Norwich for better accommodation for holding the coroner's court.[100] Nationally, inquests were being gradually removed from the public house; in London by the 1890s only 8 per cent were held there.[101]

The Coroners' Records for Norwich are missing from 1836 through to 1896, but those records that are extant for 1835 provide an illuminating picture of how extensive a circuit the coroner had in Norwich and how many drinking places were used as locations for

inquests. Although one public house, the 'Trumpet Inn' in St. Stephen, provided the location for around a quarter of the fifty-seven inquests held in 1835, there are another thirty-seven public houses that were used to accommodate the coroner's court.[102] These drinking places were spread across the city of Norwich, located in twenty-six of the forty-three parishes.[103] The inquest would have been not only a matter of crown business but also an opportunity to sell beer. Publicans and brewers had an interest in keeping the connection between drinking place and inquest, just as they had in keeping the link between drinking and other leisure activities. It meant all the more profit from the increase in sales of alcohol.

In conclusion, this analysis of the social importance of the drinking place for those who lived in Victorian Norwich has added yet more weight to Wicks' claim that: 'Practically every social and political function was held at a public house'. [104] Although the political importance of the drinking place did grow less towards the end of the reign, as did the significance of the boxing pub and the connection between pugilism and politics, the social importance of the public house remained extraordinary. Given the accelerating diversification in leisure interests in the second half of the period, and the pivotal role that the public house seems to have played in many of these developments, its social importance may actually have deepened. The public house was a remarkable institution, providing personal and social meaning for so many of the population, serving as one of the key elements in the working of the local economy, and, not least, acting as a critical agency for social cohesion. By 1901, there were still over 600 drinking places in Norwich, the great majority of these owned and controlled by a handful of wealthy brewing families who in turn were key figures in the urban elite of the city. That

urban elite, through its Watch Committee, employed its own police force to ensure, as one of its functions, that there was no serious threat to public order through the consumption of alcohol. The public house could indeed be regarded as a bastion of social order, a bulwark against the threat of revolution. The Temperance movement, however, well meaning its intentions, was unlikely to succeed in its efforts to diminish so powerful a social and economic institution as the public house.

Footnotes to Chapter 3

[1] Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History 1200-1830* (London, 1983), p.4, and Paul Jennings, *The Public House in Bradford, 1770-1970* (Keele, 1995), p.16, both emphasise the value of a research methodology that utilises a variety of sources.
[2] The annual dinner of the Norwich and Norfolk Licensed Victuallers Association, for example, was held at the Norfolk Hotel – see below, p.234.
[3] *Wicks* used these newspapers in the compilation of his volume. I made use of the *EDP* and the *NM* in the *EDP* Library in Norwich as I researched particular issues in the period.
[4] Hawkins was a sociologist based at Toynbee Hall in London; Wicks a Norwich resident. Two other books that have been published more recently on the drinking places of Norwich – Leonard P. Thompson, *Norwich Inns* (Ipswich, 1947) and John Riddington Young, *The Inns and Taverns of Old Norwich* (Norwich, 1975) – both acknowledge their indebtedness to Wicks' work and provide little new material.
[5] Mark Girouard, *Victorian Pubs* (New Haven and London, 1984).
[6] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p.2.
[7] See Appendix 1, pp.347-351 for the mapping of some of these streets and the density of their drinking places.
[8] See Appendix 3, pp.354-365 for some of these surviving photographs. Also see below, p.89, and p.90, Fig. 3.2 for the popularity of billiards.
[9] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p.4.
[10] See Appendix 1, pp.346-349. Also see below, p.72, Table 3.1, for evidence for this differential in profitability from the range of Steward and Patteson public houses in 1894.
[11] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p.7.
[12] See Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, pp.161-162 and R.C. Riley, and Philip Eley, *Public Houses and Beerhouses in Nineteenth Century Portsmouth* (The Portsmouth Papers, No.38, 1983), p.13. For Norwich, see above, pp.7-10.
[13] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, p.54.
[14] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, p.213.
[15] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, p.205.
[16] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, pp.206-207.
[17] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, p.210.
[18] See below, pp.312, 316, 336-337.
[19] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, pp.210-211.
[20] Riley and Eley, *Public Houses in Portsmouth*, p.11.
[21] Riley and Eley, *Public Houses in Portsmouth*, p.11. The lack of alternative public buildings is a critical factor in explaining the social importance of the public house and beerhouse. Workingmen's clubs and societies, and coroners' inquests, required this available space. Martin Daunton's analysis of the funding crisis in Victorian local government (see below, pp.86-87) offers an important insight into the reasons for the continuing dependence on the public space provided by the public house. Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p.9, noted with reference to London: 'Almost all pubs had one or more public rooms, often of very large size, up on the first floor or tacked on to one side'. In Norwich, at least one in ten of the licensed premises had space for billiards (see below, p.89), although the extent to which brewers enlarged the premises they owned remains uncertain. For the development of the music hall from the 'back-room get-together' in the local pub, see Peter Bailey, 'Introduction: Making Sense of Music Hall' in Idem (ed.), *Music Hall: The Business of Pleasure* (Milton Keynes, Philadelphia, 1986), pp.ix-xii. Also see below, p.92 and p.108, note 67. For friendly society meetings, see below, pp.94-95 and p.109, notes 77-81. *Hawkins*, p.312, observed that the "smoke-room" or "porter room"

next to the bar was used for small meetings, and there was often a larger room or hall behind – see below, p.109, note 74.
[22] Riley and Eley, *Public Houses in Portsmouth*, p.12.
[23] Riley and Eley, *Public Houses in Portsmouth*, p.28, note 76.
[24] *Wicks* had as his professed aim: 'to furnish as much information as possible of characters and incidents connected with them (inns and taverns)'. Newspaper files and local periodicals and 'incidents still remembered' provided him with his source material - see Prefatory Note.
[25] *Wicks*, p.11.
[26] *Wicks*, p.11-12.
[27] *Wicks*, pp.101-102.
[28] *Wicks*, pp.60-61. Entries from the First Register of Victuallers Licences have established the length the licence was held and the ownership of public houses, in this instance and in other cases.
[29] *Wicks*, pp.104-105; Thompson, *Norwich Inns*, pp.53-54; Young, *Old Norwich*, p.33.
[30] The brewery family of Morgan therefore owned the public houses of Norwich's leading rival publicans-cum-political 'minders' for over two decades. The Liberal "Cock" Blyth was at the 'Bulls Head' from 1867 to 1872 (see above, p.77), with the Conservative 'Dick' Nickalls resident at the 'Arabian Horse' from 1872 to 1886. For the political affiliations of Norwich brewers, see below, pp.243-244.
[31] *Wicks*, p.108.
[32] See below, pp.320-321.
[33] *Wicks*, pp.79-80.
[34] Jennings, *Public House in Bradford*, p.205.
[35] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p.8.
[36] First Register of Victuallers Licences, 1894.
[37] *Wicks*, p.129; First Register of Victuallers Licences, 1892; NRO, N/TC 7/12, WCM, 1892.
[38] *Wicks*, p.136.
[39] Trevor Fawcett, 'The Norwich Pleasure Gardens', in *Norfolk Archaeology*, XXXV, 1973, pp.382-399. Fawcett's account concentrated on the pre-Victorian associations with the upper and middle classes. He noted, however, the emergence of the 'Greyhound Gardens' from 1829 that 'soon became a favourite with the Norwich working class' (p.396). For its location, see below, p.83, Fig.3.1.
[40] *Wicks*, pp.131-132.
[41] Frank Meeres, *A History of Norwich* (Chichester, 1998), pp.166-167. Meeres noted that the Norwich and Yarmouth Railway opened in 1844; the rail track to Cambridge and London in 1845; and to Ipswich in 1849.
[42] H. Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture' in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1990), II, pp.289-290.
[43] See below, pp.92-94. Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', p.305, noted the competitiveness that was one of the hallmarks of these developments in urban popular culture: '… pub competed against pub, club against club'.
[44] Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', pp.315-316.
[45] Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', p.290.
[46] Neil Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain, 1750-1914* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.15-16.
[47] H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c.1780-1880* (London, 1980), pp.36-51.

[48] M.J. Daunton, *Councillors and tenants: local authority housing in English cities, 1919-1939* (Leicester, 1984), p.4, and Idem, *A Property-Owning Democracy? Housing in Britain* (London, 1987), pp.40-43.
[49] Daunton, *Property Owning*, pp.23-26, 40-43.
[50] Daunton, *Councillors and tenants*, pp.6-9, and Idem, *Property Owning*, pp.26-27.
[51] The annual average in the period 1910-13 for United Kingdom per capita consumption of beer was 26.9 gallons. In the period 1919-25 the annual average was around 18 gallons. See *British Brewing*, pp.30, 339-340.
[52] *Wicks*, p.60.
[53] NRO, PS/10/1, 'Register of Billiard Licences, 1869-1966'.
[54] These details are taken from pages of the Register of Billiard Licences.
[55] Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', pp.295-296.
[56] Twenty of these billiard licences to pubs with off-licences were granted in the 1870s; ten in the 1880s; nineteen in the 1890s; three in 1900/01. The growth of the off-licence business was steady and substantial.
[57] See below, p.90, Fig. 3.2, for the pattern of distribution of billiard licences across the parishes of Norwich in licensed drinking places in 1901. A western Norwich bias is apparent, with a significantly high figure in Heigham. Perhaps billiards was a game more for upwardly mobile suburban workers rather than those who lived in the poorer parishes like St. Julian and St. James.
[58] *Wicks*, p.118.
[59] *Wicks*, p.139.
[60] *Wicks*, p.106.
[61] *Wicks*, p.86. Roger Munting, 'Sport and Games in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' in Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (eds.), *A History of Norwich* (forthcoming), notes that the last report of a cock-fight in the city was in 1823, 'though they might well have continued surreptitiously'.
[62] *Wicks*, pp.85-86.
[63] See above, pp.76-77.
[64] *Wicks*, pp.139-140. Munting, S*port and Games*, argues that the decline of pedestrianism in the last quarter of the century was in part a reaction against 'overt commercialism' and linked with the growing influence of the 'gentleman amateur'. He notes that the Amateur Athletic Association (1881) excluded any who had competed professionally in any sport.
[65] *Wicks*, pp.138-140.
[66] First Register of Victuallers Licences, 1886.
[67] *Wicks*, p.54. The Theatres Act (1843) had allowed the emerging music halls to sell drinks in the auditorium whilst banning their sale in drama houses. For the development of the music hall in Norwich, see Deborah Louise Smith, 'A Comparative Analysis of the Theatre in Yarmouth – a Seaside Resort, with the Theatre in Norwich – a Prosperous City, at the Turn of the Twentieth Century' (M.A. dissertation, UEA, 2002), pp.17-19. Smith, p.42, noted that nationally the music halls, which had been patronised by the poorer classes, started to decline after the Licensing Act (1902) banished drink from the auditorium. Yet Norwich's most successful music hall – the Hippodrome – was not founded until 1903.
[68] *Wicks*, p.114. Wicks commented that this marked 'the commencement of the flower show as we know them today'.
[69] *Wicks*, pp.137-138. The 'Greyhound' pleasure garden and free house in Ber Street (that had flourished from 1829 – see note 39 above) did not survive beyond 1871 when the

licence was dropped and the house pulled down – see First Register of Victuallers Licences, 1871.

[70] *Wicks*, p.118.

[71] *Hawkins*, p.313. Writing in 1910, Hawkins noted that the average annual subscription was 12s 6d, which was supplemented by a prize fund collected from other sources. Accumulated funds were spent on an annual outing to Horning and Ranworth, or very occasionally to Wroxham.

[72] *Hawkins*, p.314.

[73] *Hawkins*, pp.314-316.

[74] *Hawkins*, p.312. Hawkins made two significant points about the public house in Norwich, in contrast to public houses in other cities. First, they were 'smaller and more home-like. There is a bar with room to sit down comfortably, and "smoke-room", or "porter-room" adjoining. This is used for small meetings, and there is often a larger room or hall behind'. Secondly, the landlord 'has usually some other occupation. The house is not his only means of livelihood'. See above, pp.54-58, for an analysis of the issue of publicans with other occupations.

[75] *Hawkins*, pp.312-313.

[76] Steven Cherry, *Doing Different? Politics and the Labour Movement in Norwich 1880-1914* (Norwich, 1989). Cherry argued that the lack of a mass trade union base in Norwich was at least in part due to the durability of Liberalism and the traditional two-party politics that could contain significant class differences (pp.101-103) - see below, Chapter 9, for an analysis of the role of the public house in the traditional political system.

[77] *Hawkins*, pp.302-303.

[78] Brenda Stibbens, 'Friendly societies in Norfolk in the nineteenth century with particular reference to north Norfolk' (M.A. dissertation, UEA, 2001), pp.5, 24-25. Quoting from *The Norfolk News*, Stibbens (p.12) observed that the first lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity was established in Norwich in 1835 "by five intelligent but poor operatives" (*NN*, 31 October 1846), who came to the city from Bradford with the worsted industry.

[79] Stibbens, 'Friendly societies', p.27, quoted from a letter written by Charles Hardwick in *The Odd-Fellows Magazine* (January 1860), p.301.

[80] P.H.J.H. Gosden, *The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961), p.117; Stibbens, 'Friendly societies', p.28, noted that the Vernon Loyal society had £60 of funds invested with the brewers, Messrs Young and Crawshay, who gave them one guinea a year towards their dinner. Quoting from the *Norfolk Chronicle* (11 June, 1870), she also showed that Messrs Morgans were providing a 'liberal annual donation' towards the annual meeting of the Loyal British Friendly society at Cattton.

[81] *Wicks*, p.77, recorded: 'It was at the 'Red Lion' that the Foresters held their first Court in Norwich (Norwich Union, No.2504) introduced from the Lynn and West Norfolk District.' Wicks also observed that 'a prominent figure in the Friendly Society movement, Mr Samuel Daynes … was the first Secretary of the Norwich Licensed Victuallers' Association, formed in September 1854. Its first meeting was at the Boars Head' (p.55). Licensed victuallers like Samuel Daynes must have been trusted, able and dedicated; they were evidently elite members within the working class.

[82] Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', p.331.

[83] *British Brewing*, pp.34-40.

[84] *British Brewing*, pp.35-36.

[85] A.E. Dingle, 'Drink and Working-Class Living Standards in Britain, 1870-1914', *Economic History Review*, XXV, 4 (1972), pp.611, 619-620. See below, pp.170-172.

[86] Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', p.301.

[87] *Lords Intemperance Report*, 1877, First Report, p.112.
[88] *Lords Intemperance Report*, 1877, Second Report, p.87.
[89] *Lords Intemperance Report*, 1877, Second Report, pp.82-83. Simms Reeves' testimony offered an explanation for the supposed sobriety of Norwich: 'I believe that a great deal of the beer in Norwich is very mild, so much so that a great deal of the beer that is drunk is not more than 3d a quart [compared with a national average of 5d a quart – see above, p.96], and it is called "straight", from its being supposed to go right down the throat and leave no effect behind it'. Lord Aberdare, the chairman, commented that there had to be a great deal of drinking of this small beer if the large number of drinking places in Norwich were to maintain themselves. How much beer in Norwich was sold more cheaply remains unclear. Simms Reeve may have exaggerated both the weakness and cheapness of the beer.
[90] R.H. Mottram, 'A Thousand Years in the Life of Norwich Market' in *Norwich Markets Official Handbook* (Cheltenham and London, 1968), p.20.
[91] The Earl of Kimberley noted in 1877 in his questioning of Mr Simms Reeve, the Norwich magistrate: 'I suppose, to some extent, Norwich's large number of public houses is due to the very large number of markets which are held?' 'Yes.' '… A large number of people, not of the ordinary population, congregate there somewhat to an unusual extent?' 'Yes.' (*Lords Intemperance Report*, 1877, Second Report, p.87).
[92] Mottram, *Norwich Market*, p.21; Second Register of Victuallers Licences, 1912.
[93] See above, p.72, Table 3.1. The 'Waterloo Tavern' (132 gallons of spirits) and the 'Tuns' (120 gallons) are two central drinking places that had spirit-drinking customers but their beer sales also remained high. The 'Mancroft' (178 gallons) and the 'Denmark Arms' (118 gallons) in Heigham outside the city walls also had both high sales of spirits and beer, perhaps suggesting that these drinking places all had customers who were Celtic in origin and preferred spirits. The link between Irish navvies, the 'Tuns', and the building of the adjacent Catholic cathedral in Norwich, is made clear in annotations in NRO, BR1/157, 'Steward and Patterson Register of public houses giving licensees, annual sales and profits, 1894-1947'.
[94] Witnesses varied in their perceptions but the general impression is clear: '… drunken boys and girls came into the city on Boxing Day by rail, and after carousing about, left in a worse state than they entered' (*EDP*, 2 January 1900); 'I grant that there were few who came into Norwich drunk on Boxing Day, but for everyone who came in drunk I am sure a hundred went out in that condition … they had mostly got away by nine o'clock …'. The correspondent John Abby, who was the secretary for the Norwich diocese of the Church of England Temperance Society, continued by pointing out that by ten o'clock it was the residents of Norwich who were responsible for the drunkenness that was such a problem (*EDP*, 3 January 1900) - see below, p.213.
[95] NRO, N/TC 7/4, WCM, 10 June 1853. Also see below, p.216, note 34.
[96] First Report for the House of Commons Select Committee on Uniform System of Police in England, Wales and Scotland, *PP* (1852-53), XXXVI.I, p.121.
[97] *Lords Intemperance Report*, 1877, Second Report, p.85.
[98] *Wicks*, pp.62-64; First Register of Victuallers Licences, 1891; Second Register of Victuallers Licences, 1904, 1908, 1909.
[99] *Drink*, p.54.
[100] *EDP*, 13 February 1900.
[101] *Drink*, p.327.
[102] NRO, CASE 6a/30-42, 'Norwich Coroners' Inquests, 1824-1836'. See below, p.103, Table 3.2.
[103] See below, p.104, Fig. 3.3.
[104] See above, p.76.