

## WILLIAM MORRIS MOORE (1813-1841)

William Morris Moore was the leader of the Chartists in Tewkesbury. The Chartists were organised in the *Tewkesbury Working Men's Association* of which Moore was secretary and treasurer. He was also a licensed Methodist preacher and active in the local temperance movement.

William Morris Moore was baptised in Hathern, Leicestershire on 11 July 1813, the son of William and Elizabeth Moore. In his youth he lived for some time in Belgium and France but by 1839 he was living in Jeynes Row, Tewkesbury, working as a stockinger.

His Chartist activity in and around the town was in 1839. He preached throughout the county, combining religion and politics in his sermons. He was involved in Chartist activities such as church 'sit-ins' and came into conflict with the likes of Cheltenham's Rev. Francis Close.

He left Tewkesbury in late 1839, allegedly absconding with the funds of the Working Men's Association although this is disputed. He is next heard of in Tewkesbury in 1841 where he was resident in the Workhouse; he died there on 21 July 1841. He left a 'death-bed confession' regretting his Chartist involvement, however its authenticity is disputed.

The following are transcripts of various letters and articles that were published that concerned William Morris Moore. I used them when researching and writing articles for the *Tewkesbury Historical Society Bulletin 19* (2010) 'Chartism in Tewkesbury and District' and *Bulletin 20* (2011) 'William Morris Moore (1813-1841)'. (See the THS website at [tewkesburyhistory.org](http://tewkesburyhistory.org) for details of this and other Society publications.)

I thought it would be useful to have this material transcribed and consolidated as a reference resource for this interesting character from Tewkesbury's political and religious past.

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## **Tewkesbury Chartist Meeting**

The Chartists sustained a miserable discomfiture and were compelled to make a dishonourable retreat from a meeting at Tewkesbury, on Tuesday evening last. We have received from a correspondent an excellent account of the transaction, but we are unfortunately precluded by a press of other matter from inserting his communication.

***Gloucester Journal* 8 June 1839**

## Chartist Meeting at Tewkesbury

Some of the Chartists have paid a visit to this town, but have met with signal discomfiture. The meeting was to have taken place on Tuesday evening at the White Lion, but much to the credit of the landlord of that Inn, he refused to allow his room to be used for such an unconstitutional purpose, and it was subsequently announced that the meeting would be held at the Oldbury. Every exertion was used to get a large meeting, both by stating that John Frost, Esq. And other *gentlemen* would be present, and by making personal applications to all who were considered likely to attend; but it was all to no purpose, the people were not to be deluded, and but few would attend; and of those who were present many went solely from curiosity, and to hear what the learned *gent'emen* would say. The Esquire did not make his appearance, but the scene was enlivened by the appearance of a female "patriot," who escorted two of the speakers to the meeting! Altogether the proceedings must have been very unsatisfactory to the revolutionary party, and it will, we should think, be long ere Tewkesbury is again troubled by the Chartists.

*Gloucester Chronicle* 8 June 1839

## **Chartist Meeting at Cheltenham**

**(Held in the uninhabited York Hotel Cheltenham, the three rooms of which were crowded by about 2,000 persons.)** part of article – that which related to Moore.

Mr. Moore then rose and said that when a stranger “alike unknowing and unknown,” came before an audience, it was but right that that audience should know something about him; he should therefore tell them that he had the honour to be the secretary of the Working Men’s Association at Tewkesbury. (Loud cheering.) He had been born among the higher classes; he had lived among the middle classes; and now he was reduced to what the Tories call the vagabond class, but which is more properly styled the class of men who work hard for their livelihood. (Loud cheers.) The lecturer then explained the right which every man had to enjoy the elective franchise, and said that the reasons given for withholding this their lawful right, was that the people of England were ignorant, drunken, and idle. That the people of England are ignorant he knew and deplored, but whose fault is it? Have they not for years supported an established church, the parsons of which as well as the dissenting parsons, have done all in their power to keep them in ignorance. Notwithstanding the maxims laid down by them in their pulpits that the people ought to study for themselves, when they find the people following their advice, they immediately turn round and exclaim, “Oh! These Chartists are nothing but a parcel of infidels.” (Loud cheers.) He would lay down one proposition, which he believed would not be denied by Atheists, Deists, Infidels, or any one else, viz., “That the author of our being wishes for us universal happiness ;” and therefore if that be the case, one class ought never to be rolling in riches while another class is working hard all day – ah! And oft times night, too, to support them in affluence. (Loud cheers.) We do not, said he, wished [sic] to live without work, but we do wish to have a fair day’s wages for a fair day’s work. (Loud cheers, and cries of, “That’s the ticket”) On that condition we are willing to work, and, said he, I was going to say on no other, for I believe that is the determination the working men generally have come to. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) He had travelled through England, France, and Belgium, and therefore was certain that he was correct, when he said that it was impossible to get a Frenchman to go to work in the morning until he had had his glass of brandy, while an Englishman takes a pride in getting up from his bed and going straight to his work; yet for all this, said he, we are told we are drunken. (Loud cheers.) My friends, said he, never give our enemies cause to say there goes a drunken Chartist. (Renewed cheering.) Some of you, said he, perhaps may know that in the lace business, which is the business with which I am connected, there is some very heavy work, and I will tell you that in the whole course of my experience, I never knew but three Frenchmen who would undertake the heavy frame, that being uniformly left for the English; yet for all this we are told that we are idle. (Loud cheering.) Who is it, said he, who walk on carpeted floors? (Cries of “Not the Chartists”.) Who is it that live in splendid mansions, and in the enjoyment of every luxury? (Cries of “Not the Chartists”.) Why the very men who tell us that we are idlers. (Renewed cheering.) In Tewkesbury, said he, as may be seen by the masters’ books, the wages paid do not average more than 6s. each man, out of which he has to pay 1s. 1½d. for frame rent, 6d. for seaming, 6d. for the rent of the room in which the frame stands, and in the winter 6d. for fire and candles. (Cries of “Shame, shame.”) When this was the case, and not one middle class man had come forward to help us, was it not time for us to bestir ourselves? (Hear, hear, and cheers.) After a few other remarks, Mr. Moore resumed his seat amidst great cheering.

*Cheltenham Free Press* 8 June 1839

**To the Editors of the Northern Star**

Gentlemen,— Perhaps you will not deem the following intelligence from an “ancient and loyal borough” as the town are pleased to call it, in the West of England, uninteresting; if

not you will greatly oblige your readers, in this said "borough," by inserting the same in your incomparably intelligent and useful paper. No doubt the Tories and Whigs think that the inhabitants of this "borough" have sufficient to make them "loyal;" and well they may, for we are somewhere about 700 stocking makers here, and the average amount of our wages is so enormous, as not to exceed six shillings a week per head, from which must be deducted 1s.0½. for frame rent; 6d. for seaming; 6d. for frame standing and taking in of work; 4d. for needles and winding of cotton; and in the winter there are additional expenses of fire and candles, making a total of about 2s.4½. expenses in the summer, and about 3s. in the winter, leaving in the summer 3s.7½. for bread, lodging, washing, and so on; and in the winter the astonishing sum of 3s. for the same purpose, per head per week. With this state of things, the working portions of this "ancient and loyal borough" have at length become very dissatisfied, and having heard a little concerning the "People's Charter," and believing that if the same Charter were to become the law of England, their worldly condition would soon be bettered, the consequence is that many of them have become Chartists. This is a great mortification to both Tories and Whigs, and from both these parties we meet with decided opposition, and even persecution in every shape and form. But nothing daunted, we are determined to co-operate with our brethren in other parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of gaining our object; our motto being "Universal Suffrage and no surrender." At a weekly meeting of the members of our Working Men's Association, held in their room on Monday evening, the 15<sup>th</sup> inst., the following resolution was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously:— "That in the opinion of this meeting, the recent outrages and bloody proceedings of an unconstitutional and blood-thirsty force from London, towards the peaceable inhabitants of Birmingham, sent thither by the Home Secretary, at the request of the Mayor and Magistrates of that borough, affords another proof that the administration of justice is the last thought of the practically infidel Whig Government; and also, that the working classes have no hope of obtaining a redress of their grievances, but from an effectual union amongst themselves, and an unqualified obedience to the National Convention of the Industrious Classes; we therefore resolve, "That whilst we regret that from the poor condition in which we are placed, we cannot afford to the Convention that pecuniary aid which we could wish; yet should the Convention need the assistance we can give, that assistance shall be forthcoming at their bidding." And on Monday evening, the 22d inst., the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:— "That we the members of the Tewkesbury Working Men's Association, in our weekly meetings assembled, do now soberly pledge ourselves to practically carry out to the utmost in our power, the five recommendations recently issued by the National Convention." We are not a little proud that our respected member, John Martin, Esq., voted for the National Petition.

Yours, very respectfully,  
WILLIAM MORRIS MOORE,  
Secretary.

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1839.

*Northern Star* 3 August 1839

**Letter accompanying that of the above letter from William Morris Moore**

Gentlemen,— After what Mr. Moore has said, it is my pleasing duty to inform you that we have a Female Radical Association in this borough, and though few in number, yet are we determined to do all in our power to assist our dear sisters in different parts of our beloved country, in their attempts to obtain for them and our husbands, brothers and sweethearts — Universal Suffrage. At our weekly meeting on Monday evening, the 22d inst., the following resolution was unanimously passed:— "That in the opinion of this meeting, the National Convention of the Industrious Classes, having been chosen by the people as their just rep-

representatives, to watch over and secure their just rights, ought to be obeyed by the same, we, therefore, resolve to adopt and abide by the five recommendations which they have just issued, to the utmost in our power.”

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,  
Yours, very sincerely,  
ELIZA HALE, Secretary.

***Northern Star* 3 August 1839**

## **Winchcomb.** [sic]

— A CHARTIST MEETING AT GRETTON — On Monday last, about 500 of the Chartists of Cheltenham proceeded to Winchcomb, with hand bells, and banners bearing the following mottoes “The Voice of the People,” “Cheltenham Female Democratic Association,” “Liberty of the Press,” “No Military Flogging,” “No Imprisonment.” “Radical Reform and Liberty of Conscience.” They were met at the entrance of Winchcomb by the Chartists of that town, with a banner bearing the inscription “Welcome.” They joined company and marched through the town, and shortly afterwards arrived at a field in the hamlet of Gretton, about two miles distant from this town, where, by permission of the owner, Mr. Capel, they held their meeting. There were nearly 1000 persons present. Mr. Banfield, jun. in the chair. The meeting, after singing a Chartist song commencing “The trumpet of liberty sounds through the world,” was addressed by the chairman, Messrs. Goding, Banfield, Bease, Moore, Spackman, and others. Resolutions were adopted expressive of their determination not to cease agitating until the Charter had become the law of the land, and their unbounded confidence in, and their willingness to obey all orders issued by the “National Convention.” No disturbance took place, and after giving three cheers for — Capel, Esq., the Convention, Vincent, Lovett, Collins and the chairman, returned in procession.

***Cheltenham Free Press* 17 August 1839**

## **Article following an account of the Chartist visit to St. Mary’s Church, Cheltenham on 18 August 1839**

— At 3 o’clock on Sunday afternoon, nearly 2,000 persons assembled in a field on the London road, to hear Mr. Moore, the Secretary of the Tewkesbury Working Men’s Associ-

## Winchcomb. [sic]

On Monday evening, pursuant to notice, which had been posted in the night time, some days previous in various parts of the town and villages adjacent, a Chartist procession, consisting of nearly 200 men and women, displaying their various banners, passed through this town from Cheltenham, on their road to Gretton, a hamlet belonging to, and about two miles distant from this place. On arriving there, they assembled in a field, belonging to Mr. Capel, of that place. After electing a chairman (one of their own party) the usual violent addresses were delivered by several of their partisans, calculated only to stimulate the more loyal and honest of all classes of society to feel doubly satisfied in the station in which Providence has placed them, rather than be deluded by those who seek only their own aggrandisement at the expense of others, and to the ruin of themselves. No tendency to a breach of the peace was manifested, and it is due to the more humble classes of persons in this town to add that they indicated a strong feeling against such a motley and apparently dissolute group. The procession did not return through Winchcomb, feeling, as those who composed it must have done from the support they experienced, that the inhabitants of this ancient town and neighbourhood are by far too loyal and well disposed to become converts to their cause. We have derived these particulars from the *Cheltenham Chronicle*. The *Examiner* gives a more detailed account of the proceedings, evidently written by one of the spouters. It is asserted that 500 persons were present Mr. Banfield jun. Was in the chair, and the other speakers were Mr. Goding, Mr. Bease of Tewkesbury, (who styled his hearers "brother slaves" and talked big about "little Finality"), Mr. Moore, secretary of the Tewkesbury Working Men's Association, Mr. Beecham of Cirencester &c. At the end of the meeting, three cheers were given for Capel, Esq. And three for the Convention, Vincent, Lovett and Collins. An address in favour of the convicts at Warwick was agreed to.

*Gloucestershire Chronicle* 17 August 1839

ation, who has taken out a licence to preach, deliver a discourse on the principles of the Peoples Charter, which he undertook to prove were in accordance with the Scriptures. He took his text from the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter of Jeremiah, and the three last verses. He spoke for about an hour and a quarter, he compared the English people to the Jews of old, explained the objects of the intended rural police bill, which he stated was exactly similar to the French spy system, which he had himself witnessed, and concluded by begging the Almighty to open the eyes of the rulers of the land, to the danger of anarchy and convulsion which threatened them if they did not administer justice to the poor, and remove the misery and suffering of the people. After singing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," the people quietly returned home, several highly respectable tradesmen were present. Mr. Moore was a commercial Traveller and also a Wesleyan Minister, since a stocking maker.

***Cheltenham Examiner* 21 August 1839**

## Tewkesbury

The long anticipated three days of sacred rest passed over in this borough without any demonstration, expressive of the workingmen's past and present deplorable condition; and were it not for the pseudo-patriotism of two or three sycophants, but few chartists would be found in this town. Some months ago it was asserted that upwards of 189 Chartists were enrolled in the Working Men's Association; now, however, their numbers have dwindled below fifty, their fund is barely sufficient to defray the expenses of the room in which they meet, and great difficulty is occasioned in getting a muster even amongst the zealous and the lukewarm. Their secretary has been spouting at Cheltenham, Winchcomb, and other places in the vicinity, and on every occasion, in no great extacy [sic], announces the important and honourable situation he has held in Tewkesbury, but he forgets to inform his auditory that a few months ago he was dismissed from the society of the Tewkesbury Teetotalers, for wishing to disseminate [sic] his rancourous [sic] principles in that respectable body, that he subsequently, by letter, couched in no very moderate terms, insulted one of our most respectable inhabitants, and has since not "done unto others as he would others should do unto him," a maxim he frequently alludes to in his Chartist perambulations.

*Cheltenham Examiner* 21 August 1839

## **To the Editor of the *Cheltenham Free Press***

Sir, — Perhaps you will be kind enough to insert the following, in reply to a statement which appeared in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* of Thursday last, respecting the Chartist Meeting at Winchcombe.

In the first place, it says “the bills had been posted in the night time,” which is a direct falsehood. To say nothing of the tissue of misrepresentations it contains with regard to numbers, describing some of the most respectable tradesmen of this town as a motley and dissolute group, &c., it says “the Chairman was one of their own party.” Now this is meant to question the character of the gentleman who took the chair; I challenge the writer of the article to prove if the Chairman’s character does not stand as high, if not much higher, than his own. He says the usual violent addresses were delivered. The fact is, not one violent word was spoken, and I have attended several Chartist meetings, and am convinced milder language could not have been used, to which, I believe, the agents of the Reverend intimidator who tried to frighten them from holding a meeting can bear witness. The speech of that worthy young man Mr Moore, of Tewkesbury, inculcated better Christianity and morality than many of the clergymen of the Established Church preach, whose humble slave the Editor of the *Chronicle* is. The working men of Winchcombe, so far “from feeling strongly against them,” met them with a banner inscribed “welcome,” and escorted them to the place of meeting. The reason the Chartists did not return through Winchcombe was because they went a much nearer way home, and not because the loyal inhabitants would not countenance them. The writer of the article, like the aristocracy, as Mr. Moore observed, do not pay much attention to that divine command of “doing unto others as they would be done unto.” Had he done so such untruths would not have appeared. The article is not worth notice, but many persons may be led away with the idea that there are no Chartists in Winchcomb, which is quite the reverse. He may rest assured his calumnies will not be noticed in future by any honest man.

I am, Sir A FRIEND TO FAIR PLAY

Aug. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1839

***Cheltenham Free Press* 24 August 1839**

## Part of article following an account of the Chartist visit to St. Mary's Church, Cheltenham on 18 August 1839

In the afternoon of Sunday, upwards of 1,000 persons assembled in a field on the London Road, near Cheltenham, to hear a sermon from Mr. Moore of Tewkesbury. After singing two hymns from Wesley's hymn book, and praying, Mr. Moore arose and took his text, the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses of the 1st chapter of the prophecies of Jeremiah. He divided [sic] the text into three heads, 1<sup>st</sup>, The command, 2<sup>nd</sup>, The Qualification, and 3<sup>rd</sup>, The purport of the mission. After some prefatory remarks he explained these several heads. He said that for a long time the children of Israel were under the tyrannical vassalage of King Pharaoh, they were delivered from that vassalage by Moses, and after wandering for 40 years in the wilderness, at last arrived at the promised land. They lived happily for a long time under a democracy, till at last, they demanded a King, the king was granted them, and it was then that their troubles began. He said that the history of the children of Israel was the most interesting history that had ever been written, and it was always the case that the afflictions that were brought upon them, were from sins committed by their kings or priests, and never for sins committed by the common people. For even when our Saviour suffered, it was the priests who induced the people to cry out "Away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him," for had they requested the people to cry out for his release, or only have left them alone to themselves, he would never have been crucified. The prophet Jeremiah was therefore sent "against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the priests thereof," to declare unto them the word of the Lord. The speaker said he hoped that no person would go away with the impression that in speaking against kings he was speaking against the sovereign of this country; he trusted they would not substitute *Quee for Ki* ! but he would not give them occasion, for he would not say anything seditious. He afterwards referred to the condition of England, he said that some years ago, the rich were safe, and the middles class men were prosperous and the poor were happy. The constitution of the country was then good; he would not say it was not so now, then only the bad laws had been suffered to remain, while the good laws had been taken away and exchanged for bad. He said that the French was carried on against the wish of the majority of the English; it was carried on to prevent liberty abroad and to keep down liberty at home. To carry on this war, money was of course wanted, and although the aristocracy had then sufficient money to have themselves brought all the troops in Europe against Napoleon; they brought upon this country a weight of debt which is not equalled by any country in the world, it amounts to upwards of 800 millions, although there is no country in the world so well able to keep out of debt. To procure money to pay the interest of this debt they put taxes on the bit of bread which the poor had to eat; and therefore, devised the damnable system of the Corn Laws. If there was any person then present who thought that they did not wish the repeal of those laws, because they refused to sign petitions against them, he assured them that the only reason for that refusal was that they believed then, and their suspicions have since proved true, that the House of Commons would not at all regard the petitions. He said that a few years ago they made a precious jump in reform, for they jumped from Tories to Whigs. Before the Whigs got into office they promised to repeal these laws and give us several boons, and when they were in office, said he, what did they give us! Why they gave us the New Poor Law! A law which is at once unnatural in its provision, inhuman in its operations, and damnable in its results. When he sees in the scriptures, "Whosoever God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," he was surprised to hear, as he did, a minister of the largest body of dissenters say, that that passage does not refer to the poor man but only to the rich. He said that he contemplated something more terrific than had ever yet happened from the working of the rural police bill which Lord John Russell had just brought before the House of Commons. The police would be exactly

similar to the French *gend'arms*. That word, said he, is derived from *gen* the people *d'* of *armes* arms; but instead of their being people raised from the people to protect the people, they were only raised to insult the people, and protect the Government who spend the people's money in their support. He said that in the event of this bill being passed, there would be in Cheltenham, a body of foot police, with blue jackets of course, who would march to and from the Station House with short cutlasses, at stated intervals, under regular military discipline; and if they were to see two or three persons collected together in the street, and speaking on any subject, whether public or private, one of them would come and stand close to them, and listen to what they were saying, and if they civilly request him to move on, he will call another and they will very complaisantly march them down to the Station-house, between them. Again there would be a body similar to what the French call *d'annays*, and they would have the power of making any person who came into the market with a basket, empty out the contents on the ground, to show that they had no smuggled goods about them. Again they would have horse patrols, who would be provided with the best horses in the kingdom, and if they happened to meet a person about two miles from the town, who had not been to the Town Hall in the morning to get a certificate, for that offence he would be taken back, and be, perhaps, committed to prison for two months. He said that when he told a minister some time ago, that the Chartists only wished to make themselves and every one about them happy, the minister replied that God never intended that they should be happy in this world. He then said, that if God did not make man to be happy he would not own him for a God; for if he did not make him to be happy, he made him to be miserable. Happiness alone is a blessing, misery is a curse, and if that is the case he would return a curse for a curse, and resort to nature and reason and live happier; but if the ministers would take the gospel and preach from it the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, then they would find that the world may be happy. If he had any children he would give them four kinds of education, moral, scientific, political and religious. He stated that the stocking weavers of Tewkesbury, after working 12 or 13 hours a day, received on an average but 6s. a week, out of which, they have to pay for the expenses in the factory, 2s. 4½d. in the summer, and 3s. in the winter! He stated some of the barbarous cruelties practised under the factory system, and observed that as this state of things had been brought on by exclusive representation, the only way to remedy it, was by a system in which every one will be represented. He then explained the four points in the Charter for which they were agitating. He exhorted, besought, and entreated them to obey the laws of the land, while they are the laws, but to examine them publicly and express their opinion of them. After the meeting had sung a hymn and the benediction had been pronounced, the company quietly dispersed.

***Cheltenham Free Press* 24 August 1839**

## To The Rev. Francis Close

*Cheltenham, Sept 2, 1839.*

Rev. Sir, – I understand that in the course of a discussion which took place between you and Mr. William Milsom a few days ago you had the monstrous audacity to say that I preached blasphemy in my sermon on the London-road, that I was a drunken, idle, and dissolute fellow, and that I was turned out of the Tewkesbury Tee-total Society for my habits of drunkenness, these Sir are serious charges for a minister of the Establishment to bring against a public character like myself: I have nothing to say against your character, but I now demand of you a proof of the truth of these different charges, by the asserting of which you have thought proper to attempt the blasting of my reputation, and as it respects the principles of the People's Charter, which principles I have espoused and am doing my utmost to propagate, and though I am comparatively illiterate, am a member of the Working classes, and have not the facilities of obtaining knowledge which you have, yet, if you like, I will meet you on the platform of any public meeting you may think proper to call for the purpose, and I will there prove the rationality and Biblical character of those principles, and you, if you can, shall disprove the same. I have the honor [sic] to be, very Rev. Sir, your Fellow-citizen.

WILLIAM MORRIS MOORE,  
Jeynes-row, Tewkesbury

*Cheltenham Free Press* 7 September 1839

## Tewkesbury — Chartist Sermon

At six o'clock on Wednesday week, Mr. W.M. Moore of this town preached a sermon at the Oldbury, from the first three verses of the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis. After alluding to the powers of knowledge and the different sources from which it might be acquired, Mr. Moore divided his text as follows:—First. The great gift of God to man and every thing which moveth, &c. He insisted that it could not be inferred from this text that God only intended a part of mankind to be possessed of the blessings of food as we now see it to be the case. He understood the meaning of that portion of the text to be that as Noah was the second general head or representative of mankind, and as all who should come into the world after him were then considered as in his loins, that this gift was given to Noah simply with a view that all who now live as well as all who were then living should have a sufficiency of those blessings and to spare. — Second. The purpose of God in the bestowment of this gift. God, as an infinitely wise being, having by his power created man, knew by his wisdom what would be the best for the sustenance of the life of man, and seeing that animal and vegetable food would be the most conducive to man's happiness as far as nourishment was concerned he bestowed upon man these inestimable blessings. After briefly alluding to the fact that this purpose of our beneficent Creator had been perverted, and to the bad effects of such perversion, he proceeded in the third place to to [sic] inquire into the cause of these bad effects, which he showed to arise, not so much from the sins of the poor, either individually or as a body, as from the tyranny of the great, who, by the formation and enactment of bad laws, produced an incalculable amount of misery which drove men to the commission of vice, and by this course of procedure [sic] produced misery upon misery. In the fourth place he pointed out a few means by a practical adherence to which, he said the poor might regain those great blessings of the Lord. I have been charged, said he, with being an infidel and with creating discontent. I deny these charges altogether, and I say that we were all created by one God, that we have all sinned against God, and that our first duty is to repent toward that God and to make our condition known unto him, but if we are to have repentance as a means of removing national sins, let the repentance itself be national. Mr. Moore affirmed that he believed that Her Majesty knew nothing of the misery now prevailing in England, for he believed her to be of a disposition too kind, too well disposed, and too much bent upon the happiness of her subjects to suffer things to go on as they are if she was rightly informed of the state of the country, thereby removing all blame from Her Majesty and placing it upon the shoulders of Her Majesty's ministers, who either did or ought to know of the suffering of the people. He said let Her majesty's ministers repent, let the bishops repent, let us have an example of repentance from the great, for it is a sin in the sight of God to be always sending the poor to hell for their wickedness, whilst the rich are suffered to go on unreprieved. He exhorted them to be united amongst themselves, and by a reliance upon God and union amongst themselves he had no doubt but that they would soon see England rise into Comfort and happiness.—Upon the whole it was the most interesting meeting of the kind ever held in this town.

*Cheltenham Free Press* 14 September 1839

(From an article describing a Chartist meeting in Cheltenham)

Mr. Moore – I am quite happy to meet the Cheltenham friends on this occasion, but I have one favour to ask of you. Will you allow me to speak with my hat on, as I have a very bad cold? (Cries of On! yes.) I went down the streets of Cheltenham this morning and was indulged with a very unexpected hearty laugh. I saw upon the wall of some place, I don't know what you call it, bills issued by the magistrates, cautioning the people against attending these meetings, and stating that they were at the Public office, waiting to swear in special constables. This, as I told you before, produced a hearty laugh from me, to think that the magistrates were swearing in special constables because a meeting was about to be held to hear such a great long-legged giant as myself! Oh dear! Oh dear! If it had been the case that they were coming with their bloated faces and corpulent bellies to speak, it would have been necessary for our own protection for us to swear in special constables. (Cheers and laughter.) There are two causes why the people of England have been so long without gaining their rights. The first cause is the long and protracted dissension which has existed among the working classes. They have been induced at elections to cry out "I'm a Whig," and "I'm a Tory." No doubt conscientiously, because each thought that his party would do most for the good of the country; but they have been awfully deceived down to the present time. In future, let the Whigs support themselves and the Tories themselves, and let the working class support their own party. The second cause, to which I ascribe it, is the Church. The Church of England is always trumpeting [sic] up something against the Church of Rome, and the Church of Rome against the Church of England. The great principle of the Christian religion is love to your neighbour. But as we find that they do not inculcate this either in churches or chapels, we are induced to stop away from both. In churches and in Dissenting Chapels in particular, the ministers have been raised from the people, yet as soon as they enter the pulpit they tell us that if we touch politics our religion is gone. Let all the different sects agree upon two points, and surely there are two points upon which they can agree, one in reference to man in another world, and the other in reference to him in this, placing that which refers to this world first. They all agree on the subject of God's great gift to Noah, that God gave the whole world to him for the use of all mankind who were then supposed to be in his loins. If they agree upon this they must also agree that the working classes have been robbed of this by class legislation. Let them pursue this and they will, at last, come to the Charter, and I will venture to say that if they agitate for the Charter it will be the law of the land in a month. Mr. Moore concluded by seconding the second resolution, which was put by the Chairman and carried.

***Cheltenham Free Press* 14 September 1839**

### **Winchcomb.** [sic]

— CHARTIST SERMON. — On Sunday afternoon Mr. Moore, of Tewkesbury, delivered a sermon to a large concourse of people in the open space opposite the Old Abbey field. He took his text from the 9<sup>th</sup> verse of the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter of Proverbs, “Open thy mouth, judge righteously, plead the cause of the poor and needy.” After giving an affecting description of the wretchedness prevalent in England, and showing by how far the greater part of this wretchedness was produced by bad legislation, he proceeded to explain that it was the duty of kings, queens, rulers and religious ministers implicitly to obey the injunction of his text, and denounced in strong yet just terms all those who refused to do so. The meeting was well attended, and the persons who composed it appeared to be highly gratified.

*Cheltenham Free Press* 14 September 1839

## Cirencester – The Chartists at Cirencester

On Sunday last. Mr. Moore of Tewkesbury, delivered a sermon in the Market-place, to an assemblage of upwards of 2,000 persons. He took his text from Jeremiah, Chap., 1<sup>st</sup>, vs., 17, 18, 19, and proceeded in a forcible manner to denounce the crimes of the great as a principle cause of the vices and miseries of the poor. He was listened to throughout with deep attention – his observations upon the Poor-law affected many, even to the shedding of tears, and it was with great difficulty that the people could be restrained from openly and vehemently expressing their applause. Mr. Moore announced in conclusion that he would again address them in the afternoon, and that a public meeting would also take place the following evening at five o'clock – from 4,000 to 5,000 persons had assembled in the Market-place, but the moment Mr. M. began to speak, the church bells struck up and drowned his voice with their clamour. An adjournment immediately took place to the London road, the people forming an irregular procession, reaching from the top to the bottom of Dyer Street. The service, which occupied an hour and a half, was here suffered to proceed without interruption, and the utmost order and decorum prevailed throughout. At half-past six on the Monday evening, (the hour appointed for the public meeting) the rain descended in torrents, and it was in contemplation to abandon the open air meeting and invite the females to hear an address from Mr. Moore, in the Association Rooms. The rain, however, having abated, and it appearing that a great number of persons had assembled in the Market-place, Mr. Moore and his friends proceeded towards the spot, but when they reached the top of Cricklade Street, some working men (willing, it would appear, to act as the tools of the aristocracy) commenced an interruption, which brought on a fight. Knowing that occasion would be taken to lay the blame of any disturbance on the Chartists, and suspecting that this was part of a preconcerted [sic] plan to throw the meeting into confusion, it was deemed advisable to retire to the room where the Working Men's Association hold their meetings. Mr. Beecham was called to the chair, but when he had proceeded about ten minutes in his address, the pressure became so great that it was impossible to proceed; an adjournment accordingly took place to the open air, and to avoid all pretext for interruption it was agreed that Mr. Moore should preach a Chartist sermon. Excepting that several lawyer's clerks clubbed round to buy twopenny worth of crackers, and that the gentleman who lately persuaded his friends that he was a candidate for the coronership [sic], was seized with an uncontrollable [sic] desire to bellow. – No disturbance occurred. We have not heard that any "specials" were sworn in, but the public houses were ordered to be closed at ten o'clock

*Cheltenham Free Press* 21 September 1839 (From a Correspondent.)

## **Charlton Sermon**

Mr. Moore delivered a short address to about 200 principally country people in the Green Lane, near Charlton on Sunday afternoon. He took for his text the 42 chapter of Isaiah, 22 and 23 verses, "But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith ,Restore. Who among you will give ear to this? Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?" In consequence of Mr. Moore, being very unwell, he did not speak at any length, but having shown the applicability of his text, to the condition of the working people of England; and having pointed out a few means, by the adoption of which in his opinion general distress might be removed; the people retired very peaceably, apparently quite satisfied with what they had heard; several expressed themselves converts to the cause he espoused though previously opposed to it.

***Cheltenham Examiner* 25 September 1839**

## **Chartist Sermon**

It was announced that Mr. Moore of Tewkesbury, would preach at Leckhampton on Sunday afternoon, but he suffered under so severe an indisposition that he was unable to fulfil his promise. The afternoon however proving more than usually fine he preached at Charlton to a small concourse of persons who assembled at a very short notice. He took for his text from the 22d and 23d verses of the 42d chapter of Isaiah; “But this is a people robbed and spoiled, they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses, they are for a prey, and none delivereth for a spoil, and none saith restore. Who among you will give ear to this? Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?” He spoke from this for a short time, during which he explained the similarity of the condition of the working men of England to that of those spoken of in his text, and also told them the means by which he considered their evils might be removed. – Not the slightest disturbance took place.

***Cheltenham Free Press* 28 September 1839**

## Winchcomb [sic] - Chartist Sermon

On Sunday afternoon, Mr. Moore delivered a Sermon to a large concourse of people, in the open space opposite the Abbey-field, in this town. After the preliminaries had been gone through by a friend Mr. Moore rose and spoke to the following effect:- I hope that you will every one pay particular attention to the first few words I shall speak. I understand that it is the intention of some individual or individuals to interrupt the peaceable proceedings of this meeting; symptoms of this I already perceive, but, I have to inform such individuals, that though the magistrates sat last week to consider on the best means of putting me down, and though they themselves may feel an inclination to interrupt me, that I have in my pocket that which gives me as much legal authority for preaching here as your parish parson has for preaching in the pulpit of your parish church, and that, if I am interrupted, I shall most assuredly compel the magistrates, notwithstanding their objection to me, to punish the offenders. I request of you who are my friends that should I be molested you will offer no resistance, be peaceable yourselves, and do me the favour of giving me the names of those who may cause the disturbance. (A female voice – “Ah! That I will,”) This caution had the desired effect, and everything went on very peaceable. Mr. Moore took for his text Isaiah chapter x., 1 and 2 verses. “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgement, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” After showing the peculiar applicability of the text to our present rulers and masters of almost every kind – the dreadful consequences of bad legislation and administration – commenting at some length on the philosophy of Malthus and Charus – showing the still more awful consequences of such philosophy being acted upon – and denouncing ministers of religion for not rising up and opposing such damnable doctrines and proceedings – Mr. M. said, I now demand, in the name of God, of all that are in authority, of kings, queens, princes, lords, dukes, legislators and administrators, but especially of Christian ministers, I say, I demand of them all justice to the poor, which should they refuse. I then point them all, without exception, even including the mitred bishops themselves, I say, I point them all to hell as their future destiny. “Woe unto them,” &c.; and after exhorting his hearers to be united, and to give themselves to religion and to the God of religion, he concluded, leaving the people anxious for more knowledge. All terminated peaceably. – *Communicated.*

**Cheltenham Free Press 5 October 1839**

## **Chartist Sermon**

— Mr. Moore, the Chartist preacher, delivered a discourse to about 4000 Chartists, nearly half of whom were females, on Sunday last, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> [probably in fact 5<sup>th</sup>] chapter of Jeremiah, and 29<sup>th</sup> verse. He commenced his discourse at three o'clock, and concluded about half-past four. After the service, twelve small wooden boxes were carried round, and 3l.16s. were collected for the incarcerated brethren. Mr. Moore intimated his intention of paying another visit to this neighbourhood.— Cheltenham Free Press.

***The Charter* 20 October 1839**

## Chartist Sermon

— It having been announced that Mr. Moore would preach on Hampton Common on Sunday afternoon, the 6th inst., the Sabbath was accordingly desecrated by the assembling of some thousands of persons on Whitfield's Tump, where Mr. Moore delivered one of his most violent and inflammatory addresses under the cloak of a sermon, taking as his motto the 29th verse of the 5th chapter of Jeremiah ; "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" A considerable sum of money was collected towards the support of the wives and families of the incarcerated Chartists; a hymn was sung and the meeting quietly and peaceably separated .— *Examiner*.

*Gloucestershire Chronicle* 12 October 1839

## Cheltenham

Chartist Tea Party.— On Tuesday evening last, the Chartists of this town gave a tea party in the large room of the Emporium. At a quarter-past seven o'clock upwards of four hundred persons had assembled, among whom were many of the fairer half of creation. The tea-table was well supplied with everything usual on these occasions, and gave great satisfaction to the numerous guests. When tea was over, Mr. Gooding (who officiated as chairman) addressed the company in a brief and appropriate speech; and was followed by Mr. Moore, of Tewkesbury; Mr. Bonfield, Mr. Towzer, &c. &c. Recitations, songs, and sentiments, were given between the speeches. The thanks of those present were then unanimously voted to Thomas Henney, Esq., for his kindness in allowing them the use of the room; and the remainder of the evening (sic) was passed in dancing. The company broke up at twelve o'clock, highly delighted with their evening's entertainment.

*Northern Star* 26 October 1839

## Tewkesbury

—The Chartists in this Borough are now defunct. Moore, the Secretary of the Working(?) Men's Association has left the town, and duped the members out of their pence! This individual was recently furnished with a suit of clothes by the Chartists of Cheltenham, and a number of framework knitters in Tewkesbury raised him the money to purchase a licence for preaching, in order that he might the more easily avoid conviction, for his seditious language at Chartist meetings, held at Cheltenham, Stroud, Winchomb, Tewkesbury &c. *The Vindicator*, a Chartist weekly publication, which, only a few months ago, was extensively circulated here, is now wholly discontinued, and thus the revolutionary tide is, happily checked in this vicinity.

***Cheltenham Free Press* 23 November 1839 (from a Correspondent)**

## James Bennett's Register 1839

Nov.—The small knot of Chartists, or, as they termed themselves, the “Working Men’s Association,” in Tewkesbury, became suddenly extinct, through their secretary and treasurer, a journeyman stocking-maker, having run away with the society’s purse and the few penny subscriptions it contained. This individual, having obtained a licence to preach, in order that he might the better avoid being disturbed in his mischievous avocation, periodically travelled into the neighbouring towns and villages, disseminating seditious and revolutionary doctrines; he was usually accompanied by another stocking-maker, from Nottingham, who acted as his clerk, and whom, for a trifling reward, he afterwards betrayed, causing him to be apprehended for deserting his wife and children. The chartists here, at any time were only few in number, and never had a leader of the least influence or talent: at the period of the outbreak at Birmingham, they boasted of having one hundred and eighty members, though it is doubtful whether they could ever muster more than half that number.—On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, Henry Vincent, the notorious chartist delegate, (who was afterwards convicted of sedition and conspiracy at Monmouth,) visited this borough, and induced a number of persons to assemble at the Queen’s Arms, to whom he made a long harangue, eulogising the “people’s charter” and the “national convention,” abusing the parliament and the clergy, and urging his auditors to insist upon universal suffrage and vote by ballot, which were to form a panacea to all their ills, social and political.—On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June it was publicly announced, that “John Frost, esquire,” the celebrated ex-mayor and magistrate of Newport, (who is now undergoing the punishment of transportation for life,) would on that evening address the admirers of chartist principles in the Oldbury: few persons were attracted even by the announcement of this luminary’s appearance; and those who attended were wholly disappointed, for the “great man” was so busily engaged in maturing his plans for the premeditated attack upon Newport, that he could not at that time be spared so far from home.—For several months, during the summer, the deluded chartists assembled nightly in a hired room in Church-Street, and on Sundays frequently preached in the open air in the immediate neighbourhood of the town.—On Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August a party of them walked over to Cheltenham and accompanied their brethren there to St. Mary’s Church to hear divine service, where they somewhat misconducted themselves, one of the Tewkesbury men being sent to prison and afterwards fined by the magistrate for being drunk. And on the following Sunday, in expectation that the Cheltenham chartists would join them here, about thirty of the body attended morning service at the Abbey Church, where their behaviour was not very exceptionable, though it was evident that their object in thus assembling was not with any view to edification and improvement.

*Bennett’s Register 1839* pages 426-427

## Death of William Morris Moore, The Chartist

Our readers will remember that many months since, a man named Moore, from Tewkesbury, was in the habit of preaching Chartist sermons in the open air, in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham, and that he decamped with the money-box of the Tewkesbury Chartists. Since that time we have heard nothing of him until this week, when it was announced that he had expired in the Tewkesbury workhouse, another proof of the truth of the maxim "Honesty is the best policy." Since his death the following has been published in the shape of a tract, under the title "Chartism and Infidelity," and our ears have been dinned by the "flying booksellers" who have been hawking it about the street as "the last dying confession of the wicked Charterist, Moore." We have some doubts of its genuineness, however our readers shall have it and judge for themselves. It is as follows: – "Notwithstanding the manifold and faithful preaching of the blessed Gospel, with which the Lord has favoured this our land, in these our days are but comparatively few of our youth who pay a strict regard to its records, or who, from their heart, make it the rule of their faith and practice. I have been one of these thoughtless individuals. But I am persuaded that there ever was, and ever will be to man in general, a period in the dispensations of the Almighty, when he shall be brought to serious reflection on the life which he has led in this present world. – To this period, the Lord hath now brought me; and, that, by the general method which He adopts with the children of men, – *affliction*. It is on this bed, on which I expect very soon to terminate my days, that through the sparing mercy of God, I have had time for sad, melancholy, and unhappy reflections on a life so far spent in sin, and in the propagation of wickedness. Yet now after all, I have to bless God for so long a space in which to repent, and to seek to obtain peace with Him; and I trust, yea, I have a full confidence that through the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ my Saviour, having been brought through the teaching of His Holy Spirit to feel myself a sinner, whenever it may be the Lord's will to call me hence, I shall meet with acceptance at His right hand in glory. These are my true sentiments. I also bear full testimony that I have experienced great kindness from the Master and Mistress of this House, since here I have been. Now I come to that period of my life, to which I wish more particularly to refer. And, I here solemnly declare on what I expect to be soon my dying bed, and beford [sic] that God in whose presence I expect shortly to stand a naked spirit, that I repent of ever joining the Chartist Association. Little did I think that I was going to surround myself with, men of principles so contrary to those of pure Religion. Oh! That I had listened to Christian advice! And I now wish it to be known throughout Tewkesbury and the Neighbourhood, that I sincerely regret having so awfully prostituted the word of God, as I did by getting people together on blessed Sabbath days, and preaching Sermons three parts Politics, and the rest little less than Scepticism. And if I did, as it is feared I did, lead any one astray by my influence, I hope they may hear these my dying words; and immediately, by Divine Mercy, return to the paths of life. And as for some of those who were my principal associates, and whose Infidelity has even prompted them to oppose Ministers of the Truth of God, I pray you to take warning before it is too late. Were you in my circumstances I trust you would think and feel differently; but I assure you that if you die as you are, five minutes suffering under the vengeance of an angry God will take away all your Infidelity. Take warning and may the Lord have mercy upon your souls.

(Signed) WILLIAM MORRIS MOORE, Tewkesbury Union Workhouse, July 7, 1841.

*Cheltenham Free Press* 31 July 1841

## James Bennett's Register 1841 – Death Notices

July 21.— In the Tewkesbury Union Workhouse, aged 29, William Morris Moore, an itinerant Chartist preacher of some celebrity. On his death-bed he voluntarily drew up a “declaration of his religious sentiments,” in which he deeply regretted ever having joined the Chartist association, lamented that he should have spent so much of his time “in the propagation of wickedness,” and “so awfully prostituted the word of God, by getting people together on blessed sabbath days, and preaching sermons three parts politics, and the rest a little less than scepticism.” His dying recantation was, at his express desire, published after his death, and most extensively circulated throughout the kingdom; and thus, by openly confessing his error, and warning his late associates against continuing in their infidel courses, he made all the reparation in his power for the evils which he had previously laboured to inflict upon society. This misguided man had naturally strong powers of mind, and an unceasing thirst for reading, and in early life had been placed in the way of receiving religious instruction, some of his relatives, by whom he was brought up, being members of the Wesleyan connection; and for some years before he went with his parents to Belgium and France, he pursued, as a youth, a consistent Christian course. To the absence of the means of public worship, and to his intercourse with infidel society abroad, he attributed the decay of his former serious impressions: while the fevered notions of “liberty and equality,” which he had imbibed in France, during the “three glorious days” in 1830, sowed in his mind the seeds of the revolutionary principles of Chartism. But whatever had been his former love of distinction and notoriety in becoming one of the leaders of this political sect, he evinced, during the long period of his sickness, sincere penitence for all his errors, and found effectual comfort in the truths he had learned in his earlier years.

*Bennett's Register* 1841 page 37

**The Late William Morris Moore**  
**TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHELTENHAM FREE PRESS**

Sir,— You will oblige me by the insertion of the following letter in the next number of the *Free Press* in answer to a Tract published in Tewkesbury by Mr Okell, he being a Member of the Mechanics' Institution in that capacity I address him and his Brother Members: —

Sir, — “A declaration of the religious sentiments of Wm. Morris Moore being voluntarily drawn up, signed, “sealed or delivered, it was published by his kind executor, at his “express desire,” hoping it may act as a salutary warning to those who have been led away with the error of the wicked; his friends nor any one hearing of this recantation from the principles he once held were surprised at the appearance of a manifesto, headed, “Chartism and Infidelity. [sic] However cogent may be the reasoning, and however candidly the conclusions may be stated, the integrity of the convictions will be always questioned, at least, by some who previously disapproved the conclusions themselves — it is, as Butler has written,

“They who are convinced against their will  
Are of the same opinion still.”

Thus , we may infer his opinions remained partially unchanged. After being disbanded from the Religious Association of Methodists amongst whom he had so long laboured as a preacher or in the vineyard, being also discarded by the *immaculate* Teetotallers for being Chairman at a Chartist Meeting, being a principal in forming their Association, after enduring repeated acts of tyranny, he did apply, and obtain a licence for what his *soi disant* administrator calls itinerant Chartist preaching.

Now, as to the “last will and testament.” I coincide there are but few who pay that regard to the Gospel, or take it as their rule and practice. The whole human family were created by one common Father, to whom was communicated equal benefits to all. Yet we have millions of starving people, and laws which say they shall not be fed, the rule is “Give us this day our daily bread.”

“I have been one of those thoughtless individuals, “&c. With the impropriety of his conduct we have nothing to do, his early convictions predominated, being well aware he had digressed from the rule of consistency, coupled with the circumstances in which he was then placed, having the healing balm applied — resign yourself, &c., might be an inducement to forego former professions. Man is actuated by an instinctive desire of happiness, and an instinctive aversion for evil — he must necessarily seek the one and avoid the other; but such is the difference of men’s moral constitution that individuals adopt different views of good and evil.

“The testimony of the great kindness he received from the master and mistress of the House,” &c. No doubt but he was grateful; and to that benign Government for the accomplishment of such a humane object, doubtless, after such a manifestation, greater charity and benevolence would be extended. I admire the philanthropy of his *assigns* in having it published in such a *cheap* form as it may be the means of (not inducing but) removing many unjust condemnations. “I repent of ever joining the Chartist Association” Liberty of

conscience is our motto. No reasons being adduced against Chartism, I must omit defining the fundamentals in the present letter, in case I might trespass on the indulgence of the Editor.

“Little did I think I was going to surround myself with men of principles so contrary to those of pure religion.” This would depend on *his* acceptation of the term, whether Church of Englandism, Socialism, or Mormonism, those are all defined as the pure religion? The reality of religious worship is the organic inward feeling, which is common to all mankind, whilst the outward forms and its supposed separate presence and attributes are mere ideality [sic] which consequently vary as usages vary with time and place. Nearly 2,000 years ago there came one, though no priest yet taught to the people the religion of love, who, denying priestcraft, sent forth a few fishermen to preach and minister to all. They had no priesthood, no separate interests, no tithes, no profit of the preaching.

“Getting people together on blessed Sabbath days and preaching sermons three parts politics,” &c. The observance of this day is no-where enjoined in the New Testament. It was customary with the Christians even in the fourth century to perform their usual work on that day, and we have the authority of Mosheim for asserting that many of them held Thursdays and Fridays quite as sacred as *Sun*-day. As to “Infidelity,” we are no Infidels! Though, certainly, not believers after the fashion. We follow a philosophy without egotism, not a blind faith in mystery that would fain give the *lie* to Nature. Ours is an enlightened faith without prejudice, this we are through real and positive knowledge. Our gospel is the whole universe, without sectarianism, and it is the true gospel of the people, for the people are the unsophisticated children of Nature. Your creed says, “be content!” I say, be discontent; a contented disposition is the paltriest character you can give of a man, it is next to calling him a coward.

Is it the religious or political affairs that has brought us to this destitution; are we not fleeced by the “Establishment” and the aristocracy, who are keeping up their establishments at the expense of the blood and sinews of the *people*, whilst the women and children of these hard-working men are allowed to starve or die by inches. So I remain your’s, &c. in the cause of human improvement,

FRANCIS HAYES  
Member of the Mechanics Institute  
Cheltenham 3 August 1841

[We take this opportunity of correcting a statement which we made last week about Moore having ran away with the money-box of the Tewkesbury Chartists. Our attention has since been called to a contradiction which appeared in the Free Press at the time, and we are now informed that the Tewkesbury Chartists had no funds at the time Moore left.]

**Cheltenham Free Press 7 August 1841**

**The Late William Morris Moore**  
**TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHELTENHAM FREE PRESS**

Sir,— I perceive in your paper of Saturday last a letter headed “The late William Morris Moore,” signed by Francis Hayes, a Member of the Cheltenham Mechanics’ Institute, and addressed to “Mr Okell,” or “his Brother Members” of the Tewkesbury Literary, Scientific, and Mechanic’s Association — an institution based on Christian principles and supported by all parties residing in the Borough of Tewkesbury. I know Mr Okell well, and I am convinced he will not trouble himself to notice Mr Hayes’ letter. Certainly as a printer, he is not bound to reply to the snarling remarks of one who has not boldness enough to deny the authenticity of the Tract he has published — which *authenticity* is all Mr Okell has to do with [it?], he is not called upon to defend the sentiments of the late W.M. Moore either concerning Chartist or Christian principles. Addressing Mr Okell as a Member of the Tewkesbury Mechanics’ Institutions, and adding also “his Brother members,” when neither he nor they had anything to do with the Tract, as members, is almost as much beside the purpose as are Mr Hayes’ flimsy arguments.

In support of the authenticity of the Tract, I beg leave to subjoin a copy of a letter (the original of which I myself saw recently received by Mr Okell, from the late W.M. Moore’s father, and which is appended to the second edition of the Tract.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant,

A LOVER OF TRUTH  
*Tewkesbury, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 1841.*

*(Copy of Letter from Mr Moore to Mr Okell)*

*Tewkesbury, Aug. [... ]*

Sir — Having been with my son very frequently during the latter stages of his illness, I can bear full testimony that the statements already published by you were his true sentiments and, having myself been too much disposed to take up Chartist principles, I would take this opportunity [of?] hoping, that all who have been so led astray, may take warning from the dying testimony of my son.

I am sir your humble servant.  
*To Mr Okell, Printer.*

WILLIAM MORRIS

***Cheltenham Free Press* 14 August 1841**

**“A Lover of Truth,” on the Late W.M.  
Morris Moore.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHELTENHAM FREE PRESS**

Sir,— The letter which appeared in your paper of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst., in answer to the Tract, signed by Wm. Morris Moore, and which I now find was hawked by an hired itinerant “flying stationer,” who rather precipitately decamped, from some reason best known to his *Christian brethren* of Tewkesbury. I again beg leave to offer a few remarks on the so-called “voluntary last testimony” of the late Wm. Morris Moore, and although the situation in which he was placed might be an incentive to forego his former sentiments, still, upon a review of the case, it has not, to me, a straightforward *voluntary* appearance.

I, acting in unison with others of Mechanics’ Institutions, to emancipate and improve the understanding, did address my letter to Mr Okell and his Brother Members of the Tewkesbury Mechanics Institution, (it being supported by *all parties*,) and couched in that charity and forbearance which Confucius enjoined, “Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you.” An anonymous scribbler, “A Lover of truth,” stated (on what authority he does not say.) Mr Okell will not answer the letter. In jest or in earnest I know not, but he says the Literary? Scientific! and Mechanics’ Institution! in Tewkesbury is based on Christian principles; this I deny, and will undertake to disprove. A reply to my charitable remarks I did not expect, but a coincidence was anticipated, which I hope has been effected, as I do not find any difference of opinion promulgated as yet. Mr Starkie, in his work, observes — “It is the undoubted right of every member of the community to publish his own opinions on all subjects of public and common interest. So long as he exercises this privilege candidly and sincerely, with a view to benefit society.” This “Lover of Truth” states “I had not boldness enough to deny the authenticity of the Tract.” This is a *sarling* remark. Truth is born with us, and we must do violence to nature to shake off our veracity. Would it not be ungenerous or the height of inconsistency in me to deny that which I was not privy to. Virtue is of intrinsic value, not the creature of will, not a mode of sensation but everlasting *Truth*, not dependent on power but the guide of all power! It procures us the approbation and love of all wise and good beings, and renders them our allies and friends. Remember that this alone is *honour*! Secure this and you secure everything, lose this and all is lost.

I accord with this stickler for “Truth,” when he says “Mr Okell or his Brother Members were not called upon to defend ‘Chartist or Christian principles,’ ” on which he seems to lay great stress. If he had acquired from the late Mr Moore a knowledge of the unjustifiableness of the demands made by the Chartists, he had also ample opportunity of showing how we had “erred and strayed!” The institution being on the broad principle! Literary! Scientific! and Mechanic! Supported by *all parties* in the borough! A more fitting opportunity could not have presented itself for addressing to them, as members (especially the Chartists), a few admonitory remarks. The “*flimsy arguments*” of my quondam friend are quite beside the purpose, if this portion of “*all parties*” has nothing to do with the Tract. *Non nobis solum sed toto munda nati*, (not being born for ourselves alone but for the whole world.) — Motto of Lord Rokeby. “Xerxes saw and bemoaned the condition of man.”

The confirmatory evidence of the authenticity by the letter signed by Wm. Moore, will not I think augment the *sale* of the production. Having been personally acquainted with his son, he has at different times revealed to me the injustice of the father to his children, by departing from the rule of morality! (nay, I had almost said, inculcating unnatural precepts,) which can, I assert, be vouched for by many “*parties*” in the borough. To substanti-

ate this, I fearlessly assert he is not and would not be accepted by the Literary! Scientific! and Mechanics' Institution as a member! Whatever may have induced him to give, or they to accept this, a *abrydge'd* letter, I cannot divine. His *zeal* for "Chartist principles" never emboldened him to contribute the smallest sum towards the propagation of them!

In every case of men you will find renegades. Ignorance and selfishness lead men to neglect those important duties, by which they might become acquainted with the social and political institutions of their country, by endeavouring to purify them of corruption and base them on principles of justice. Fearing I may trespass on the indulgence of the Editor, I will just observe, that if this "snarling" "Lover of Truth" had or will point out an untruth in this or my former letter, I will undertake to defend my positions, also if he considers Chartism to be erroneous. Hoping "*Truth*" will not be abashed by acknowledging his name, for as my friend, the Rev. F. Close, says, "he doubts the character of an anonymous writer." I remain, &c., a friend to the cause of social and political redemption.

FRANCIS HAYES,  
Member of the Mechanics' Institution.  
*Cheltenham, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1841.*

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