

BULLETIN

OF THE THOMAS PAINE SOCIETY



No.1. Vol.1.(New Series)1990

T P S B U L L E T I N

No.1. Vol.1.
(New Series)
1990

Editor: R. W. Morrell, B.Sc., F.L.S.

Thomas Paine Society,
43, Wellington Gardens,
Selsey,
PO20 ORF,
England.

CHRISTOPHER

and

MARGARET BRUNEL

IT was with a sense of extreme shock and sadness that I learned of the death of not just our Founding Chairman, Christopher Brunel, but also soon after of his charming wife, Margaret, seemingly of an identical cause.

Christopher Brunel was amongst the first to respond to the present writer's suggestion that a society devoted to Thomas Paine be formed when I discovered this country did not have one. This was during the time when controversy was at its height concerning the Paine statue to be given to Thetford. I had been concerned that deliberate lies were being openly told about Paine and thought that an effective voice was required to enable the record to be put right.

Christopher Brunel became an effective spokesman for the society, representing it at functions throughout the country, not least the public inquiry into the proposal to demolish the house in Thetford traditionally thought to have been Paine's birthplace. Christopher had inherited his father's very fine Paine library and continued to add to it; he also gave it another dimension in the form of an extensive collection of 18th century political tokens, an interest that led him to form the Token Collectors' Society and edit its journal.

I must admit that I only met Christopher's wife a few times, but it was evident that she shared his interest in Thomas Paine and gave him her full support in his activities on behalf of the society. Both Christopher and Margaret will be greatly missed, and this issue of the **TPS Bulletin** is dedicated to their memory.

THOMAS PAINE
in the
THETFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Christopher Brunel

This article first appeared in the *TPS Bulletin*,
No.1. Vol.3. 1968

If ever the magpie instinct in a man were justified it is wonderfully justified in the case of Ambrose G. Barker, whose collection of Paine material was presented a little while ago by Miss Ella Twynam to the Thetford Public Library. The five shelves of the A.G.Barker Collection, together with other Paineiana that the library has, form an excellent source of fascinating material for students and advanced researchers alike.

There are some notes in what I recognise as Barker's handwriting, inserted into one volume, and written about 1936. He says, in part:

"Some forty years ago two Paine Exhibitions were held to celebrate the first issue of *The Age of Reason*. Wheeler [1] wrote the introduction to one of the catalogues expressing the hope that a Paine Institute should be established in which could be gathered books, pamphlets, medals, tokens, prints, etc., relating to Paine. Nothing came of it and the two collections were dispersed, which I regarded as a calamity. The coming bicentenary [2] gives us an opportunity of remedying this....Myself beginning in a very modest way, my collection is now probably the largest in England. At my decease, I am now in my seventy-eighth year what will become of my collection? Were a well established Paine Museum in existence, I might as well Verb sap!"

Though no Paine Museum exists, Miss Twynam has been true to the spirit of Barker's wishes in presenting this valuable collection to Thetford, and numerous Paineites will be grateful to her. The book, in which the quoted

notes were inscribed is a very rare edition of Paine's **Essay on Dreams**, published in Paris in 1803 and printed by M.Chateau under the title **Extracts from the M.S. Third Part of Thomas Paine's Age of Reason, Chapter the Second; Article Dream**. It is one of the gems of the collection.

Last December I spent a few days in Thetford, examining the Paine material, while taking copious notes, and becoming increasingly enthusiastic by what I saw. Perhaps I can now present a short and personal digest of my notes, in order to make more widely known the sort of material that is there. As will be seen, a broad variety of different aspects of Paine's life and works is represented, perhaps with a particular richness in material on his theological views.

Especially topical, in view of the recent ignorant representation of Paine on the British stage, are examples of religious bigotry in the 19th century, like two illustrated eight page pamphlets, titled **Extracts from the Life of Thomas Paine (Author of "The Age of Reason")**. One was published in Paisley in 1822 and printed by J.Neilson; it has a laureated bust, facing right, in a squared circle, and it starts with the mythical "seduction of Madam Bonneville" by Paine. The other is undated and was published in London, being printed by A.Applegarth & E.Cooper, Gravel Lane, Southwark. The content matter is the same as the other pamphlet, but the illustration shows Paine in a dishevelled state with a bottle and two glasses (one overturned), on a table beside him.

In some miscellaneous folders at the Library (outside the Barker Collection) I came across a fine article by W.T.Stead from the **Review of Reviews** (undated), entitled, "A Little Homily upon a Well-Known Text, Dedicated to the Rev.Dr.Torrey".[3] This deals with the slanders against Paine for "taking another man's wife" and against Col.Robert Ingersoll for connections with publishers of "obscene literature". In this article Paine's relationship with Madam Bonneville is described as "the kindly hospitality shown by an old man of sixty-seven to the

refugee family of his French benefactor". It continues by referring to the libel case that Madam Bonneville brought against James Cheetham - and won - saying: "The only man who ever imputed a shadow of obloquy to Paine in this connection went into the witness box after Paine's death and solemnly swore that there was no foundation for his calumny".

This matter links with Paine's views on man's exploitation of women written and published by him in the August 1775 number of the **Pennsylvania Magazine**. This essay is little known today, and unfortunately for many years it has only been known obliquely and is rarely quoted directly. It does seem to me, though, that Richard Carlile, writing in **The Republican** in 1822 very well mirrors Paine's views on the subject and carries them forward: "the freedom and independency of women is the best proof of and guarantee of the independency of man" (8.2.1822).

In this year of the fiftieth anniversary of partial women's suffrage in Britain this is still so true; lip service is paid to the cause of rights of women, as it has been in the past - examples that I culled at Thetford include those of Ella Wheeler Wilcox ("Paine...first suggested justice to women", 1.5.1914), and of Ernest Thurtle ("...he wrote articles on attacking slavery and complaining of the inferior position of women, and others showing his Republican sympathies" (July, 1936). Perhaps 1968 will give an opportunity for reprinting Paine's short essay, **An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex**.

There is a new consciousness of the importance of visual history, and the material at Thetford contains some interesting examples, including a pencil drawing in a grangerised copy of Thomas Martin's, **The History of the Town of Thetford** (London, J.Nichols, 1779). The book itself shows T.Bassett's engraving of Paine, taken from Willson Peel's portrait; a note on the pencil sketch says, "A drawing from which Mr.Bassett engraved his plate:- I knew Thomas Paine, and positively declare this to be a great likeness....Geoe B B (illegible) Thetford". An

important difference between the two is the inscription on the book that Paine is holding. In the engraving it is the **Rights of Man**, while on the drawing it is **In the cause of Liberty and my Country the Crisis and common Sense** (note the small "c").

Also to be seen are photographs of places in Paris and America where Paine lived, of monuments and statues of Paine, and of meetings that commemorate his life.

Our Vice-President, Colonel Richard Gimbel, started a few years ago to compile a list of events held to honour Paine's memory, often taking place on the anniversaries of his birthday, both here and in America. In 1960 he published a list of nearly 70 such events. In the Thetford Library I found evidence of six more (four of them in the USA between 1908-10), that are not recorded in Gimbel. I use the word "evidence" rather deliberately, as some of the scraps of information maddeningly are incomplete, though the clues are enough to put anyone on the right track.

A while ago a student of Paine was surprised that I had some editions of **the Letters of Junius** in my Thomas Paine Library, and was equally surprised, when I explained that at one time it was believed that Junius was Paine. The real identity of Junius has not been established, though about forty people have been nominated for the title. The literature on the question is great, but two that I unearthed at Thetford are worth mentioning here: the first, **Junius Unmasked: or Thomas Paine the Author of the Letters of Junius, and the Declaration of Independence**, was published at Washington D.C., in 1872 and carries no author's name, while the second, **Thomas Paine: Was He Junius?** by William Henry Burr, was published by the Freethought Publishing Company in San Francisco in 1890. I had never seen these books before, and only my short time in Thetford prevented my studying them - one of the many things I expect to do on a return visit.

Every so often a new theory comes up, too, about what eventually happened to Paine's bones that William Cobbett

dug up and brought to England. I certainly found one or two of the popular theories recorded in items at the Thetford Library, but especially interesting to me was the confirmation of the pseudonym, "A Old Daylighter", that the author of a small booklet, **Thomas Paine's Bones and Their Owners** (Norwich, 1908), chose for his interesting account, was J. Hunns. The source of this information is a letter to Ambrose Barker (30 August, 1910) from Edward Burgess, Ltd., Norwich, who published the booklet.

As well as items of direct relationship to Paine, the Library has quite a bit that is connected with the radical movement, especially that in Britain in the 1790s. Sampson Perry's **Argus** is especially worth mention. Perry and Paine were friends in both London and Paris, so the bits of news about Paine in the Luxembourg prison have added interest, though they add little to what is known already; accounts of the activities of the London Corresponding Society and the Society for Constitutional Information (of which Paine was a member), have all the flavour of progressive political activity against the repressive British government and it's supporters. The sour taste that William Wilberforce left in the mouths of the fighters for freedom is seen in Perry's description of him as being "once the defender of distant slaves, now the advocate of absent lords" (p.98. 1795).

The Library has several copies of **The Jockey Club** and **The Female Jockey Club** (1794), for which the fearless publishers, J.D.Symonds and J.Ridgway, were sent to Newgate gaol, the sentences being linked with some of Paine's works that they published. The Barker Collection also contains **The Case of Charles Pigott** (author of the Jockey Club books), published by D.I.Eaton in 1793, as well as accounts of such democrats as Eaton, William Frend, Thomas Muir, William Cobbett and others.

Later material includes **The Trial of Thomas Davidson**, for publishing a **Blasphemous Libel in the Deists' Magazine** (London, R.Helder, 1820), and associated books of the same period, all of which merit study.

Perhaps with this admittedly personal survey I have whetted the appetite of others to go to Thetford. I hope so. I am certain that they will get the same kindly and friendly treatment as I did from the librarian. F.H.Millington, who was Deputy Mayor of Thetford during the Paine centenary celebrations in 1909, and whose scrapbook forms part of the Paine material in the Library, and our former Vice-President, the late G.R.Blaydon (erstwhile Mayor and Town Clerk), are Thetford men, who have contributed a great deal to the knowledge of Thomas Paine. They have laid the local foundations, on which today's local Thetford pride in the town's most famous son is being built. The local public library, as much as the fine gilded statue of Thomas Paine, is a corner stone of this work.

1. Joseph Mazzini Wheeler, who contributed a great number of items to the exhibitions.
2. Of Paine's birth, ie. 1937.
3. R.A.Torrey.

OUT OF THE PAST

BURNING PAINE IN EFFIGY

THE possible influence of Thomas Paine frightened the political establishment of Britain, and one of the means taken to influence public opinion against him was character assassination, another was to inflame prejudice against him amongst those who ironically would have had most to gain from the implementation of these ideas.

One of the methods used was to hang or burn effigies (or do both) of Paine, and this sort of thing took place in a great many places throughout England. Two examples of this I have recently come across and record them here.

According to *The Date Book*..... (Nottingham, H.Field, 1880), on February 12, 1793, "the infamous Thomas Paine (one of the rag-a-muffin Convention of Paris), was apprehended and lodged in the Peveril gaol at Lenton, near this town (Nottingham); he was brought to trial the same day, and after a fair and impartial examination (his crimes being so big with infamy he could not plead!) he was found guilty..." Paine, or the effigy used in the farce, was sentenced to hang, after which those taking part retired to a local coffee house for refreshment. In the evening the effigy was burned on a bonfire. Prior to the burning, a party of Paine's supporters had tried to cut down the effigy but were attacked by the anti Paine mob. After the burning the mob once more retired to a coffee house, which appears to have supplied them with drink rather more potent than coffee, presumably at the expense of a local landowner, Lord Middleton, whose health was repeatedly toasted.

The account also mentions effigies of Paine having been adorned in some other parts of Nottingham with a cabbage under one arm and an old pair of stays under the other, and whipped through the streets. Reference is also made to a local tradition of Paine having worked in Nottingham (p.185). Despite the burning and hangings of Paine's

effigy in Nottingham, there seems to have been considerable pro-Paine feeling in the town.

The second report I want to refer to I found in issue No.14 of **Strapetona** (1987), the magazine of the Thrapston District Historical Society (Northamptonshire). Amongst some notes collected together by the Rev.Henry Ward, a local clergy in the 19th century, it is recorded that an effigy of Paine was mounted on a donkey and paraded around Titmarsh, after which it was gibbeted and burned, one of the bystanders also fired a shot at the effigy. Another account of the same event speaks of the effigy being put in the stocks on the village green and shot at by several of those present before being burned nearby. One person who witnessed it said the effigy "was dressed in good clothes" and thought it a great pity to burn them. In Thrapston itself an effigy was paraded up the main street followed by a large procession and eventually burned in what was called the Round Pasture.

R.W.Morrell.

---o---



Christopher Brunel

SOME OF THE LETTERS PAINE
WROTE TO JEFFERSON
DURING
1788—1789
CONCERNING THE IRON BRIDGE

Ann Kalloudis

THOMAS PAINE was a pioneer in the use of iron for bridge building. Thomas Jefferson shared his interest and both corresponded on the subject.

Paine to Jefferson, from London, September 9, 1788:

The model has the good fortune of pressing in England the reputation which it received from the Academy of Sciences (Paris). It is a favourite hobby horse with all who have seen it, and everyone who has talked with me on the subject advised me to endeavour to obtain a Patent, as it is only by that means that I can secure to myself the direction and management. This is the only step I took in the business.

Last Wednesday I received a Patent for England, the next day a Patent for Scotland, and I am to have one for Ireland. As I had already the opinion of the scientific judges both in France and England on the model, it was also necessary that I should have that of practical Iron men who must finally be the executors of the work. There are several capital Iron works in this country, the principal of which are those in Shropshire, Yorkshire, and Scotland. The Iron works in Yorkshire belonging to the Walkers near to Sheffield are the most eminent in England in the point of establishment and property. The proprietors are reputed to be worth two hundred thousand pounds and consequently capable of giving energy to any great undertaking.

A friend of theirs who had seen the model wrote to them on the subject, the two of them came from London last Friday to see it and talk with me on the business. Their opinion is very decided that it can be expected either in

wrought or cast Iron, and I am to go down to their works next week to erect an experimental arch. This is the point I am now got to, and until now I had nothing to inform you of.

If arches can be extended in the proportion the model promises, the construction in certain situation, without regard to cheapness or dearness, will be valuable in all countries.

Paine replies to a letter from Jefferson, 16-2-1789:

My intention at the time of writing to you was to construct an experimental arch of 250 feet, but in the first place, the season was too far advanced to work out of doors and an arch of that extent could not be worked within doors, and nextly, there was a prospect of a real Bridge being wanted on the spot 90 feet extent. The person who appeared disposed to erect a bridge is Mr. Foljame nephew to the late Sir George Saville, and a member of the late Parliament for Yorkshire. He lives about three miles from the works, and the River Don runs in front of his house, over which there is an old ill constructed bridge which he wants to remove. These circumstances determined me to begin an arch 90 feet with an elevation of 5 feet. This extent I could manage within doors by working half the arch at a time. A great part of our time, as you will naturally suppose, was taken up in preparations, but after we began to work we went on rapidly, and that without any mistake, or anything to alter or amend. The foreman of the works is a relation of the proprietors, and excellent mechanic, and who fell into all my ideas with great ease and penetration. I attended at the works till one half the rib, 45 feet, was completed and framed horizontally together and came up to London at the meeting of Parliament on the 4th of December.

In point of elegance and beauty it far exceeded my expectations and is certainly beyond anything I ever saw. My model and myself had many visitors while I was at the works. This bridge I expect will bring forth something greater, but in the meantime I feel like a bird from it's

nest and wishing most anxiously to return. Therefore, as soon as I can bring anything to bear, I shall dispose of the contract and bid adieu. I can very truly say that my mind is not at home.

July 13, 1789, to Jefferson, discussing costs and constructional matters and asking a favour.

I am to undertake all expense from that time and to complete the expecting. We intend first to exhibit it and afterwards put it up to sale, or dispose of it by private contract, and after paying the expenses of each party the remainder to be equally divided, one half theirs, the other mine. My principle object in this plan is to open the way for a bridge over the Thames.

I shall now have occasion to draw upon some funds I have in America. I have one thousand dollars stock in the bank at Philadelphia, and two years interest due on it last April. £180 in the hands of General Morris, £40 with Mr. Constable of New York, a house at Bordentown, and a farm in New Rochelle. The stock and interest in the bank which Mr. Willing manages for me is the easiest negotiated. I shall be very glad if you can manage this matter for me, by giving credit for two hundred pounds on London, and receiving that amount of Mr. Willing. I am not acquainted with the method of negotiating money matters, but if you can accommodate me in this, and will direct me how the transfer is to be made, I shall be much obliged to you. Please direct to me under cover to Mr. Trumbull. I have some thoughts of coming over to France for two or three weeks, as I shall have little to do here until the bridge is ready for erecting.

On September 15, 1789 expresses his gratitude to Jefferson:

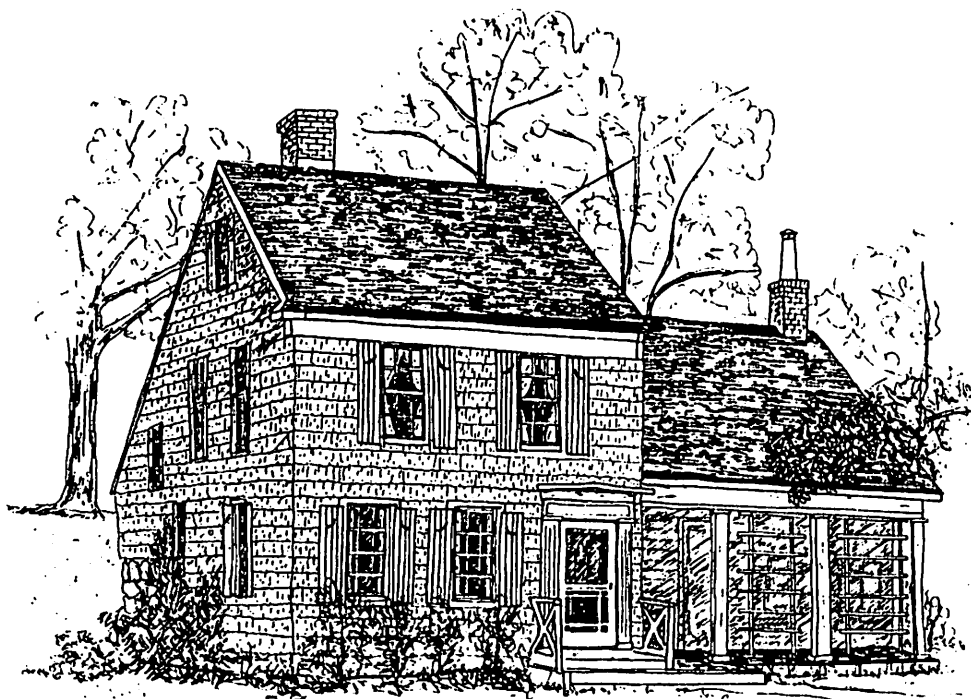
When I left Paris I was to return with the model, but I could now bring over a complete Bridge. Though I have a slender opinion of myself for executive business, I think, upon the whole that I have managed this matter tolerably well. With no money to spare for such an undertaking I am

sole patentee here, and connected with one of the first and best established houses in the nation. But absent from America, I feel a craving desire to return and I can scarcely forbear weeping at the thoughts of you going and my staying behind. Accept, my dear Sir, my most heartily thanks for your many services and friendship. Remember me with an overflowing affection to my dear America, the people and the place.

I shall be very glad to hear from you when you arrive.

I remain yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE



Thomas Paine Cottage, New Rochelle, N. Y.

A PAINE PILGRIMAGE
17-31 October, 1989

Eric Paine

I DECIDED to visit the United States in October as it was the month Paine had set out to go there in 1774, the first of his five journeys across the Atlantic. It so happened that my visit would coincide with the Annual General Meeting of the Thomas Paine-Huguenot Historical Society of New Rochelle. My journey contrasted greatly to Paine's in that it lasted a mere six and a half hours in comfort unlike his of nine weeks in great discomfort and illness. My object in going was to meet TPS members in the United States, visit places of Paine interest and do some research. My hosts at New Rochelle were Mr & Mrs Stapleton, and they were awaiting me at the station. Florence is Historian of the American organisation, and is a charming individual, a tireless and enthusiastic worker in the Paine cause. Within an hour of my arrival the terrible earthquake hit California and the media was full of it - was there a connection!!!?

Next day Mrs. Stapleton took me to visit the Paine Museum, which is shared with the Huguenots, refugees that had fled from religious persecution in France. The museum is in Paine's cottage, which had been moved from its original site. The museum has a lecture hall which has a portrait of Paine and houses a bust of him and several relics. There is also a splendid library where we spent an all too brief two hours. Near the museum and not far from where Paine had been buried is a monument to him, erected in 1839.

The following day I paid a return visit and ^{heard} had an interesting talk ^{with} the President of the New Rochelle society about Paine and womens' rights. On the Friday I ventured alone into New York to visit the United Nations, though the weather left much to be desired. At the United Nations I sat in on a debate about disarmament. I also joined a tour of the building which prompted me to conclude that despite all it's weaknesses the United

Nations has achieved a lot over the past forty years. The remainder of the day was spent in the City Museum of New York for a Thomas Paine browse.

On the Sunday I visited a Baptist church for what turned out to be a three hour spiritual jamboree. I thought Thomas Paine would have been pleased to see ladies all dressed in white taking a prominent role in the service, with a black lady preacher, and when they asked visitors to stand up and announce themselves, there was a round of applause when I told them I was on a "Paine pilgrimage".

In the afternoon I attended the AGM of the Thomas Paine-Huguenot Historical Society, at which I was invited to address the members. I congratulated them on the splendid way they guard and promote the Thomas Paine image, and the devoted manner in which they shoulder their responsibilities. I concluded my address with my "Human Rights Missionary Man" song. President Cooper, in his address to the society, reported on a visit to Paris he had made for the rededication of the Paine statue there. A proposal I made for support for an exchange visit in 1991 was well received. After the meeting a few of us went on to the splendid Thomas Paine Hotel at which we had "Tom Paine pie".

WASHINGTON

Our member David Henley drove me to Washington, stopping at Fort Lee, Morristown, where stands a magnificent statue of Paine in a lovely setting that any Paine enthusiast should make every effort to see. This statue should really be in Washington itself. We then went on to Bordentown to visit Paine's house there, which has been occupied for over sixty years by the charming Valentini sisters, both TPS members, who were most happy to see us. Another keen member of the TPS who lives in Bordentown, George Earle, came round to meet us and took David and I to see Col.Kirkbride's grave and monument. Mr.Earle took us out to dinner and it was 11.30pm before we eventually reached Washington and there I met David's charming wife, Nancy. David Henley is a great admirer of Paine and has collected

many interesting items related to him. He has made a detailed study of Paine portraits, and has an unrecorded example in his collection, perhaps the one Col. Trumbell presented to Jefferson in 1789. David supports the hypothesis that Paine wrote the letters of Junius, and had a child by his first wife, which he considers was adopted.

In Washington I took in the usual round of tourist sites. In the Smithsonian Institute I saw a model of Paine's bridge. In the Capitol there was no trace of any gratitude for Paine's role in the formation of the United States apart from a minor ceiling painting. A visit to the National Library allowed me to inspect original Paine documents and hear tapes of quotations from Paine used in the last war to encourage men to enlist in the services. These included Basil Rathbone reading the famous passage starting: "These are the times that try mens souls...." It was a pleasure to have dinner with Frank Smith, author of **Thomas Paine Liberator**, and Herbert Manius, who offered to help with the 1991 exchange proposal.

PHILADELPHIA

I went to Philadelphia by Greyhound coach, a journey of three hours. This was where Paine began his great work. I stayed at a youth hostel set in glorious parkland a few miles out of the city, where I met a party of Estonians and had a long discussion with one and distributed Paine literature to the rest. My first venue in Philadelphia was Independence Hall, a picture of Paine hangs there. Next I visited the Philosophical Society to inspect the Gimbel Paine Collection housed there. Looking at the original letters and other material made me realise just how close Paine was to many leading figures in three countries.

Benjamin Franklin is well commemorated in Philadelphia, and a modern "shrine" to him is found at the site of his family residence. Here is shown a sugary film about his life and recorded conversations take place between models dressed in period costume which rise from beneath the floor. The centre has ingenious computerised devices to stimulate visitors, and it was good to find that Paine's

role in American history was not ignored, but there is no portrait of him and no postcards showing him available at the shop. A visit to several other historical places in the city revealed that Paine is not portrayed in any, nor is it known where he lived, however, most of those I spoke to seemed to know something about him, though many were still ambivalent in their attitude to him.

So it was then back to New York, where I had the unpleasant experience of having my pocket picked at Grand Central Station, and discovered the New York police to be particularly unhelpful, to put it mildly. I wrote about this to the Mayor of the city, and also to the **Philadelphia Public Enquirer** about that city's general lack of public recognition of Paine's heroic stand for American independence (the letter was, I understand, published). In Washington I noted a statue of Edmund Burke.

I must express my heartfelt thanks to Mr & Mrs Stapleton, Mr & Mrs Henley, Ann Kalloudis, George Earle and the members of the New Rochelle society for their great help. An added bonus was to bring back a splendid bust of Paine by Gabriel Pierro, rescued from New Rochelle Town Hall by Mrs Stapleton, which will be "installed" at the "Bull", Lewes, next year by our new Vice-Presidents, Mr & Mrs David Henley as a gift from the United States.

In all my "pilgrimage" was a truly memorable and Paine expanding experience, which should hopefully make me more effective in talking about and working for the great man's ever continuing cause.

—o—



BOOK REVIEW

THOMAS PAINE, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THOUGHT

by Gregory Claey.

Unwin & Hyman, 1989.

THE author concentrates for the most part on one of Paine's best known political essays, **Rights of Man**. He dwells on the development of Paine's thinking from his early American writing set against the backcloth of natural law and rights expounded by Locke, Burke and others. Republicanism and radicalism, together with Paine's Quaker and deistic views. It analyses debates amongst historians and effectively demonstrates the underlying consistency in Paine's thinking.

Much consideration is given to the British reception of **Rights of Man**, and the successful efforts to abate temporarily the growth of the radical movement it inspired.

The author makes a strong point when he says that Paine attempted to do in **The Age of Reason**, without the aid of ancient languages, or comparison of manuscripts, a deep historical reading of the bible, its inconsistencies, illogical assumptions and contradictions, whilst still retaining a very respectful tone when referring to the life of Christ. Thus, says Claey, many of the opponents of **The Age of Reason** conceded with Paine that a deep connection existed between theology and politics by accusing his followers, the Paineites, of aiming first to destroy Christianity so that the British constitution would naturally follow suit.

The book is certainly a very stimulating read, tending to present a sophisticated new view of Paine. It has a good chronology and bibliography, good insights into how the repression of the 1790s was and the sad course of the French Revolution, combined to defeat the Paineite movement, but in no sense is it, or does it claim to be, a complete life of Thomas Paine.

Eric Paine

PAINE AUTHOR'S SUCCESS

TPS member, Alan Rosenberg, has had a play written by him on Thomas Paine broadcast at peak listening time on French State Radio. Broadcast in several instalments, the play seems to have been extremely well received. The author has since given a talk on Paine to the South Place Ethical Society at Conway Hall, a summary of which will be published in **The Ethical Record**. It is to be hoped that the BBC may eventually see their way to broadcasting the play.

MARIE-CLAIRE PASQUIER

34, RUE DE RICHELIEU - 75001 PARIS - 43 96 24 25

Paris, November 17, 1989

To whom it may concern

Some time in March 1989, I was contacted by France-culture who wanted my opinion on Pity the Plumage : A Life of Thomas Paine, by Alan Rosenberg. They thought it would be an interesting piece of work to produce before the end of 1989, the Bicentennial of the French Revolution.

I read the radio play and loved it, and spent the summer of 1989 translating it. Starting on December 4, 1989, it is going to be a serial of ten thirty-minute episodes at the "prime time" of 6 PM, and the person chosen to be responsible for the production is a young talented "réalisateur" by the name of Claude Guerre. He has worked on it with enthusiasm and, I trust, excellent results, although I have not yet become acquainted with his actual work. But the actors and technicians (among whom a musician) who worked with him were all equally enthusiastic.

This radio play (for which the French title finally chosen is Tom Paine, citoyen du monde) has, in my opinion, two main merits: one is the great deal of scrupulous research which went into the piece, with the use of historical documents which gives it the ring of truth and authenticity. The second one is its dramatic quality: the main protagonist, Tom Paine, is indeed a "citizen of the world", but also a man with his weaknesses, his contradictions, his recurrent unhappiness. He was, during his life-time, pursued by his enemies, slandered, put into jail, misunderstood. In a series of dramatic scenes, Alan Rosenberg makes us feel close to his main character, we share some of his dilemmas and disappointments. The freedom given by the medium of the radio allows us to follow Thomas Paine from Thetford, his native place, to America before and during the American Revolution, then to France at the time of the French Revolution. A number of secondary characters - among which Tom Paine's mother and his two wives, an Irishman with whom Tom Paine sails across the Atlantic for the first time and almost dies from typhus, his good friend the publisher Clio Rickman, his ideological opponent the famous Edmund Burke Lafayette and General Washington - provide lively episodes and many different points of view.

To sum up my opinion, this is a very professional piece of work which should have great success with a French audience. I would not be surprised if it was considered for a television program.

Marie-Claire Pasquier

© THOMAS PAINE SOCIETY
1990.