

The spatial configuration of class solidarity in London's West End 1792-1939

Introduction

For more than two hundred years after the Glorious Revolution, the British aristocracy gained control of 'every aspect of government, both executive and legislative. They dominated the Cabinet, the highest ranks of the armed forces, the civil service and, to a lesser extent, the judiciary'.¹ During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a shift in their centre of gravity from that of a rural elite, to a group whose influence was mediated increasingly through the manipulation of the levers of power embedded in the urban system. This urbanization of their consciousness was coupled with, and partly responsible for, a scale jump in their collectivity. By 1850 it was no longer true that 'society' owed its allegiance to the local 'county' circles. Bush suggests that for the aristocratic class there developed in the nineteenth century a nationwide, shared ethos and culture.² This was fostered on the proverbial playing fields of the nascent public schools, but it is the thesis of this paper that the spatiality of the West End of London was also a major factor in what amounts to a process of class formation for the disparate social factions which were eventually moulded into a coalition of the British ruling classes. Such was the binding quality of the social cement manufactured in the West End that it was able to withstand the aggressive solvent of industrial capitalism for something approaching a century.

In particular it will be argued that the West End of London was a class-conscious social artefact constructed to suit the needs of a very small group, whose power was of national and international significance. The West End as a space-time phenomenon was their creation, with consequences for the essence of urban growth in London. The aim is to suggest that the residential segregation of the *beau monde* was a major factor in their reproduction, and the

furtherance of their influence. Our contention will be that a study of the substantial data base of available address information can illuminate the consumption of urban space by coalitions of the ruling class and therefore increase our knowledge of their mode of dominant behaviour. A magnifying glass held over the changing morphology of this residential district also refracts light from the underlying processes of social relations.

The argument of this paper will be that the persistence of the elite residential districts of London is best understood in terms of class interests and perceptions. The evolving social topography was inextricably linked to the changing fortunes of the ruling class. The most appropriate theoretical context therefore seems to be the oeuvre of the various marxist geographers who have written on what Soja calls the socio-spatial dialectic.³

In these terms top residential districts are areas of 'situated social struggle'.⁴ They are concretized spatialities, which are the elitist material form of biased social structures and relations. Lefebvre succinctly described this as socially produced space, which reproduces and transforms social structures through its innate spatial contingency.⁵ Thus the West End was commodified from the seventeenth century, packets of planned space wrapped in a new social meaning of separateness, produced by aristocratic estate owners who were virtual spatial monopolists in west London, and consumed by a miscellaneous variety of people who, by their very proximity and frequent social contacts, were over two centuries welded into a coalition of mutual interests that might approximate to a 'class'. They dominated national affairs from this fortified stockade, without which British history might have been very different.

The paper opens with a familiar account of the 'production' of the West End space by estate owners, followed by an interpretation of its consumption by the people listed in so-called 'fashionable court directories'. This data source is then described and a series of maps provides the raw material for a commentary on the ebb and flow of the boundaries of fashionable London from 1792 to 1939. The final sections discuss the theoretical implications of the findings and propose an agenda of supplementary research.

The emergence of the West End

We are fortunate to have a substantial literature on the early growth of the West End. Power uses three sources: Stow's late sixteenth-century *Survey of London*; the parliamentary surveys of property confiscated during the Commonwealth; and late seventeenth-century hearth tax returns.⁶ He is able to show that the *bon ton* was already established here in the western suburbs growing between 1550 and 1650. The great mansions of the nobility lined the busy route along the Strand between the City of London and Westminster and,

generally speaking, houses in the west were larger and better constructed than those in east London or Southwark; although the high proportion of Westminster people who lived in shacks which fell below the tax threshold does suggest that this was still a socially heterogeneous area.⁷

Stone dates the congregation of high society in west London to the later, post-Restoration, post-fire era.⁸ Here were available, for a select minority, the luxuries of piped water, street lighting and sanitation, while a wider circle participated in the cultural and leisure activities. The developing social scene was also a factor, as were the proximity of the national administrative function in Westminster and the nascent financial markets in the City. By the late seventeenth century most of the landed class had moved to the west, but a majority of the merchants involved in trade and commerce, many of whom were fabulously wealthy in their own right, remained in the City close to their work.⁹ Vance posits a model with dual foci of merchant's town and court settlement which fits this situation well, at least until the end of the nineteenth century when the merchants also left the City, either for leafy suburbs or to join the aristocracy in the West End.¹⁰

A few aristocratic families had been compiling London estates since the Reformation by purchase, marriage or royal grant, and it is not surprising that they found the west more attractive than the south or east. Environmentally it was more salubrious: in particular the prevailing westerly wind minimized smoke pollution, which became a chronic negative externality elsewhere in the metropolis. In addition, physical proximity to the nearby court and government was prized both for its status connotations and for its potentially enhanced access to the ear of the powerful. By the eighteenth century large tracts of land were owned by these landlords, whose policies in the West End amounted to an attempt to monopolize space. They rarely engaged directly in development themselves, most leasing out their proprietorial rights to speculative developers in the time-honoured manner of the *rentier*, but it was very largely their land on which the new suburbs were constructed.¹¹

By 1700 the nobility and gentry had achieved a measure of separateness in their own residential location in such pockets of privilege as the Earl of Bedford's pioneering Covent Garden (1631), the Earl of Leicester's Leicester Fields (1635), the Earl of Southampton's Bloomsbury Square (1681), and Lincoln's Inn Fields and Red Lion Square (1684). Later they moved further west to the Earl of St Albans' newly developed St James's Square (1663), the Earl of Scarborough's Hanover Square (1717), the City of London's nearby Conduit Mead estate (1723), Lord Berkeley's Berkeley Square (1736), or north to the Earl of Oxford's Cavendish Square (1724).¹²

The physical morphology of these developments, so unlike the previous urban texture of London, was conducive to social change. Whereas the proximity of rich and poor, powerful and powerless,

landed and trading wealth, residential and commercial land-use, was taken for granted in the huffer mugger of the pre-industrial City's streets, courts and alleyways, here in the planned environment of the new age there was deliberate social distancing. Each estate had a focus in a central square, with the mansion or palace of the potentate, surrounded by the lesser houses of his clients.¹³ Many were also planned as communities with a church, a market and other public facilities.¹⁴

Residential segregation was certainly a goal of polite society after the Restoration, but Schwarz's use of income tax returns demonstrates that it was still incomplete in the London of 1798.¹⁵ There were no parishes with a majority of the population paying £5 or more in tax, and only the City Within, St Anne Soho, St Paul Covent Garden, and St George Bloomsbury reached 30 per cent or more. The degree of segregation found depends to a certain extent upon the scale of analysis. Within the West End, for instance, there would have been an intricate tessellation of social patterns, but even at the citywide level there is discernible a clear pattern of wealthier parishes in the peripheral north and west, with relative poverty in the east. Unfortunately the data are missing for several key districts, but Schwarz is sufficiently confident to assert that 'in no other major European city of the time was so large a proportion of the built up area subjected to such heavy middle-class pressure'.¹⁶

The production of elite residential space: aristocratic estate development

'Images of knowable and affective communities can be marketed as commodities. That technique is often used in association with speculative housing development'.¹⁷ This is the supply side of the housing equation, but in the West End the demand side was also important. Harvey describes the demand for life-style and the construction of community as post-1945 phenomena but they were certainly available for the super rich at a much earlier date.¹⁸ What was the west London square about if not the planned combination of a micro-scale semi-rural amenity and an inward looking locality of like-minded people?

Why did people of high rank want to live in what, by the beginning of the twentieth century, amounted to an 'inner city' locality? Why did they not share the urge to move to the suburbs shown by the middle class? On the whole the accommodation in the West End was spacious and carefully planned, but we must not forget that it was not much inhabited throughout the year. Many of the seasonal immigrants had their own substantial piece of the Arcadian idyll back at their country seats and regarded their town house as a merely a convenience. According to Worsley-Gough:

Society, with its roots in the real country, was never concerned with the suburbs until it began to include people whose roots were in London. When this element in society was established, the motorcar had arrived to facilitate short journeys . . .¹⁹

The influence of the ground landlords in west London has been perhaps the major factor in establishing and maintaining its character. The Grosvenor family, who developed their 40 hectares in Mayfair (figure 1) from 1721 to the 1780s, exhibited the greatest *éclat* in property speculation. They were relatively late on the scene, obtaining their estate by marriage in 1677, but they certainly made the best of their opportunity, eventually accumulating one of the country's largest private fortunes. This they did by creating the city's most prestigious residential district, which brought them substantial recurrent income without too large a capital outlay.

In a splendidly detailed volume of research, Sheppard has outlined the evolution of the Grosvenors' portion of Mayfair.²⁰ It seems there was little co-ordination of leasing at first and surprisingly lax control over the quality of the houses built, other than that they should be 'good and substantial'. Two hundred and ninety builders, architects and suppliers were involved in the construction of 1,375 houses, along with stables and other buildings. This multitude of developers, speculators and contractors militated against a unity of architectural style, but this does not appear to have been a disadvantage because right from the outset the estate attracted a very select clientele and it soon became *à la mode* to live in Mayfair. Of the first tenants in Grosvenor Square 69 per cent were titled.

Mayfair was not uniformly desirable, however. The continuation until 1783 of Tyburn's public executions, at the junction of the Bayswater and Edgware Roads, reduced the attraction of the north-west, and the northern strip along the busy trunk route of Oxford Street was never popular. The largest houses, with the most exalted tenants, were on Grosvenor Square, Grosvenor and Upper Grosvenor Streets, and Brook and Upper Brook Streets, with outliers at the southern end of Park Street, the south of South Audley Street, Dunraven and Hereford Streets, and later on in Park Lane. Sheppard uses taxation survey and poll book evidence to describe the changing social and occupational status of the inhabitants.²¹ Surprisingly perhaps, in both 1750 and 1789/90 over half of the householders were engaged in retailing, crafts, construction or transport. In addition there would have been a large population of servants living in. The largest establishments had upwards of twenty servants.

The Grosvenors seem to have been single-minded and at times ruthless in the pursuit of the long-term interests of their estate. Their policy, and its execution by their agents, was sufficiently astute and flexible over the years for Mayfair to maintain its pre-

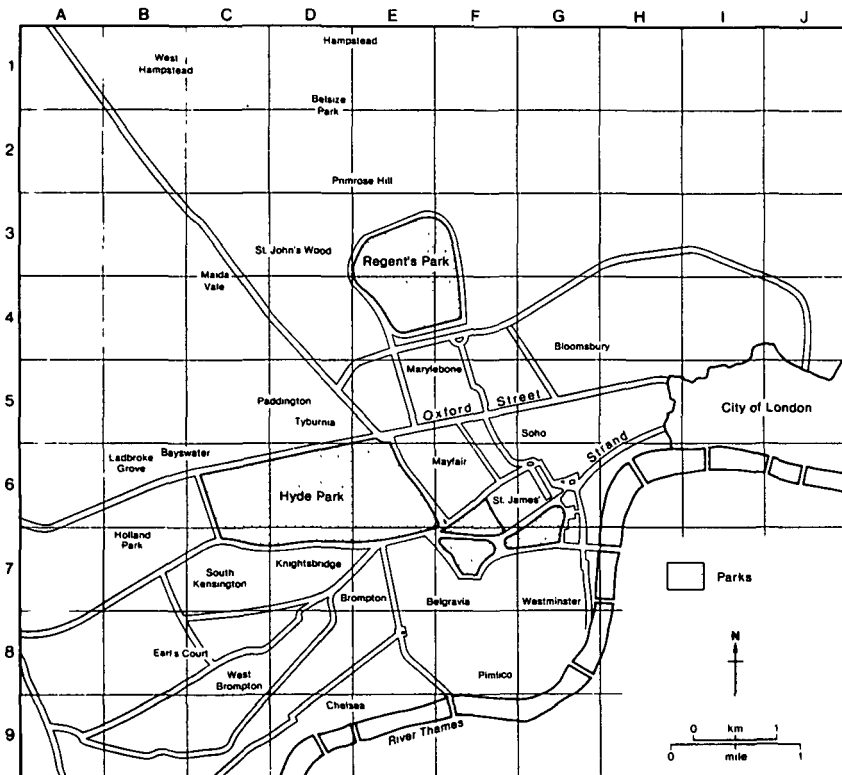


Figure 1: London's West End: location map

eminent position in London society throughout the nineteenth century and it has only been relatively recently, since the Second World War, that it has lost its residential character and been transformed into a high-class office district with a leavening of five star hotels and foreign embassies.²²

Other estate owners sought to emulate the Grosvenors. Summerson argues that their efforts were better organized from the late eighteenth century onwards.²³ During a building boom Hans Town was created on Lord Cadogan's Chelsea estate (1771), and the Duke of Manchester completed his square in 1776 as a means of financing the construction of Manchester House. There soon followed the Duke of Portland's Portland Place in 1774, and Baron Southampton's Fitzroy Square (1791). The Duke of Bedford's Bedford Square (1776) and Bloomsbury estate are among the best known developments of this era.

Olsen has demonstrated how estate policies varied.²⁴ The Bedford and Grosvenor estates were, he suggests, the two extremes of well-thought-out strategies. For example, much of the early architecture

in the Grosvenors' other West End estate, Belgravia, has been considered conservative and repetitive and a more vigorous estate policy was not initiated until after 1845, by the second Marquess.²⁵ After that, rebuilding became more common when leases fell in. The estate also decided to provide a range of buildings to suit varied pockets including working people, although the latter were kept at arm's length in blocks of model dwellings rather than in back street mews. As we have seen, by no means all of the estate appealed to the fashionable world. Pimlico, for instance, was always low on the social ladder:

If indeed they could have achieved Eaton Square, or a street leading out of Eaton Square — if they could have crept on to the hem of the skirt of Belgravia — the bride would have been delighted . . . Her geographical knowledge of Pimlico had not been perfect, and she had very nearly fallen into a fatal error. But a friend had kindly intervened. 'For heaven's sake, my dear, don't let him take you anywhere beyond Eccleston Square'.²⁶

The Duke of Bedford, on the other hand, was determined to prevent excessive change in Bloomsbury, thereby preserving an existing atmosphere. He faced the greater challenge because of the retreat of the fashionable world from this quarter, to be replaced by the offices and consulting rooms of professional men.²⁷

The great landlords, although they certainly had advantage of a long-term development objective without the smallholder's worry about an immediate return on investment, were not immune from market forces.²⁸ Michael Thompson puts this well for Hampstead:

In the Hampstead case the property boundaries were decisive in marking the line between residential sectors of sharply contrasting characters. But by itself the property structure probably would have been unable to produce the end-result of the wealthy suburb. Landowners, developers, and builders might propose, but their customers disposed. In Victorian London it was almost an everyday occurrence for the comfortable middle-class clients to fail to show up to take the houses designed to attract them; it was standard routine for speculations to go sour for this reason . . .²⁹

Here was an early example of demand-side urbanization.³⁰ Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grandiose plans for neighbourhoods of glittering palaces had to be scaled down when demand was insufficient. An instance of this was the 'Cavendish Square fiasco'.³¹ A plan for the development of the Cavendish-Harley estate in Marylebone fields was drawn up in 1719, but building was interrupted by the South Sea Bubble and was still incomplete fifty years later. A respectable location and aristocratic ownership seem to have been both necessary but not sufficient

conditions for high-class residential development. The Bedford estate is acknowledged to have been consistently the most efficient and vigilant in London, and yet both Covent Garden and Bloomsbury were left high and dry by the drift of the *haute monde* westwards. By comparison Mayfair and Belgravia were perfectly positioned to receive them.

The nineteenth century saw the development of the Grosvenors' Belgravia. Plans had been drawn up for this area in the eighteenth century but had been shelved. A new impetus was given by the conversion of Buckingham House into Buckingham Palace which began in 1821. Belgrave Square (1825), Eaton Square (1827), and Lowndes Square (1837) eventually became an alternative to Mayfair, facilitated by the assiduous work of builder Thomas Cubitt.³² Much of the ground was low lying and marshy. Cubitt used spoil excavated from the St Katharine's dock to raise the ground level.³³

At the micro scale, the West End was far from homogeneous. Booth's maps show slums in Westminster, and there were estates which seem to have specialized in working-class housing.³⁴ Portland Town on the Howard de Walden estate was one such, surrounded to north and south by expensive housing. Other examples are the Marquess of Northampton's estate in Clerkenwell and the Somers estate in St Pancras. Presumably their owners, guessing that the constrained demand for high rental, low density housing would be insufficient to guarantee the success of yet more up-market development, calculated that low rental, high density accommodation would at least yield a return.

The social alps of London may have been found in the West End, but suburban foothills and some isolated peaks were certainly established by the end of the nineteenth century. Figure 2 shows the streets in Charles Booth's survey associated with the wealthy class employing three or more servants and living in houses rated at £100 or more.³⁵ These were generally on high ground close to a major road. North of the river he noted Hampstead, Highbury Hill, Highbury Park, Clissold Park and Upper Clapton. In the south there was an outer ring comprised of Putney's 'new estates of good houses' in the west; clusters of the 'well-to-do' around Clapham and Tooting Bec Commons; ribbon development along the routeways ascending from south central London, such as Brixton Hill, Denmark Hill, Herne Hill, and Champion Hill where 'with few exceptions the houses . . . are very large, mostly standing in their own grounds' and 'inhabited by a wealthy class'; and in the east Brockley Hill and Blackheath.³⁶

The consumption of space: London society and the Season

The London social Season was a vital component to the life of the West End. It was greatly expanded from the 1820s onwards and

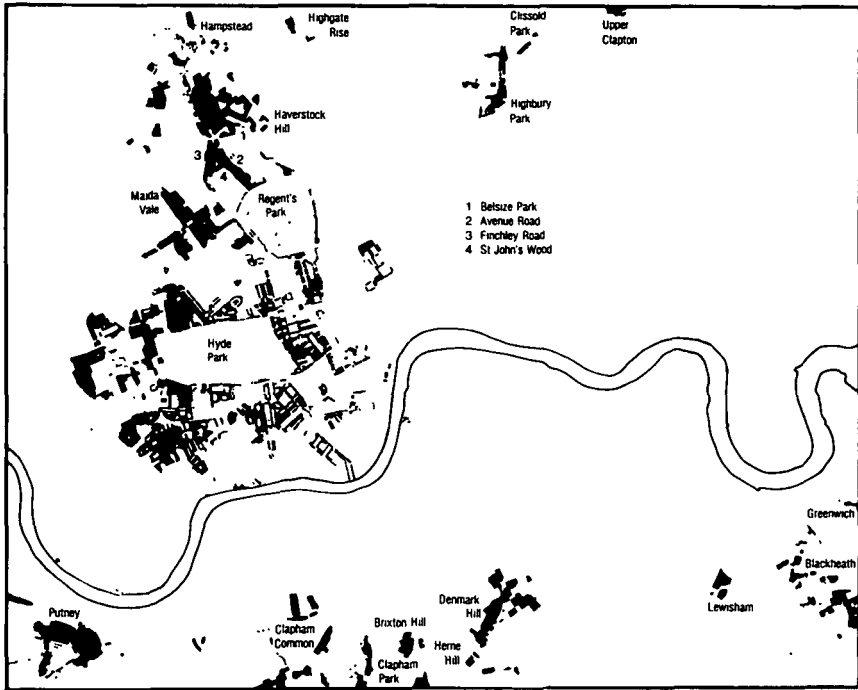


Figure 2: Wealthy residential streets recorded in Booth's (1902-3) survey

reached its opulent peak at the end of the nineteenth century. During the few short weeks from May to July there was a dazzling social round of receptions, garden parties, dinners, salons, soirées, levees, balls, fêtes, opera, horse racing, presentations at court and many other events. This was the time for society weddings, for making family alliances, conducting business, and for politics. Shepard has reconstructed the migrations of the fashionable world from the comings and goings recorded in *The Morning Post*.³⁷ Arrivals from the country began in earnest in the last week of January, and the net population peaked in May, then falling away steadily during the summer. Other influences on people's movements would have been the sittings of Parliament (February-August) and the law courts.

The major events of the social calendar were compressed into a few weeks and scheduled mainly at venues in the West End. In addition there were countless minor private functions from dinner parties to house calls. Several engagements a day were *de rigueur* for the socially ambitious and even those with private carriages would have found it impossible to participate fully if they had lived more than a short distance from the others in their circle. Moreover to reside at an unfashionable address was to risk social ostracism.

Geography played a vital part in making the Season what it was . . . Except for a few special events — the race meetings at Epsom, Ascot and Goodwood, the Regatta at Henley, and so forth — almost every event in the calendar occurred in London, in the West End, and in certain parts of the West End at that.³⁸

The desire for the ascribed status of attending fashionable events, and the hoped for resultant favourable marriages and social alliances, was a significant motive force in the residential locational behaviour of high society. As a result the fashionable residential area was remarkably compact.

A proportion of the houses would have been occupied for only a few weeks each year, however. The West End was in effect a part-time place, but it was nevertheless vital for the mutuality of a class which was otherwise widely dispersed. The privileged life-style of the rich meant that they were less constrained in their movements than any other group, yet constrained they still were, by the technology of the age. After the First World War the telephone and the motor car no doubt eroded the need for such a tightly circumscribed spatial phenomenon, but the geographical structure of the West End in the nineteenth century was at least partly dictated by the need for convenient but intensive social contact over a short period of time.

Leonore Davidoff argues that the upper echelons of Victorian society developed a highly structured and complex set of access rituals and rules of etiquette to protect themselves from encroachment by bourgeois interlopers.³⁹ She suggests that, in the absence of any place for them in public life, it became the role of women to act as arbiters of social acceptance or rejection. Top hostesses were accepted as power brokers.⁴⁰ It was at their discretion to bring together politicians for the informal social contact which could make or break a career, and their patronage was often relied upon for introducing prospective marriage partners. Summerson points out that many town houses were designed with entertainment rather than domestic convenience in mind. Provision for drawing-rooms, ballrooms, and dining-rooms was generous.⁴¹

Some lived in magnificent houses, but for many their London address was merely a convenient base in town from which to sample the delights of society, or to press for preferment in the nearby Court of St James. Summerson argues that the aristocracy lavished more investment on their country residences.⁴² The West End was a temporary address in their leisured progress around Britain and the continent. Furnished houses could be taken for just a few weeks or months, and luxurious lodging houses and private hotels were available from the late eighteenth century onwards. Nevertheless, the availability of suitable accommodation was a significant constraint on the growth and structure of the West End. The rapid growth of the upper middle class in the nineteenth century necessitated the pioneering of new areas to the north-west and west of the core.

'In contradistinction to bourgeois wealth which was expected to have a productive use, aristocratic wealth was ideally devoted to consumption, property accumulation, hospitality and charity'.⁴³ London was a self-conscious social experience and a theatre of conspicuous consumption. Extravagance was an ineluctable component of the social scene. It was directly responsible for the creation of many seasonal jobs for domestic servants, craftsmen making luxury items, and suppliers of food and other household necessities.⁴⁴ The multiplier effect of lavish expenditure by a few thousand members of the ruling class in London is as yet uncalculated but no doubt significant. This small, select group was indirectly responsible for supporting tens of thousands of workers. An apposite example is Mayfair, the heartland of aristocratic privilege, where only 10 per cent of the population was upper class but where the other 90 per cent were dependent as their servants, the manufacturers and retailers of their goods, or as tenants of the Grosvenor and other estates. No doubt deference here would have been as much the rule as on the Duke's country estate in Cheshire, but the great landlords are likely to have shown less of the reciprocal feeling of responsibility for the welfare of their urban tenants than had been traditional in the rural ethos of the landed aristocracy.⁴⁵

The Season was enjoyed equally by men and women, although hostesses seem to have acted as initiators. The circles of money and power were, however, almost exclusively male preserves. Residents of the West End were conveniently placed for the law courts and parliament, and the financial markets of the City of London were not far to the east. In their leisure time the great and the good would assemble in gentlemen's clubs, which during the nineteenth century became increasingly important meeting places.⁴⁶ Clubs had been popular before, but this exclusive, patrician variant was new. For Besant 'without doubt the greatest social force of modern times has been the club'.⁴⁷ He counted twenty-five in 1837 and ninety-eight in 1900, including twelve specializing in political affairs, five for universities, seven for women, eleven for games and leisure pursuits, and four for hunting and sport. The majority were located in St James's and Piccadilly. These were conservative and elitist institutions very much dedicated to the aristocratic ethos. Over the years they have been alternative forums for the exchange of political ideas and nodal points for the informal marshalling of opinions on a wide range of issues. It is difficult to overestimate their influence on the maintenance of the *status quo*. In most of these clubs 'no person engaged in trade, not even a great merchant, could hope for admission', but attitudes were liberalized by the beginning of the present century.⁴⁸

The eventual decline of aristocratic influence on British life was due to a long and steady sapping of strength: economic, political, cultural.⁴⁹ The 1832 and 1868 Reform Acts, for instance, undermined their power in Parliament, as at the county level did the 1888 reform of local government. The repeal of the Corn Laws in the 1840s

was a blow to the sustained value of the agricultural output of their estates, and many families were financially embarrassed by the great agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s. The introduction of death duties in 1894, and the uprating of that tax in 1909, was in some cases the straw that broke the aristocratic camel's back.

Meanwhile the currency of the landed plutocracy was devalued by an influx from the mid 1880s onwards of newly made peers from political and commercial life, whose group interests were different.⁵⁰ Other wealthy industrialists, by adopting the manners of the ruling class, were able to gain access to clubs for themselves, public schools for their children, and residence in the West End.

The light of London society was dimmed towards the end of the nineteenth century, partly by the expense of keeping up appearances and partly by subtle changes in the mores of the rich. The court of Victoria and Albert had been an altogether duller affair than its predecessors. Improvements in transport and communications had made it much easier for bilateral contacts to be made without the need for a gathering in London. The capital's function as an assembly point for people and a channel for information was to an extent undermined. This was exacerbated in the early twentieth century when the motor car revolutionized local travel and made it possible to live conveniently several kilometres from the centre of town. This is when the Surrey 'cocktail belt' grew in importance and the extraordinarily clear clustering of the upper classes around Hyde Park and northwards to Hampstead began to dissolve.⁵¹ The phenomenon of the West End then entered a new phase.

Court directories

Dennis points to the difficulty of establishing class identity through people's behaviour and consciousness because suitable records are unavailable.⁵² But for London's elite the fashionable court directory *was* an expression of their common identity and a convenient source of information for those who wished to interact socially. The correlation of names between different directory series (table 1) suggests a relative clarity of auto-identification, which for our purposes can be translated into the spatial dimension of an identifiable core area.

The history of London directories began in 1677 with Samuel Lee's *A Collection of the Names of the Merchants Living in and About the City of London*.⁵³ It was not until 1792, however, with the publication of Patrick Boyle's *Fashionable Court Guide*, that a specialist listing of aristocratic west London was available.⁵⁴ At 3,700 names there was nothing outstanding about its size, but the format was unusual for a London directory. It was a specialist 'court' directory in that only the names and addresses of those likely to move in court circles were recorded.

Despite early financial difficulties, Boyle's directory was a long-

Table 1: A comparison of four London court directories in 1860

| Sample compared with | | Boyle % | Sample taken from | |
|----------------------|---|---------|-------------------|--------------|
| | | | Royal Red % | Royal Blue % |
| Boyle | 1 | - | 58 | 68 |
| | 2 | - | 36 | 26 |
| | 3 | - | 4 | 6 |
| | 4 | - | 2 | 0 |
| Royal Red | 1 | 86 | - | 73 |
| | 2 | 13 | - | 15 |
| | 3 | 1 | - | 8 |
| | 4 | 0 | - | 4 |
| Royal Blue | 1 | 85 | 76 | - |
| | 2 | 14 | 19 | - |
| | 3 | 1 | 4 | - |
| | 4 | 0 | 1 | - |

Key

1 Address details identical

2 Name and address recorded in one directory but not the other

3 Name recorded but different address

4 Address the same but name details different

Note: Sample size 3 × 100 addresses.*Source:* P.J. Atkins, 'The compilation and reliability of London directories', *London Journal*, 14 (1989), 17-28.

term success and continued publication until 1925. Editions came out in January and April, the latter for the social Season. These were genuinely revised editions and must have entailed the investment of considerable labour to produce. This necessary research and the class of intended clientele are reflected in the cover price of 3/- (15p) in 1792, rising to 5/- in 1818. After that the price was kept steady for nearly a century, partly as a result of competition from imitators such as T. Gardiner & Son's *Royal Blue Book* (1822-1939) and *Webster's Royal Red Book* (1847-1939). Table 2 shows data on price and coverage for these three series.

How comprehensive were these directories? Did they list only the aristocracy, or did they bridge the social chasm between landed and commercial wealth? Both questions are difficult to answer without very detailed research. One preliminary conclusion of the present author is that the editors of court directories were not consistent in their policies of compilation. Table 1 shows, from samples of 100 names and addresses drawn from each of the 1860 editions, that the degree of overlap was substantial, but far from perfect. These variations suggest caution in the interpretation of the spatial pattern of addresses.

At the national scale Beckett identifies a titled elite of about 1,400 in 1800, rising to 4,900 in 1900.⁵⁵ This compares with 5,500 and 21,700 London addresses respectively in Boyle.⁵⁶ Where the boundary of eligibility for inclusion in the directory lay is problematic. No doubt it varied with editorial whim, but it is certain that all of the

Table 2: Three specialist court directories

| | Boyle's Court Guide | | | Royal Blue Book | | | Royal Red Book | | |
|------|---------------------|--------|---------|-----------------|--------|---------|----------------|--------|---------|
| | Price | Names | Streets | Price | Names | Streets | Price | Names | Streets |
| 1792 | 3/- | 3,000 | 300 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1795 | 3/- | 4,000 | 300 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1800 | 3/- | 6,000 | 400 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1805 | 4/6d | 7,000 | 400 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1810 | 4/6d | 8,000 | 400 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1815 | 5/- | 8,000 | 400 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1820 | 5/- | 8,000 | 400 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1825 | 5/- | 8,000 | 500 | 5/- | 8,000 | 400 | - | - | - |
| 1830 | 5/- | 10,000 | 600 | 5/- | 11,000 | 500 | - | - | - |
| 1835 | 5/- | 12,000 | 600 | 5/- | 13,000 | 500 | - | - | - |
| 1840 | 5/- | 14,000 | 700 | 5/- | 14,000 | 600 | - | - | - |
| 1845 | 5/- | 17,000 | 700 | 5/- | 15,000 | 700 | - | - | - |
| 1850 | 5/- | 19,000 | 800 | 5/- | 18,000 | 900 | 3/- | 26,000 | 900 |
| 1855 | 5/- | 20,000 | 900 | 5/- | 23,000 | 1,200 | 4/- | 27,000 | 1,100 |
| 1860 | 5/- | 21,000 | 800 | 5/- | 24,000 | 1,200 | 4/- | 30,000 | 1,100 |
| 1865 | 5/- | 23,000 | 800 | 5/- | 26,000 | 1,200 | 5/- | 31,000 | 1,100 |
| 1870 | 5/- | 24,000 | 800 | 5/- | 28,000 | 1,100 | 5/- | 32,000 | 1,200 |
| 1875 | 5/- | 24,000 | 800 | 5/- | 30,000 | 1,100 | 5/- | 33,000 | 1,300 |
| 1880 | 5/- | 24,000 | 800 | 5/- | 32,000 | 1,100 | 5/- | 33,000 | 1,100 |
| 1885 | 5/- | 25,000 | 800 | 5/- | 33,000 | 1,200 | 5/- | 33,000 | 1,100 |
| 1890 | 5/- | 25,000 | 800 | 5/- | 35,000 | 1,200 | 5/- | 34,000 | 1,300 |
| 1895 | 5/- | 25,000 | 800 | 5/- | 37,000 | 1,200 | 5/- | 32,000 | 1,100 |
| 1900 | 5/- | 26,000 | 800 | 5/- | 39,000 | 1,200 | 5/- | 34,000 | 1,200 |
| 1905 | 5/- | 27,000 | 800 | 5/- | 40,000 | 1,300 | 5/- | 38,000 | 1,200 |
| 1910 | 5/- | 25,000 | 800 | 5/- | 43,000 | 1,400 | 5/- | 38,000 | 1,200 |
| 1915 | 5/- | 28,000 | 800 | 5/- | 40,000 | 1,300 | 5/- | 36,000 | 1,200 |
| 1920 | 7/6d | 24,000 | 800 | 7/6d | 36,000 | 1,300 | 7/6d | 30,000 | 1,200 |
| 1925 | 7/6d | 25,000 | 800 | 7/6d | 32,000 | 1,200 | 7/6d | 30,000 | 1,200 |
| 1930 | - | - | - | 7/6d | 35,000 | 1,200 | 7/6d | 34,000 | 1,200 |
| 1935 | - | - | - | 7/6d | 36,000 | 1,200 | 7/6d | 33,000 | 1,200 |

Notes: 1. Names rounded to the nearest 1,000. 2. Streets rounded to the nearest 100.

Source: Atkins, *The Directories of London*.

fashionable directories included large numbers of socially ambitious 'upper middle class' people.

Even if the editors had a clear idea of the class and status of person they wanted to record, there were technical problems which always limited their listings to a compromise with perfection. Their canvassers went from door to door asking servants about the movements of their employers, but this information was sometimes extracted improperly:

Eliza Boyle respectfully cautions the nobility and gentry against a man, who for great and repeated misconduct she has discharged from her employ. He is about 5 feet, 3 or 4 inches high, has a bald head, thick lips, and talks very fast. Having heard that this man has in various places, made a demand of money for insertions in the court guide, E.B. begs to state that the persons employed by her have positive orders, under pain of dismissal, to make no charge for any insertion or alteration they may receive.⁵⁷

This is interesting because it implies that a few people were anxious enough to be recorded that they were willing to part with a fee.

Inevitably an editor would wish to restrict expenditure on data collection. One tempting corner to cut was probably that outlying, scattered locations would have been ignored. Our impression of a tight cluster of the fashionable world around Hyde and Regent's Parks is therefore no doubt exaggerated. No addresses south of the Thames were ever listed by Boyle.

Stability and change in the spatial structure of the West End

A constant theme in the historical evolution of the West End has been the close juxtaposition of wealth and poverty. Even in the late nineteenth century, by which time residential segregation was far advanced, there were slums both within and immediately adjacent to the West End. A symbiosis seems to have existed between rich and poor, who needed each other through the market for domestic service and casual labour, with an interpenetration of the upper, formal circuit of the economy, and the informal street trading sector.⁵⁸ The rich were never in a majority, even in the very core of the West End. In 1860, for instance, the 18,000 addresses listed in Boyle's directory would have represented no more than about 8-9 per cent of the total population of the 17 parishes comprising the West End.⁵⁹

The West End was not a uniform sea of privilege lapping on shores of deprivation. The sheer scale of London from an early date, for instance, encouraged a multiplicity of both high- and low-level economic and social functions. Some of these were concentrated in zones of specialized service provision in or on the fringes of the West End, such as lawyers in the area of the Inns of Court, retailing along Oxford Street, entertainment from Drury Lane to the Haymarket, vice between Regent Street and the Strand, gentlemen's clubs in St James's, and administration in Whitehall.⁶⁰ Housing therefore had to compete with these and other land uses.

Throughout our period the fashionable West End seems to have been a spatial envelope which was open to the south-west but closed to the north-east. New, expensive residential districts were established along the broad frontier with agriculture and horticulture, but very little housing seems to have been gentrified from the working-or lower middle-class suburbs. At the rear, bordering the City, there was a westwards-creeping annexation of land for non-residential use. This eventually overwhelmed estates such as those in Bloomsbury, and Olsen shows that, by the 1870s, hotels, lodging houses, professional chambers, offices and banks were proliferating in the very heartland of West End.⁶¹ By the 1890s 'it was clear that the days of Mayfair and St James's as residential districts were numbered'.⁶²

Continuity and change are both visible in the spatial structure of the fashionable West End. The continuity derives from a remarkably

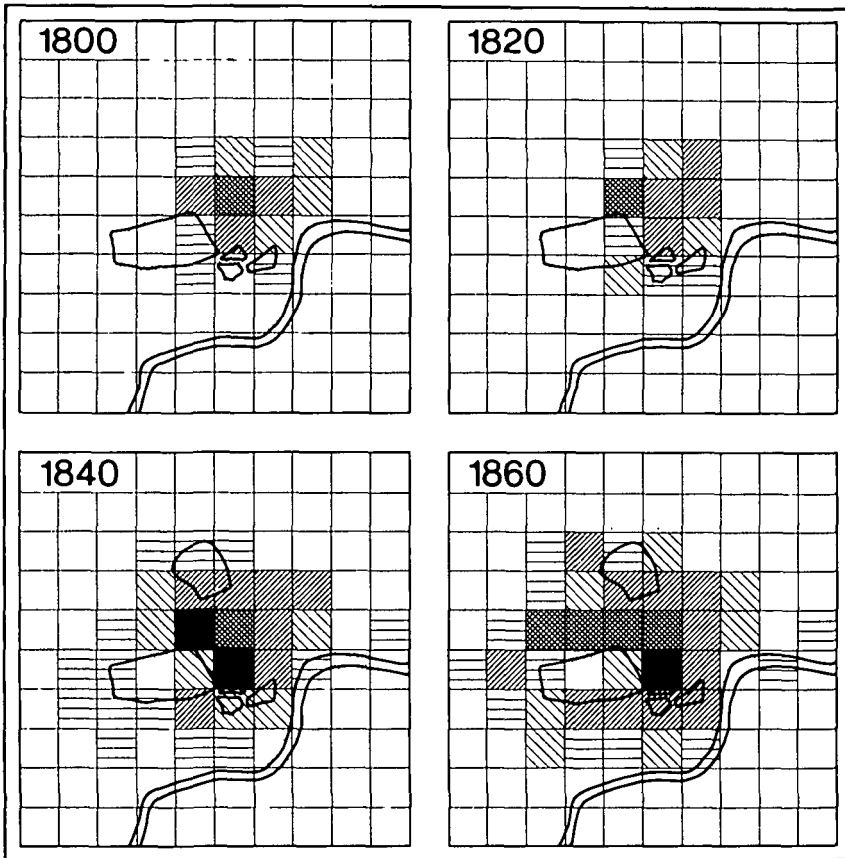


Figure 3: Fashionable addresses in the West End, 1800-1860
Source: Boyle's fashionable court guide.

stable core area, which remained among the best addresses in London throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The change was visible in the peripheral suburbs, which ebbed and flowed in their popularity, and in the inner city, where even the best organized estates suffered an irreversible decline. It is this fluid spatial structure to which we now turn.

In 1800 (figure 3) every map square on the western fringe of the built-up area had at least some fashionable addresses, except perhaps Chelsea west of Hans Town. The modal cell was F5, which covers central Oxford Street and Cavendish Square, taking in Harley Street, Hanover Square and New Bond Street. Adjacent cells were also popular, with a distance decay of address density to the east, south and south-west. At this date the 5,544 addresses were spread over 26 kilometre squares (table 3), but with two-thirds found in the top five cells, and the astonishingly high proportion of 87 per cent in

Table 3: Addresses recorded in Boyle's Court Directory

| | Cells | Addresses | % in top 5 cells | % in top 10 cells | % aristocrats in top 10 cells |
|------|-------|-----------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1800 | 26 | 5,544 | 63.1 | 87.4 | 97.1 |
| 1820 | 25 | 7,119 | 62.0 | 86.8 | 88.0 |
| 1840 | 42 | 13,234 | 45.3 | 70.1 | 87.6 |
| 1860 | 44 | 18,048 | 33.7 | 53.3 | 76.0 |
| 1880 | 46 | 20,412 | 27.7 | 48.4 | 69.5 |
| 1900 | 47 | 21,700 | 30.4 | 51.9 | 72.2 |
| 1920 | 41 | 19,381 | 33.8 | 55.9 | 77.4 |

the top ten. The centre of gravity was three kilometres west of the City.

By 1820 the peak of fashion had moved further west to E5 (figure 3), which comprised the area bounded in the west by the Edgware Road, in the north by the New Road, in the east by Marylebone High Street, and in the south by Hyde Park and Grosvenor Square. This included Baker Street, Manchester Square, Portman Square, Gloucester Place and Park Street. F6 (south and east Mayfair and the western portion of St James's) and F5 had maintained their numbers and the most rapidly up and coming district was G4: Tavistock Square, Gordon Square, Russell Square and Woburn Square. A northern strip of urban development, especially around the south-west and south-east margin of the new Regent's Park (E4 and E5) was also notable, as was Sloane Street (E7) in the south.⁶³

A spurt of building activity saw new streets appearing all around the western fringes of London by 1840 (figure 3). The number of addresses recorded by Boyle nearly doubled, and addresses were listed in 42 cells as against 25 in 1820, a dispersal reflected in the lower proportion than previously found in the top five and ten cells, respectively 45 per cent and 70 per cent. The pattern became bi-modal, E5 now sharing the top spot with F6. The locale immediately to the east and north-east of Hyde Park consolidated its pre-eminence, whereas the cells between here and the City of London were beginning to show signs of relative decline: G5 (Bloomsbury) and H5 (Southampton Row, Red Lion Square and Holborn). New areas appearing during this period included F3 (north east Regent's Park), D4 (the south of St John's Wood between Alpha Road and St John's Wood Road), D5 (Tyburnia), and F7 (Belgravia, Eaton Square and Victoria).⁶⁴

During the twenty years to 1860 two new cells and 5,000 new addresses were added (figure 3). Mayfair (F6) was the undisputed leading neighbourhood and the overall pattern was changing. Hyde Park was now almost encircled, with a notable four-kilometre axis running the length of the Bayswater Road and Oxford Street. Along this route several wealthy bridgeheads were established, the most spectacular newcomer being C5 (Bayswater).⁶⁵ Sheppard shows that estate development was again the key here.⁶⁶ Speculators were

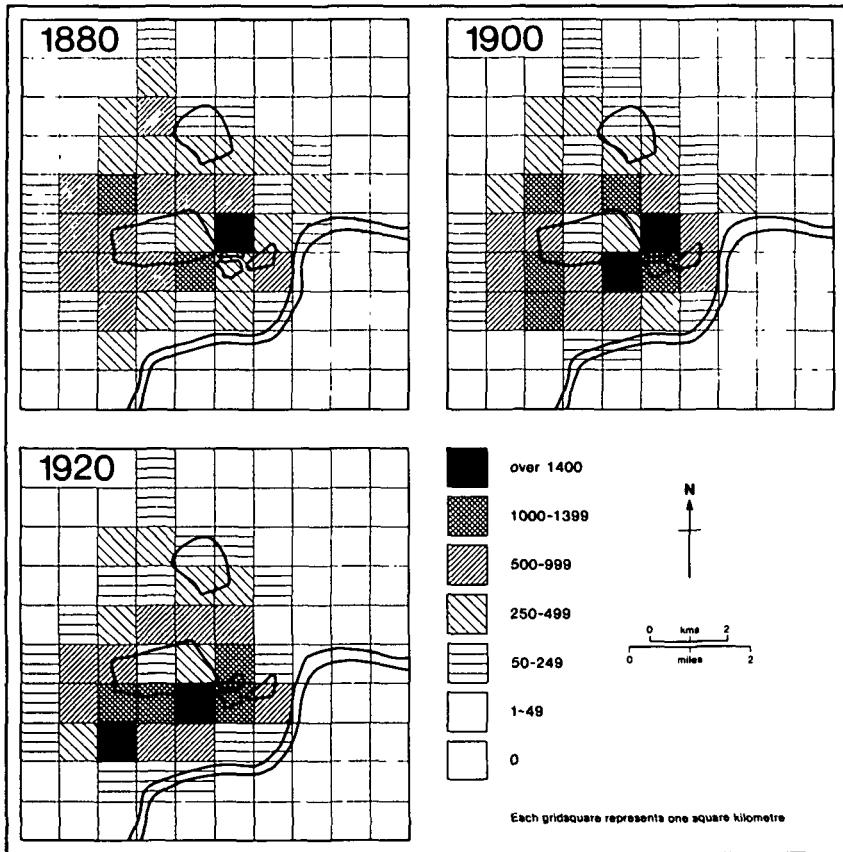


Figure 4: Fashionable addresses in the West End, 1880-1920
 Source: Boyle's fashionable court guide.

active, for instance, on the Ladbroke estate from 1844 to 1852 but, as was so often the case, they overestimated the demand for upper- and middle-class housing. Several were bankrupted in the early 1850s, a collapse which 'gave large parts of Notting Hill a notoriety from which they did not recover for some ten years'. An extensive area of half-finished houses was called 'coffin-row' or 'the stumps'.

Also new to the top flight in 1860 were F8 (Pimlico) and G7 (Victoria Street, Westminster), and rapid growth was recorded in D3 (St John's Wood), F3 (north-east Regent's Park), and the three cells to the south and south-west of Hyde Park (C7, C8, D7).⁶⁷

The 1880 map has a more westerly feel to it (figure 4). Mayfair was still impressively dominant, but the nodes of Knightbridge/Belgravia (E7) and Bayswater (C5) were competing alternatives. Newly occupied on a large scale were the Belsize Park end of St John's

Wood (D2), Maida Vale (C3, C4) in the north, and around the south-west corner of Hyde Park in Holland Park/South Kensington (B7), Earl's Court (C8) and Brompton (D8, C9). Relative decline to the north-east and east of Hyde Park continued. Regent Street/Oxford Street (F5), the most popular cell in 1800 had by 1880 dropped to 12th place, and the Oxford Street axis had been stagnant for some time.⁶⁸ F3 (north-east of Regent's Park) and G4 (north Bloomsbury) were in headlong decay.

By 1900 (figure 4) the southern flank of Hyde Park was receiving increasing attention, with Belgravia (F7) and Earl's Court (C8) penetrating the top five at the expense of Tyburnia (D5) and Marylebone (E5). The north-west corner of the park was suffering an eclipse which was almost as rapid as its earlier meteoric rise. Holland Park (B6), Ladbroke Grove (B5) and Bayswater (C5) between them had 1.5 per cent of fashionable addresses in 1840, rising to 14.2 per cent in 1880, but then falling back to 8.2 per cent by 1920.⁶⁹ Overall, 21 out of 25 cells to the north of Hyde Park suffered a relative decline 1880 to 1900, whereas 18 out of 26 cells south of the line A5 improved their status. In this southern area the axis A8 to E8 was especially buoyant.

The final cross-section, 1920, shows a less clear pattern of change (figure 4). South Kensington (B7, C7) and D7 (Knightsbridge) continued to grow, and Earl's Court (C8) and Brompton/Belgravia (E7) had risen to become the most favoured areas, dethroning Mayfair for the first time since 1840. The inner city area of the Strand/Holborn (H5) and Soho (G5) were by now virtually devoid of fashionable residences, although Boyle by this date did record some professionals and businessmen who lived near their work. Otherwise gains and losses were scattered. The Regent's Park area (E3, E4, F3, F4), for instance, rallied and the north/south split was blurred.

Figure 5 shows the fortunes of individual cells to have been mixed. F6 remained prestigious, whereas H4 declined rapidly. E7 made steady progress and C8 rose dramatically, but C5 peaked and then fell back. Figure 6 summarizes the changes in simplified cartographic form as a combination of a stable core area centred on Mayfair; a newer secondary core to the south and south west of Hyde Park; a zone of assimilation in the northern, western and southern fringes; and a zone of discard in the east bordering the City of London. Further research is needed to discover the role of intra-urban migration in this dynamic structures. Much of the spread westwards and southwards was due to building on greenfield sites, whereas in the inner city the rearguard retreated in the face of CBD functions and to a limited extent due to the filtering of housing to lower social strata through subdivision and deteriorating fabric.

The currents of fashion swirled around the core. Mayfair (F6) was the only cell to be in the top five throughout the whole period, and E6 (Marylebone) was the only other cell to remain in the top ten, but they, along with F5 and E7, account for 27.5 per cent of the 100,000

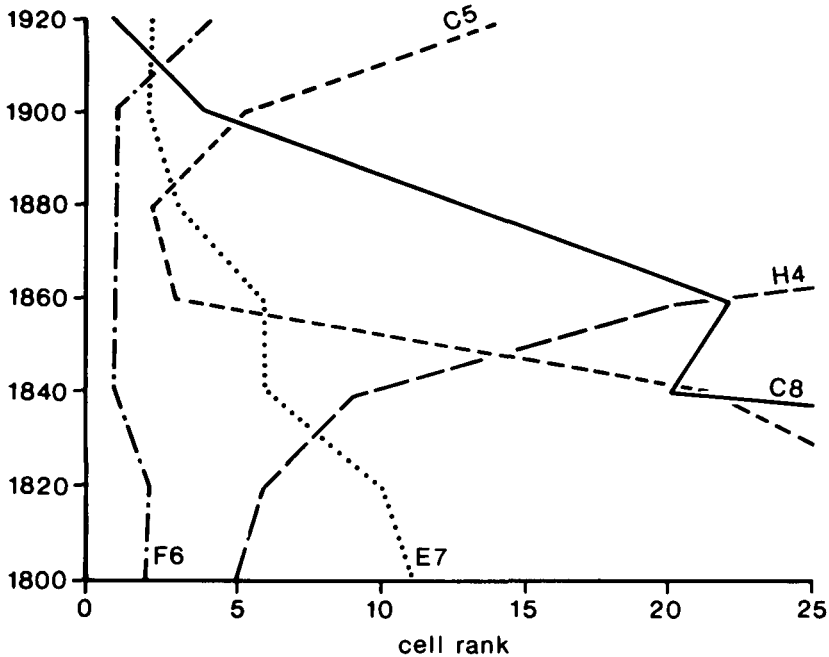


Figure 5: The fortunes of four sample cells

addresses recorded from 1800 to 1920 (figure 7). This might seem a high proportion, but it is modest by comparison with the concentration of the nobility and gentry in the same few cells. Of titled addresses, 57.4 per cent were found here, including 26.0 per cent in F6 alone.

Discussion

In this paper we have been discussing a numerically insignificant section of British society, a minority even in the West End of London. They comprised three groups. First, there was the old landed wealth of the aristocracy, gradually fading in political and economic clout towards the end of the nineteenth century. Second, a dynamic cohort of entrepreneurs from commerce, industry and finance constituted a new meritocracy whose wealth eventually earned them a political voice and even a place in 'society'. Third, there were the upwardly mobile fell-travellers, for instance minor gentry and the Victorian bourgeois professional class, who achieved reflected glory in residential proximity to their social betters. This third category was the most numerous. They were a cornerstone of respectable West End life, although few would have aspired to participation in the fashionable 'Season'. A reading of this paper should bear in mind

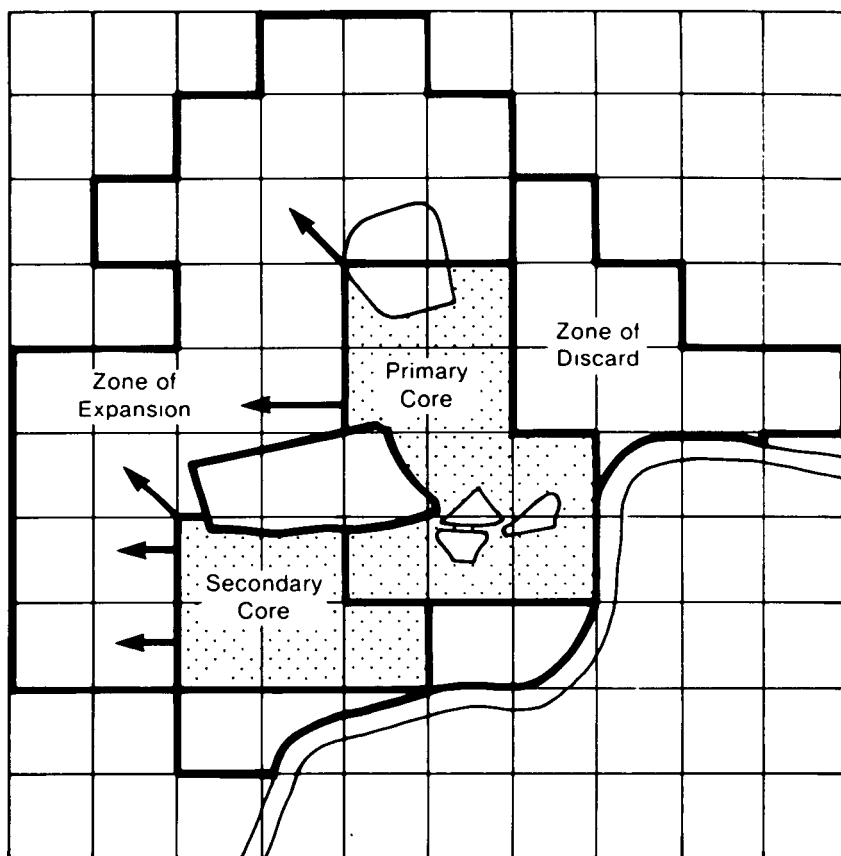


Figure 6: Simplified summary of the spatial evolution of the West End's fashionable residential district, 1800-1920

that terms such as 'ruling class' or 'elite' refer to a broad coalition of such groups, who were by their very nature disparate.

A fourth group, sometimes cross-cutting in its class composition, was that of imperial civil servants. London was a world city, arguably *the* centre of the world economy in the nineteenth century and certainly the nerve centre of the British empire. Many of the people living in the West End were players of significance on the international stage of politics, administration and military might. Just as the City of London drew sustenance from its worldwide commercial and financial functions, so one catalyst of growth in the West End was its role as the home of the rulers of empire.

The West End was a container of frighteningly concentrated power. No other city in Britain and probably nowhere else in the world was there such an extraordinary nexus of wealth and social prestige. By

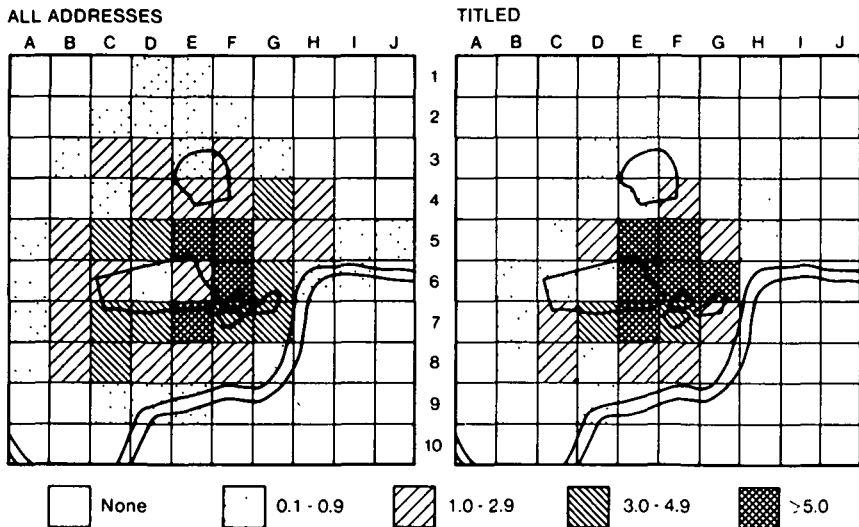


Figure 7: Percentage of all addresses and titled addresses in each cell, 1800-1920

the nineteenth century London had long since shaded out any competitors in Britain; there were no urban social gathering places on a remotely equivalent scale, even counting the resorts and spas. But this uniqueness was forged by the social and economic processes of a sophisticated, integrated system. Idle rich they may have been in the London Season, but these people had at their command a vast array of productive forces working for them all over the country and further afield. In particular, their rural assets were the necessary and enabling complement to the splendour of their urban life-style.

The clustering of the Establishment here was of great significance. The West End was a cultural computer, a vast data bank of information, prejudice, and power. It was an informal training ground for landed wealth in which there took place an annual refresher course in class solidarity. Their domination of the countryside from the sixteenth century on gained a more homogeneous, better-informed, and more efficiently organized character, which would not have been possible without the facilitating information exchange mechanism provided by London.

The West End was not, however, a 'natural area' of physical and social uniformity, nor even a 'community' in the commonly accepted sense. To parody Webber, in the West End there was propinquity without community.⁷⁰ The wealth and very broad connexions of these families made them less dependent upon each other than a community formed by a mutuality of the oppressed. This was an altogether different type of group: outward looking and downward looking. Each house in Grosvenor Square was the top of an invisible

and geographically separate social pyramid. The West Enders did not only derive their status from mutual interaction in the Season, but more significantly from their broader location in 'society', expressed to some extent by their physical location in the pecking order of the West End.

Social networks and alliances were complex and the social life was of course active, but these were arenas of collective competition as much as of cohesion. Any sense of community would have been a broad class solidarity, but of a heterogeneous class with a wide range of experience, a variety of life-styles and a far-reaching mean information field. This is of course very different from the spatially circumscribed 'urban village' communities which form over time in stable working-class areas, fostered by permanence and immobility.⁷¹

The West End was an engine of Establishment dominance, not a symbol of territoriality. Little sentimental attachment to micro-place was exhibited by its inhabitants, who were very mobile within the district. Generally speaking they were leasehold tenants for whom the use value of their property loomed larger than its exchange value. Their attraction to the investment in the locality derived its reward from the status of an address. It drew sustenance from the prestigious proximity of the various royal residences at St James's Palace, Kensington Palace, Buckingham Palace and Carlton House. The amenity of open spaces such as Green Park, St James's Park, Kensington Palace Gardens and Regent's Park was also important. Hyde Park had for 200 years been 'the resort and meeting place of fashion'⁷² and in the second half of the nineteenth century it was the focus of the London Season:

It contained the arena of fashion for the hours of daylight — an arena which moved from time to time from one side of the statue of Achilles to the other, but which was always the playground, the meeting ground, the display ground of the fashionable world . . . [But] by the 1900s riding in the [Rotten] Row had become a matter of exercise than of fashion.⁷³

Not a community; too large for a neighbourhood; so was the West End, then, a 'locale'? For Giddens this would be 'zoning of time-space in relation to routinized social practices', but the West End was eccentric because it was a part-time place, with families occupying their houses or *pieds-à-terre* for only a few months in the 'Season'.⁷⁴ Even members of parliament and judges were in town for limited periods. In addition, the privileged life-style of the very rich meant that routine did not rule their lives. Their interactions with each other and the outside world were not constrained in the same way as the space-time projects of the masses or even the lower middle-class clerks whose lives were moulded by the necessity of commuting to the City from Camberwell and similar suburbs. There was minimal

friction of distance for the leisured rich, who had sufficient time and money for regular travel between London and their country estates. They were equally at home in each location and they represented one of the strongest links between urban and rural society in Britain. In some other countries the aristocracy was either rurally based or was an absentee urban class.⁷⁵ Both situations were potentially less stable.

Intra-class coalitions were of course not always mutually reinforcing. The ruling class had many factions within their overall consensus. One example of the effect of this upon urban development is given by Summerson.⁷⁶ Apparently Hanover Square (1717-19) was built by and for people with Whig and military connexions, whereas Cavendish Square (1724) was a Tory enclave. According to Thompson these divisions were reflected from the 1830s in the formation of adversary clubs and 'the circles in which London society moved had a tendency to follow political grooves'.⁷⁷

Nevertheless the West End was symbolic of the *status quo*. It therefore became a class locality with something to defend. We have referred to the rituals of etiquette which acted as a social filter, but there were also physical barriers to exclude unwanted intrusions. There were 150 private bars to traffic in London in 1879, mostly at the gateways to West End estates to prevent them becoming noisy thoroughfares.⁷⁸ The Bedford estate was completely closed from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., and during the day only residents with a special ticket were allowed through.⁷⁹ After public agitation these barriers to the London squares were abolished by the London Streets (Removal of Gates) Acts of 1890 and 1893.

During the Gordon Riots of 1780 associations for the protection of property were formed, but, apart from occasional incidents such as the mob violence of February 1886, the West End was rarely troubled.⁸⁰ It was never a total exclusion zone anyway. The elite were a minority even in their own most concentrated districts. They relied indirectly upon various forms of social control to maintain order, and upon the symbolism of power and privilege. For Ley 'the symbolic meaning of places can act as a form of nonverbal communication, conveying information about the identity of their users. Indeed spatial form may be deliberately manipulated in order to reinforce the reality of a social hierarchy'.⁸¹ This was certainly true in the West End.

Conclusion

Although in Britain someone's address is a powerful surrogate for their status, it is indicative of pattern rather than process. People may choose to live close to others of a certain perceived category, but proximity is no guarantee of interaction, nor does it reveal very much about the why or how questions of residential location. Much

of our discussion based upon maps of addresses is therefore little more than informed guesswork.

We urgently need a detailed study of residential mobility within the West End, for which the fashionable court directories would be a source of interpolating between the decennial censuses. This might be amplified with a micro-scale analysis of the locational proclivities of the various subgroups inhabiting the West End. It is important to know whether lawyers, medics and other professionals regarded themselves as sufficiently different from, say, servicemen or minor gentry, to seek neighbourhood separations, and to explain why the premier aristocrats were so extraordinarily gregarious.

The second item on a possible research agenda concerns putting some flesh on the bones of the concept of space-time distanciation. This 'stretching of social systems across time and space' is, according to Giddens, a key to understanding the structuration of society.⁸² The authoritative and material resources of the seasonal inhabitants of the West End were both rural and urban, requiring organizational manipulation and extensive travel for the purposes of exploitation and surveillance. Sheppard has shown that is possible to reconstruct their time-space projects from information on their movements published daily in *The Morning Post*.⁸³ Additionally, there is no other group in society more likely to have relevant diaries, biographies and memoirs for further elaboration. These, and other sources of data, should help us to write a more detailed national scale chronogeography than has hitherto been possible, with special reference to the manner in which these diverse paths of leisure, business and social interaction were bundled together once a year in the West End.

Third, more work is required on what Giddens has called 'dominant locales'.⁸⁴ Cooke is keen for us to know more of 'red belts' or radical regions, and so we should, but also important is an understanding of the conservative clusters and wealthy wedges which are often nodal in both the reproduction of ruling elites and the restructuring of society at large.⁸⁵ The study of the West End is of interest not for the place itself, but for what that place represented as an arena of interaction and an instrument of domination.⁸⁶ Other such proactive localities existed, for instance the City of London in the financial/commercial sphere and Manchester at the centre of a global textile empire.⁸⁷

By way of overall conclusion, this paper has attempted to suggest a role for the West End in the domination of British life by a coalition of the ruling classes. That unique region, in its ascendancy for a century from the 1820s, if not longer, was the locus of imperial political power and social prestige. By studying the residential behaviour of its inhabitants we have been able to show a remarkable degree of stability in time and compactness in space. The locality itself has been transformed in the twentieth century as the very social processes which created and maintained it have themselves

been restructured in the flow of history.

In recent years there has developed a widespread contempt for a history of the high and mighty, and a countervailing trend towards studying the everyday experience of working people. The present author is suggesting that the two social histories are not mutually exclusive, and that an understanding of the free-ranging life paths of aristocrats *can* help us to appreciate the mechanisms which constrained the life paths of the masses.

P.J. Atkins

University of Durham

Appendix. Addresses in each cell

| Cell | 1800 | 1820 | 1840 | 1860 | 1880 | 1900 | 1920 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| D1 | - | - | - | - | 57 | 55 | 58 |
| E1 | - | - | - | - | - | 11 | - |
| C2 | - | - | - | - | 22 | - | - |
| D2 | - | - | - | 36 | 338 | 178 | 197 |
| E2 | - | - | - | 32 | 74 | 52 | 40 |
| F2 | - | - | - | 12 | 11 | - | - |
| B3 | - | - | - | - | 17 | - | - |
| C3 | - | - | 16 | 172 | 471 | 300 | 290 |
| D3 | - | - | 124 | 507 | 638 | 425 | 306 |
| E3 | - | - | 65 | 155 | 134 | 94 | 181 |
| F3 | - | - | 208 | 437 | 212 | 105 | 119 |
| G3 | - | - | 5 | - | - | - | - |
| C4 | - | - | 24 | 194 | 400 | 273 | 147 |
| D4 | 16 | 11 | 384 | 463 | 392 | 216 | 165 |
| E4 | 107 | 180 | 554 | 563 | 375 | 321 | 322 |
| F4 | 320 | 360 | 720 | 596 | 333 | 274 | 325 |
| G4 | 116 | 707 | 991 | 746 | 433 | 217 | 98 |
| H4 | 345 | 440 | 589 | 362 | 68 | 37 | - |
| A5 | - | - | - | - | 81 | 34 | - |
| B5 | - | - | 6 | 177 | 752 | 401 | 230 |
| C5 | - | - | 107 | 1,115 | 1,263 | 1,110 | 584 |
| D5 | 18 | - | 524 | 1,085 | 948 | 852 | 829 |
| E5 | 654 | 1,052 | 1,451 | 1,171 | 987 | 1,001 | 924 |
| F5 | 1,010 | 920 | 1,286 | 1,048 | 711 | 819 | 623 |
| G5 | 612 | 765 | 769 | 550 | 164 | 112 | - |
| H5 | 304 | 334 | 328 | 249 | 255 | 432 | - |
| I5 | 35 | 25 | 31 | 48 | 12 | - | - |
| J5 | - | - | 100 | 107 | - | - | - |
| A6 | - | - | 33 | 125 | 188 | 146 | 125 |
| B6 | - | - | 80 | 554 | 890 | 814 | 772 |
| C6 | 18 | 10 | 55 | 227 | 591 | 642 | 498 |
| D6 | 4 | 16 | 43 | 33 | 88 | 159 | 129 |
| E6 | 199 | 219 | 288 | 322 | 297 | 349 | 290 |
| F6 | 876 | 972 | 1,495 | 1,670 | 1,446 | 1,619 | 1,269 |
| G6 | 310 | 343 | 654 | 674 | 434 | 537 | 212 |
| H6 | 49 | 47 | 82 | 83 | 55 | 28 | - |
| I6 | - | - | 29 | 45 | 13 | - | - |
| A7 | - | - | 5 | 21 | 157 | 177 | 171 |

| Cell | 1800 | 1820 | 1840 | 1860 | 1880 | 1900 | 1920 |
|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| B7 | 14 | - | 60 | 151 | 500 | 560 | 760 |
| C7 | 43 | 4 | 161 | 362 | 783 | 1,077 | 1,360 |
| D7 | 22 | 27 | 189 | 562 | 821 | 927 | 1,033 |
| E7 | 179 | 289 | 766 | 849 | 1,009 | 1,409 | 1,439 |
| F7 | 62 | 104 | 350 | 561 | 717 | 1,231 | 1,001 |
| G7 | 213 | 229 | 296 | 633 | 942 | 780 | 528 |
| A8 | - | - | - | - | - | 174 | 203 |
| B8 | - | - | 4 | 8 | 172 | 527 | 394 |
| C8 | - | 1 | 117 | 329 | 681 | 1,228 | 1,440 |
| D8 | 1 | 6 | 45 | 187 | 400 | 639 | 737 |
| E8 | - | 27 | 105 | 103 | 121 | 510 | 774 |
| F8 | 10 | 36 | 92 | 623 | 478 | 412 | 248 |
| G8 | 7 | - | 3 | 98 | 195 | 157 | 126 |
| C9 | - | - | - | - | 286 | 26 | 94 |
| D9 | - | - | - | - | - | 105 | 143 |
| E9 | - | - | - | - | - | 148 | 197 |

Acknowledgements

The archival work for this paper was made possible by grants from the Research Fund of University College Swansea and the Staff Travel Fund of the University of Durham. The maps were drawn by Arthur Corner, David Cowton and David Hume.

Notes

- 1 J.V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England 1660-1914* (1986), 10.
- 2 M.L. Bush, *The English Aristocracy: A Comparative Synthesis* (1984), 75. This stands in sharp contrast to a recent attempt to write a regional geography of industrial culture: J. Langton, 'The industrial revolution and the regional geography of England', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, new series, 9 (1984), 145-67.
- 3 E.W. Soja, 'The socio-spatial dialectic', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 70 (1980), 207-25.
- 4 E.W. Soja, 'The spatiality of social life: towards a transformative retheorisation' in *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, eds D. Gregory and J. Urry (1985), 90-127.
- 5 H. Lefebvre, *La Production de l'Espace* (1974).
- 6 M.J. Power, 'East and west in early-modern London' in *Wealth and Power in Tudor England*, eds J.J. Scarisbrick et al. (1978), 167-85; M.J. Power, 'John Stow and his London', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 11 (1985), 1-20; M.J. Power, 'The social topography of Restoration London' in *The Making of the Metropolis: London 1500-1700*, eds A.L. Beier and R. Finlay (1986), 199-223.
- 7 In this paper the 'City of London' refers to the commercial core, which was also a separate administrative unit. On London's private palaces see D.J. Pearce, *London's Mansions: the Palatial Houses of the Nobility* (1986).
- 8 L. Stone, 'The residential development of the West End of London in the seventeenth century' in *After the Reformation*, ed. B.C. Malament (1980), 167-212.
- 9 S. Lee, *A Collection of the Names of the Merchants Living in and About the*

- City of London (1677).
- 10 J. Vance, *This Scene of Man: the Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization* (1977).
- 11 Bush, *The English Aristocracy*, 74.
- 12 The dates given refer to the commencement of construction. See E.B. Chancellor, *The History of the Squares of London* (1907), and G. Rude, *Hanoverian London 1714-1808* (1971).
- 13 S.E. Rasmussen, *London: the Unique City* (1948), ch. 9.
- 14 J. Summerson, *Georgian London* (1988), 26.
- 15 L.D. Schwarz, 'Social class and social geography: the middle classes in London at the end of the eighteenth century', *Social History*, 7 (1982), 167-85.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 172.
- 17 D.W. Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital* (1985), 155.
- 18 D.W. Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (1985), 213.
- 19 B. Worsley Gough, *Fashions in London* (1952), 47.
- 20 F.H.W. Sheppard (ed.), *Survey of London, Volume XXXIX: the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair. Part I: General History* (1977).
- 21 *Ibid.*, 84-6.
- 22 The Duke of Westminster rescinded his objection to professional consulting rooms and offices in 1934. The resident population of Mayfair fell from approximately 17,000 in 1841 to 4,345 in 1961. See Sheppard, *Survey of London, Volume XXXIX*, 93-102, and C. Kennedy, *Mayfair: a Social History* (1986).
- 23 Summerson, *Georgian London*.
- 24 D.J. Olsen, *Town Planning in London: the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (1964); D.J. Olsen, *The Growth of Victorian London* (1976).
- 25 Olsen, *The Growth of Victorian London*, 162-9.
- 26 From Trollope's *The Small House at Allington*, quoted in B. Weinreb and C. Hibbert, *The London Encyclopaedia* (1983), 599.
- 27 C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London. First Series, Poverty, Volume 2: Streets and Population Classified* (1902).
- 28 Including institutions such as the Foundling Hospital, which developed its estate, comprising Mecklenburgh and Brunswick Squares, from 1790 to 1830.
- 29 F.M.L. Thompson, *Hampstead: Building a Borough, 1650-1964* (1974), 73.
- 30 Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital*, 213.
- 31 Summerson, *Georgian London*, 81-4.
- 32 H. Hobhouse, *Thomas Cubitt: Master Builder* (1971).
- 33 F.H.W. Sheppard, *London 1808-1870: the Infernal Wen* (1971), 106.
- 34 Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, 17 vols (1902-3).
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 A further commentary on these districts is given in A. Cox, *The Landlord's and Tenant's Guide* (1853).
- 37 Sheppard, *Survey of London, Volume XXXIX*, 90-1.
- 38 H. and M. Evans, *The Party that Lasted 100 Days. The Late Victorian Season: a Social Study* (1976), 28.
- 39 L. Davidoff, *The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season* (1973), 15-16.
- 40 W.L. Guttsman, *The British Political Elite* (1963), 158.
- 41 Summerson, *Georgian London*, 121-4.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 43 Bush, *The English Aristocracy*, 75.
- 44 G. Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: a Study in the Relationship Between*

- Classes in Victorian Society* (1971), ch. 2.
- 45 F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (1963), 336.
- 46 R. Nevill, *London Clubs: their History and Treasures* (1911).
- 47 W. Besant, *London in the Nineteenth Century* (1909), 259.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 20.
- 49 Thompson, *English Landed Society*, ch. 10.
- 50 R.E. Pumphrey, 'The introduction of industrialists into the British peerage: a study in adaptation of a social institution', *American Historical Review*, 65 (1959), 1-16; W.D. Rubinstein, *Elites and the Wealthy in Modern British History* (1987).
- 51 J.W.R. Whitehand, 'The changing urban landscape: the case of London's high-class residential fringe', *Geographical Journal*, 154 (1988), 351-66.
- 52 R. Dennis, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: a Social Geography* (1984), ch. 6.
- 53 P.J. Atkins, *The Directories of London 1677-1977* (1990, forthcoming), ch. 3.
- 54 P.J. Atkins, 'Eighteenth century London directories', *Factotum*, 28 (1989), 12-16.
- 55 Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England*, 41.
- 56 In the 1851 census 33,000 people in Britain 'of rank or property' were not engaged in any occupation. His investigation of the court pages of the press counted 4,000 fashionable arrivals in 1841, although some were for the same families. Sheppard, *Survey of London, Volume XXXIX*, 91, 104.
- 57 E. Boyle, *Boyle's Fashionable Court and Country Guide and Town Visiting Directory* (1813), iii.
- 58 P. Malcolmson, 'Getting a living in the slums of Victorian Kensington', *London Journal*, 1 (1975), 28-55.
- 59 Hampstead, St Pancras, St Marylebone, Paddington, Kensington, Chelsea, St George Hanover Square, SS Margaret and John Westminster, St Martin in the Fields, St James Westminster, St Anne Soho, St Paul Covent Garden, St Luke, Strand, Bloomsbury, St Clement Danes, and St George Martyr.
- 60 G. Shaw and M.T. Wild, 'Retail patterns in the Victorian city', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, new series, 4 (1979), 278-91; P.J. Atkins, 'The Covent Garden ladies', *Factotum*, 30 (1989), 10-11; Nevill, *London Clubs*; H. Carter, *An Introduction to Urban Historical Geography* (1983), 164-7.
- 61 Olsen, *The Growth of Victorian London*, 83.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 82-4.
- 63 A. Saunders, *Regent's Park: a Study of the Development of the Area from 1086 to the Present Day* (1969).
- 64 Tyburnia was occupied by wealthy merchants, professional men and MPs. Cox, *The Landlord's and Tenant's Guide*, 212.
- 65 D.A. Reeder, 'A theatre of suburbs: some patterns of development in west London, 1801-1911' in *The Study of Urban History*, ed. H.J. Dyos (1968), 253-71.
- 66 F.H.W. Sheppard (ed.) *Survey of London, Volume XXXVII: North Kensington* (1973), 232-3.
- 67 This square reached its peak in 1860 and declined thereafter.
- 68 Although there were still 600 addresses listed here as late as 1920.
- 69 Many colonial administrators made their home in Paddington and Bayswater. P.L. Garside, 'West End, East End: London, 1890-1940' in *Metropolis 1890-1940*, ed. A. Sutcliffe (1984), 221-58.
- 70 M. Webber, 'Order in diversity: community without propinquity' in *Cities*

- and Space, ed. L. Wingo (1963), 23-54.
- 71 P. Knox, *Urban Social Geography: an Introduction* (1982), 44.
- 72 Besant, *London in the Nineteenth Century*, 230.
- 73 Worsley Gough, *Fashions in London*, 35.
- 74 A. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (1979).
- 75 D. Spring, *European Landed Elites in the Nineteenth Century* (1977).
- 76 Summerson, *Georgian London*, ch. 7.
- 77 Thompson, *English Landed Society*, 106.
- 78 M. Searle, *Turnpikes and Toll-Bars* (1930), volume 2, 714.
- 79 Olsen, *Town Planning in London*, 145.
- 80 Rude, *Hanoverian London*, 43; Stedman Jones, *Outcast London*, 291-5.
- 81 D. Ley, *A Social Geography of the City* (1983), 161.
- 82 A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (1984).
- 83 Sheppard, *Survey of London, Volume XXXIX*, 90-1.
- 84 A. Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism: Power, Property and the State* (1981).
- 85 P. Cooke, 'Class practices as regional markers: a contribution to labour geography', in D. Gregory and J. Urry, *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, 213-41; N.J. Thrift, 'The geography of nineteenth century class formation' in *Class and Space: the Making of Urban Society*, eds N.J. Thrift and P. Williams (1987), 25-50.
- 86 N.J. Thrift, 'On the determination of social action in space and time', *Society and Space*, 1 (1983), 23-57.
- 87 P. Cooke, 'Locality, economic restructuring and world development' in *Localities: the Changing face of Urban Britain*, ed. *idem.* (1989), 1-44.