

Rambles Beyond Railways:

Gothicised Place and Globalised Space in Victorian Cornwall

Abstract: This paper examines an account of Cornwall published by Wilkie Collins in 1851, focusing specifically upon Collins's claim that the region lay 'beyond' the railway. In so doing it explores the way in which mid-nineteenth-century Gothic discourse can be understood to inform a scalar opposition between localised place - conceived of as static, isolated, anachronistic and particular - and globalised space - conceived of as kinetic, networked, modern and homogenous.

Keywords: Gothic, globalisation, Victorian railways, Wilkie Collins.

In 'The Fiddler of the Reels', published in 1893, Thomas Hardy's narrator notes that the year 1851 marked not only the opening of London's Great Exhibition but also the opening of 'the new railway into South Wessex'. It was, he attests, a critical historical moment:

For South Wessex, the year formed in many ways an extraordinary chronological frontier or transit-line, at which there occurred what one might call a precipice in Time. As in a geological 'fault', we had presented to us a sudden bringing of ancient and modern into absolute contact.¹

1851 was also the year in which Wilkie Collins published *Rambles Beyond Railways: or Notes in Cornwall Taken A-Foot*. As did Hardy some forty years later, Collins figured train travel in oppositional relation to the geography of the West

Country in order to suggest historical disjuncture. So what Collins alluded to his title, and what he elaborated in his text, was the idea of Cornwall as the locus of embodied, anachronistic time and space, set apart from the mechanisation of modernity; or, to use his words, 'emancipated from the thralldom of railways'.² And as Collins suggested at the beginning of his study, when he spoke of 'the grand and varied scenery; the mighty Druid relics; the quaint legends; the deep, dark mines; the venerable remains of early Christianity; and the pleasant, primitive population' of 'one of the remotest and most interesting corners of our old English soil', Cornwall could be conceived as a Gothic location.³

This essay discusses how mid-nineteenth-century Gothic discourse can be understood to inform a scalar opposition between localised place and globalised space, drawing as it does so upon the idea that a Gothic location 'is perceived to harbour unreasonable, uncivilised, and unprogressive customs or tendencies'.⁴ More specifically, it will utilise the notion that the Gothic serves to compromise 'the Enlightenment project of rationally calibrating all forms of knowledge and behaviours', a project historically bound up with the attempt to co-ordinate the world according to the dictates and demands of industrial capitalist modernity.⁵ Famously illustrating the way in which an orientalised Gothic geography might be held to disrupt the steam-powered, timetabled, global realisation of this Enlightenment project, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* opens with Jonathan Harker lamenting 'that the further East you go the more unpunctual are the trains'.⁶ Seeking a similarly Gothicised terrain within England, however, Stoker turned west in *The Jewel of Seven Stars*; his characters move from London to Cornwall in an effort to secure the 'absolute and complete isolation' they require for their experiment to resurrect the 'old Magic' and 'Old Time' of the Egyptian Queen

Tera.⁷ Revealing connections between this late-nineteenth century imaginary and a mid-nineteenth century antecedent, this essay is interested to explore how Collins construction of a peculiar, pre-modern Cornwall feeds into what Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik have termed the 'Cornish Gothic', which they associate with Cornwall's 'strangeness, the "otherness" of a landscape permeated by relics of the past and hints of beliefs alien to the seemingly rational world of the twentieth century'.⁸ In so doing it examines the literary Gothic themes and tropes that Collins utilised in *Rambles Beyond Railways*, and that he later drew on in the novels *Basil* and *The Dead Secret*, as he worked to position Cornwall and the Cornish 'on the edge of modern life'.⁹ But the essay is also concerned to show that Cornwall's peripheral representation in *Rambles Beyond Railways* can be understood with relation to the medieval, architectural form of Gothic that John Ruskin was theorising contemporaneously in 'The Nature of Gothic'.¹⁰ In contradistinction to the atavistic mystery and horror often associated with Gothic literature, this latter context opens up the way in which Collins's travelogue deployed a Gothic register in order to celebrate the unenlightened mode of existence he felt was enjoyed by the Cornish. Central to the essay, then, is a concern with both the aesthetic resonance and politico-economic significance of the Cornish Gothic that Collins set against prevailing Victorian understandings of globalised modernity. There are three main points of focus to this argument; the essay is thus organised into three interlinked sections.

The first part of the paper examines how Collins's decision to emphasise a move beyond the railway speaks to the significance of trains to the Victorian conceptualisation of industrial capitalist modernity as an enlightened calibration of global time and space. This examination is refined with relation to questions

raised recently by human geographers over the conceptual problem of scale.

Here Katherine T. Jones has argued the following:

Once we accept that participants in political disputes deploy arguments about scale discursively, alternatively representing their position as global or local to enhance their standing, we must also accept that scale itself is a representational trope, a way of framing political-spatiality that in turn has material effects.¹¹

In order to shed light on the way that such disputes took shape in the mid-nineteenth century, the essay demonstrates that a Victorian understanding of globalised space - conceived of as kinetic, networked, modern and homogenous - was energised by the perceived impact of train travel. Set against this understanding, Collins's move beyond the railway allowed him to open up localised, gothicised place - conceived of as static, isolated, anachronistic and particular.

The second and main part of the paper addresses the differently formed and accented Gothic character of Cornwall that emerges as a result of this move. If, as Jones suggests, scale is a 'representational trope', then it is important to explicate the literary techniques, generic conventions and ideological strategies through which scale is forged. As indicated, then, this section is concerned to demonstrate how Collins's use of both a literary and a Ruskinian Gothic served, in Horner and Zlosnik's terms, to construct Cornwall 'as historically unruly and ungovernable, far from the centres of national power: a transgressive space'.¹² With regards this Ruskinian focus, it is particularly significant to note the way in which Collins represented a Cornish periphery in such a way as to illuminate Stephen Shapiro's recent suggestion that the Gothic codex should be understood

as 'a mode of critical inquiry into capitalist modernity'.¹³ Where Shapiro is interested in the fact that the Gothic signifies negatively as a mode that registers the threatening and damaging impact of capitalist de- and re-territorialisation, however, this essay brings to the fore the positive way in which the Gothic signified against the debilitating consequences of socio-economic progress wrought through industrial capitalist expansion.

The third section reflects upon the opposition between gothicised place and globalised space established by Collins with relation to Cornwall's socio-economic status at the time and following the publication of his text. By mobilising the scalar antagonism that it did, Collins's account of Gothic Cornwall did much to anticipate developments later on in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when Amy Hale notes the downturn of the Cornish economy coupled with the rise of the Cornish-Celtic Revival movement and the tourist industry fed into the cultural construction of Cornwall as a pre-industrial, Celtic Otherworld.¹⁴ But at the time of Collins's writing Cornwall could be justly considered an engine-room of British industrialisation and an internationally connected centre of technological innovation and expertise. If *Rambles Beyond Railways* can be understood to challenge the dominant concerns and prevailing ideologies associated with industrial capitalist growth, then, so too it can be held to constitute a depiction of Cornwall that did much to efface from view the region's significance within globalised modernity.

In 'The State of Emergency' Paul Virilio notes that 'Territory has lost its significance in favour of the projectile. *In fact, the strategic value of the non-place of speed has definitively supplanted that of place*, and the question of possession of Time has revived that of territorial appropriation'.¹⁵ In the nineteenth century it was the train – which was held in the popular phrase of the day to annihilate space by time – that served to create the new temporal conditions for such territorial appropriation. But co-ordinated exactitude as well as speed fed into this sense that the particularities and contingencies of place had been supplanted. Commenting upon the significance of the railway timetable as they think through the way in which the idea of the 'non-place of speed' gripped in the nineteenth century, Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman suggest,

In the timetable, the interlocking grid of the railway system, which adhered to increasingly rigid schedules, was given an abstract printed form. It mapped both the time and space of a nation. It functioned 'as an agent in the dissemination of standard time'; and it connected up disparate, distant locations, to create a kind of algebraic map of the nation's geography.¹⁶

Hence the train could be understood to fulfil the conditions of 'smooth travelling' that Paul Cater has associated with the abstracted idea of the geometric 'grid plan', a spatial conceptualisation that levelled out topographical peculiarities, at least theoretically, and thus 'rendered travelling an activity independent of place': 'Ultimately, the effect of this geometrical tendency was to iron out spatial differences, to nullify the strangeness of here and there.'¹⁷ It is this idea that the train constituted a 'mechanical power that created its own new spatiality', vanquishing the idiosyncrasies of place and timetabling this triumph as it did so,

that Wolfgang Schivelbusch brings to the fore with the title of his study *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*.¹⁸

If the railway thus served to open up what Benedict Anderson defined as the 'homogenous, empty time' of the modern nation state, its impact can also be understood with relation to what Henri Lefebvre would come to describe as the abstract space of capitalism - 'which includes "the world of commodities," its "logic" and its worldwide strategies', and which he suggests works to inscribe market forces in a manner that 'tends towards homogeneity, towards the elimination of existing differences or peculiarities'.¹⁹ Acclaiming the fact that 'Distances practically diminish in the exact ratio of the speed of personal locomotion', and underscoring the way in which spatio-temporal industrialisation was understood to calibrate rationally and progressively a socio-economic order of things, Dionysius Lardner's *Railway Economy*, published in 1850, championed the capacity of the train to connect previously distinct communities, thereby extending markets and facilitating evermore refined divisions of labour. And in keeping with the global thrust Lefebvre identifies, this industrialisation of time and space was by no means nationally restricted. The subtitle of Lardner's work, which attested to the 'practical results of the railways in operation in the United Kingdom, on the Continent & in America', bears out Ian J. Kerr's contention that 'Both within Europe and beyond it is useful to examine British, mid-nineteenth century railway ventures as, in the words of Leland Jenks, "a migration of enterprise *and* labour *and* capital from one part to another of a commercial area conceived as an expanding economic whole"'.²⁰ Thus the central contention of this first section: it was with regard to this conceptualisation of an expansive, holistic global economy that the train was

held to serve as an instrument *par excellence* in the enlightened quest to dominate nature and liberate humankind, playing a crucial role in that bourgeois mission which Marx and Engels noted in *The Communist Manifesto* aimed to create 'a world after its own image'.²¹

Victorian commentators such as Lardner celebrated the train's pronounced ability to co-ordinate the world around the spatio-temporal rhythms and dictates of industrial capitalist modernity. But others were far less enthusiastic. Even as the initial substantive programme of railway construction took hold in Britain, then, an 1843 travel narrative entitled *Hierologus* featured the following fictional dialogue between two theologians, reflecting upon the likely results of 'our future friend, the railway':

Catholicus: How lamentably unromantic is every thing and every one becoming! We must throw in our lot with others, and submit to be whirled on with the rest of the world. [...] But see to what the love of money – nay, worse than that – the grasping after an immediate return – can lead! [...]

Palaeophilus: Well, I will agree with everyone as to the immense moral mischief the railroads have caused and will cause to England, making it into one huge manufacturing town – amalgamating into one senseless heap the various usages of different localities – mixing, as opticians do, the clear and beautiful tints of local habits, feelings, prejudices, affections into one colourless and monotonous mass – cutting up by the root hearty old English associations, superstitions, attachments, and, by weakening patriotism on a

small scale, weakening it also on a larger; thus turning us into
cosmopolites, most odious name!²²

While he did not make specific mention of the railway's pronounced role in this amalgamating drive, Matthew Arnold would echo the above analysis when he wrote in 'On the Study of Celtic Literature' that Saxo-centric 'modern civilisation' tended irresistibly towards the 'fusion of all the inhabitants of these islands into one, homogenous, English-speaking whole'.²³ The thrust of Arnold's thesis was to encourage such linguistic assimilation while at the same time insist that the wholesale 'triumph of the prosaic, practical Saxon' over less materialist, more imaginative peoples would diminish greatly the scope of human potential.²⁴ His essay is particularly interesting here because it noted with relation to the eventual disappearance of the Welsh language the inability of the 'Celtic genius' to withstand the 'real, legitimate force' of modern civilisation. As proof of this racial weakness, and its beneficial results, he remarked that 'Cornwall is the better for adopting English, for becoming more thoroughly one with the rest of the country'.²⁵ A decade and a half earlier, in revealing contrast, Wilkie Collins cast both regions in opposition to modern Britain, emphasising that in Cornwall 'a stranger is doubly a stranger, in relation to provincial sympathies' and that 'a man speaks of himself as *Cornish* in much the same spirit as a Welshman speaks of himself as Welsh'.²⁶ Where Arnold famously invoked the abstract concept of culture as a means of countering what he saw as the damaging consequences of modern civilisation's onrushing, all-embracing and irresistible impetus, then, Collins turned instead to the geographical materiality of Cornwall as he sought to imagine the kind of location that might remain resistant to the homogenising tendencies of globalised modernity.

Towards the beginning of *Rambles Beyond Railways* Collins exhorted his readers to take up a map of the world and reflect upon the fact that an abundance of literature detailed ‘the adventures of travellers in every part of the habitable globe – except, perhaps, Cornwall and Kamtschatka?’ Answering the question he posed, and calling to mind as he did so the global scope of the bourgeois drive to ‘to nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere’ outlined by Marx and Engels, Collins elaborated with incredulity that a part of South-West England as well as the Malay peninsula still promised an escape from industrialised time and space:

That the latter place should still be left open ground to the modern traveller, is, in these days, extraordinary enough; but that Cornwall shares the same neglect, passes all comprehension. Yet so it is. Even the railway stops short at Plymouth, and shrinks from penetrating to the savage regions beyond!²⁷

So it was that Collins imagined Cornwall in a global context that provides early substance to Patrick Brantlinger’s explication of the ‘imperial Gothic’, a key feature of which he holds to be a late Victorian fear that advances in transportation and communication technologies, coupled with the growth of international tourism, rendered ‘adventure [...] a thing of the past in the real world’.²⁸ That being so then it seemed Collins was justified in suggesting that Cornwall lay beyond civilisation’s pale. For as his narrative recounts, much of the region did indeed allow Collins and his travelling companion, the artist Henry

Brandling, 'a perfect independence of high roads, stage-coaches, time-tables and guide-books', together with the kind of experiences of 'savage regions' that other Victorian writers would more commonly situate in far-flung and fantastic non-European lands.²⁹

Set against the spatio-temporal transparency, homogeneity and regulation associated with modernity, Cornwall thus appears predominantly in *Rambles Beyond Railways* as a fathomless, wild, at times grotesque place, inscribed with legend and mystery, affective as opposed to abstracted, its landscapes and peoples defying rational comprehension. Focusing in the first instance on Cornwall's strange topography, then, there are moments in the journey that recall medieval romance, as Collins and Brandling battle through 'Tangled branches and thorny bushes' which 'seem possessed with a living power of opposition, and commissioned by some evil genius of Fairy Mythology to prevent mortal footsteps from intruding into the valley'.³⁰ Elsewhere Collins describes the 'weird and fantastic' geological formation of weathered granite known as the 'Cheese-Wring', standing 'alone in its grandeur, a curiosity that even science may wonder at'.³¹ On other occasions he draws upon a Burkean aesthetic in order to invoke Cornwall's 'visions of barrenness and solitude', possessing 'all the sublimity that vastness and space can bestow ... [a] sublimity which is to be seen not described'.³² Kynance Cove, with its caves like 'great, irregular, Gothic halls', and its dark, unfathomable depths, prompts Collins to reflect that 'If ever the ghastly imagery of Dante's terrible "Vision" was realized on earth, it was realized here'.³³ Fascinated by this terrifying landscape, the travellers find themselves drawn into its 'narrow and dark' crevices, with

suitably nightmarish results: 'Now, we crawl into them on hands and knees; now, we wriggle onward a few feet, serpent-like, flat on our bellies'.³⁴

Such encounters dramatize an awful Nature, emptied of human existence. But a Gothic register is also invoked in order to depict the activities and histories of the Cornish themselves. Notable in this respect is a passage where the two ramblers reach 'the very centre of the noise, the bustle, and the population on the surface of a great mine'. '[S]aluted by an entirely new prospect, and surrounded by an utterly bewildering noise', Collins represents a driving force of the Cornish economy and Britain's industrial rise as an isolated, strained and uncanny phenomenon:

All about us monstrous wheels were turning slowly; machinery was clanking and groaning in the hoarsest discords; invisible waters were pouring onward with a rushing sound; high above our heads, on skeleton platforms, iron chains clattered fast and fiercely over iron pulleys, and huge steam pumps puffed and gasped, and slowly raised and depressed their heavy black beams of wood.³⁵

Here Cornish men, women and children are seen, at a distance, 'breaking and washing ore in a perfect marsh of copper-coloured mud and copper-coloured water'.³⁶ Elsewhere, however, this marshy mingling of inhabitants and environment is figurative rather than literal, as Collins stresses the history-sodden character of a Cornish topography that is haunted at once by previous generations and the strange stories that are told of their lands.

In Brian Friel's *Translations*, a play about nineteenth-century English imperialism in Ireland, one character remarks 'it can happen that a civilisation can be imprisoned in a linguistic contour which no longer matches the landscape

of ... fact'.³⁷ *Rambles Beyond Railways* is in good part energised by Collins's efforts to access precisely such a linguistic contour, drawing upon tales of the country that continue to inspire 'feelings of awe and horror' amongst the superstitious contemporary Cornish population and so giving the lie to any clear and neat distinction between fact and fiction.³⁸ Confronted by a wide circle of rocks, the travelling companions thus find themselves able to indulge their 'common susceptibility to the charms of romance', dismissing a 'straight-forward and practical' antiquarian explanation of the structure as the remains of a druid temple in favour of a 'popular account' that contended, 'on the part of the people, that once upon a time (nobody knows how long ago), these rocks were Cornish men'.³⁹ On another occasion when 'No human beings were discernible anywhere', Collins is quick to imagine the plains over which he traverses are as desolate now 'as when Druid processions passed over them by night to the place of the secret sacrifice, and skin-clad warriors of old Britain halted on them in council, or hurried across them to the fight'.⁴⁰ And so it goes on. In 'a country where each succeeding spot that the traveller visited, was memorable for some mighty convulsion of Nature, or tragically associated with some gloomy story of shipwreck and death', or troubled by gruesome myths of murders, ghosts and ogres, 'modern explanation' of Cornish geography consistently gives way to 'ancient legend'.⁴¹ At one point in his narrative Collins describes Land's End, the very name of which is resonant with 'desolation, danger and death', as a 'Cornish Ultima Thule'.⁴² In fact the backward-facing savagery and superstition he finds all over the region would seem to render the term appropriate to Cornwall itself.

As indicated, then, throughout *Rambles Beyond Railways* gothicised Cornish place works to problematise the totalising scope of the Enlightenment

project, with its confident assertion that the world in its entirety could be rationalised and dominated once it could be scientifically comprehended and calibrated. Indeed, given the stark, uncivilised and terrific way in which the region was depicted it is perhaps not surprising that Collins set the Gothic conclusion of his novel *Basil*, published in 1852, in the 'wild western land' of Cornwall.⁴³ Subtitled *A Story of Modern Life*, the majority of the novel takes place in London, described as a bustling, economically-oriented city, connected to the world via railway and steamboat, its vulgar bourgeois population pursuing commercial opportunities in 'every direction' and marking their successes ostentatiously in 'oppressively new' suburban homes.⁴⁴ However, in an end section to the novel that echoes Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, as well as drawing heavily upon the stories, scenes and peoples Collins had depicted in *Rambles Beyond Railways*, *Basil's* eponymous hero flees London and is relentlessly pursued across Cornwall's remote wilderness by his hideously deformed nemesis, Mannion. There *Basil* attempts to hide amongst Cornwall's 'solitary, secret people', but his plans are thwarted by Mannion, who exploits the 'barbarous, monstrous superstition' of these local inhabitants in order to drive him from safety.⁴⁵ In *Rambles Beyond Railways* Collins had written of a geographical phenomenon featuring 'a black, gaping hole, into the bottom of which the sea is driven through some unknown subterranean channel, roaring and thundering with a fearful noise, which rises in hollow echoes through the aptly named "Devil's Throat"'.⁴⁶ Having already made fictional use of the Gothic Cornish peasantry this earlier trip had fleshed out, Collins now revised the Gothic topography of the 'Devil's Throat' in the dramatic climax to *Basil*. Against a tempestuous backdrop featuring 'huge Atlantic waves [that] hurled themselves,

foaming and furious, against the massive granite of the Cornish cliffs', then, the two protagonists come face to face, desperately clambering over the coastline until Mannion falls foul of the treacherous terrain, disappearing into the 'black, yawning hole' of a 'frightful abyss' with 'a scream so shrill, so horribly unlike a human cry, that it seemed to silence the very thundering of the water'.⁴⁷

Although it moved away from the violent horror of *Basil*, Collins's later novel *The Dead Secret*, published in 1857, also utilised a Cornish setting in order to energise its Gothic plot. Summarising the novel, Ira B. Nadel remarks that 'A ruined home with a mysterious past supplemented by a possible ghost – that of Mrs Treverton – and the hint of a crime, are all features of Gothic fiction since Mrs Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*'.⁴⁸ However, the dramatic effect of such generic features should not be disassociated from the particular spatio-temporal dimensions of *The Dead Secret*. Early on in the novel Collins introduces an attempt by the new, non-local owner of the house at the centre of the action, Porthgenna Tower, to work the mine and fisheries belonging to the estate 'on new scientific principles, and to beautify the old house from top to bottom with bran-new mediaeval decorations'. The results, as related later, are telling:

Why, of course, every one of his plans turned out a complete failure. His Cornish tenantry received him as an interloper. [...] They would have gone to the world's end for the Trevertons; but not a man would move a step out of his way for the Franklands. As for the mine, it seemed to be inspired with the same mutinous spirit that possessed the tenantry. The wiseacres from London blasted in all directions on the profoundest scientific principles, and brought about sixpennyworth of ore to the surface for every five pounds spent in getting it up. The fisheries turned

out little better. A new plan for curing pilchards, which was a marvel of economy in theory, proved to be a perfect phenomenon of extravagance in practice.⁴⁹

This pronounced Cornish resistance to metropolitan modernity, on the part of both its landscape and its population, sets up an environmentally and historically grounded alterity that remains in play throughout the novel. So although much of the action of *The Dead Secret* revolves around the interior space of Porthgenna Tower, with its hidden recesses and ‘absurd ghost stories’, Collins consistently foregrounds the fact that the house is located in the ‘barbarous regions’ of the Cornish west coast, surrounded by ‘ignorant people’ and ‘popular superstition’ at a historical moment when the railroad was in ‘an unfinished state’.⁵⁰ Given that *The Dead Secret* can in this sense be understood to capitalise upon the isolated, anachronistic, place-bound materiality Collins had first linked with Cornwall in *Rambles Beyond Railways*, it is somewhat ironic that the novel itself was written in a manner that also capitalised upon modern, globalised space: published in serial form in *Household Words*, *The Dead Secret* was serialised at the same time in the United States, ‘and instalments had to be written to coincide with the sailings of transatlantic steamers’.⁵¹

In *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History’s Nightmares*, Robert Mighall draws attention to the Gothic strategy by which a specific district is rendered the demonised locus of “unenlightened” and outmoded practice, a scandalous vestige from a barbarous age which has long since been reformed in more “civilized” cultures’.⁵² While Mighall’s focus falls here upon Gothic aspects of the modern city, this essay has discussed the way in which in *Rambles Beyond Railways*, and then *Basil* and *The Dead Secret*, Collins structured a distinctly

Cornish Gothic in juxtaposition with metropolitan modernity.⁵³ Notwithstanding this geographical discrepancy, however, the essay has argued that Collins's use of Cornwall as a strange, barbarous locus falls broadly in line with the thrust of Mighall's thesis. But significantly the juxtaposition it has explicated does not fit neatly with his further contention that Gothic space and time served to affirm 'the enlightened now'.⁵⁴ Notably therefore, Mighall also points out that Gothic loci could also inspire acclaim, opening up as they did 'isolated pockets of resistance [to be] celebrated rather than feared'.⁵⁵ Given this dialectical character to the Gothic's antagonistic relationship with modernity, it is important to note Cornwall was not depicted by *Rambles Beyond Railways* as an entirely barren, hostile or terrifying place.

Elaborating his consistent emphasis upon the region's remove from modernity's historical energy, Collins proposed at one point in his travelogue that 'the Cornish people are left, as it were, to struggle in the rear of the great onward march of the busy world before them'. But the precise nature of this 'struggle' was immediately explicated, in very different terms to the nightmarish picture of Cornish life Collins had painted elsewhere:

Thus, overlooked by the searching scrutiny of the searching spirit of progress in our day, the people of Cornwall exhibit much that is primitive and simple in their manners [...] and much that is kindly and honest in their behaviour to strangers and their behaviour to others.⁵⁶

Some two decades earlier, in the typically acerbic essay 'Signs of the Times', Thomas Carlyle characterised his as a 'Mechanical Age', noting that at a time when 'Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand' the 'worship of the Beautiful and the Good' gave way to 'a calculation of the

profitable'.⁵⁷ It was this much remarked link between homogenising mechanisation and a reductive, self-centred commitment to materialist progress that the above cited *Hierologus* picked up on, and that Collins echoed when he observed that with emancipation 'from the thralldom of railways' came freedom from the 'days of vehement bustle, business, and competition' that blighted modernity.⁵⁸ And it is with this link in mind that it becomes significant to examine the fact that 'primitive and simple' Cornwall was seen by Collins to cultivate a mode of existence that was not subject to the same profit-oriented dictates, instrumentalised pressures and atomised conditions of life associated with the Mechanical Age. In order to do so, though, it is instructive first to turn to another text that was begun in 1851, although it was not completed and published until 1853.

In 'The Nature of Gothic', from *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin memorably detailed the 'great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities', a cry the result of the fact that 'we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; but to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages'.⁵⁹ Underpinned as it was by a mechanised division of labour that broke workers into 'small fragments and crumbs of life' in order to increase productivity, and driven by a manufacturing requirement for standardised perfection, Ruskin maintained that industrial capitalist civilisation served only to make 'animated tool[s]' of workers, alienating them from a united productive process, from their community as a whole, and from a genuinely fulfilling sense of self. As he recorded the unnatural and dehumanising effects of

industrialised modernity, and the way in which they were experienced by the labouring classes, Ruskin's register is significant:

But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognized abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes – this, nature bade not, – this, God blesses not, – this, humanity for no long time is able to endure.⁶⁰

If Gothic narratives and devices open up spatio-temporal lags that serve to legitimise the onward march of enlightened progress, so too it is important in light of the above passage to recognise the Gothic's capacity to signal that, as Franco Moretti has it in his influential discussion of *Frankenstein*, 'the process of capitalist production [...] forms by deforming, civilizes by barbarizing, enriches by impoverishing'.⁶¹ Demonised pockets or vestiges that can be understood as 'History's Nightmares', then, but also accounts of industrialised time and space that reveal capitalist History as nightmare.

This final point has been developed by Stephen Shapiro, who notes that Gothic effects - perhaps most notably Marx's repeated invocation of 'a Gothic lexicon of the undead, lycanthropes, and dripping blood to characterise capital's damage to human subjects' - occur recurrently 'as capitalism separates laborers from any means of production (agricultural, crafts-orientated) that might sustain them outside of or in tension with a system that produces commodities only for their profit-generating potential'.⁶² Here, though, Shapiro is interested to periodise more specifically, positing that terrific 'Gothic representational devices' become pronounced and energised at those historical moments in capitalism's phasal development when inevitable crises of over accumulation

prompt those coercive and violent acts of 'primitive accumulation' necessary to absorb surpluses in capital and labour.⁶³ The emergence of such historical patterns, he proposes, can be read not only with relation to the damage done to those global peasantries that found themselves variously integrated into capitalist markets, but also to the anxieties generated within those bourgeois societies that apprehended developing threats to their own control over the world-system. Where Shapiro's work thus focuses upon the gothicisation of globalised space, however, this essay maintains its concern with the scalar antagonism set out in its title and developed in the introduction. As such it retains an interest in the Gothic as a mode of registering fears engendered, exploitation endured and damage done under capitalist conditions, but it turns more particularly to the powerfully affirmative way in which Ruskin proposed the Gothic as a means of generating 'a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children'.⁶⁴

Championing a reverential relation 'of mountain brotherhood between the cathedral and the Alp', Ruskin set the 'wildness of thought' and 'roughness of work' of medieval Northern European architectural form against modernity's misguided, complacent preoccupation with 'narrow accomplishment' and 'smooth perfection'.⁶⁵ His study of Gothic architecture thus bears emphatic witness to Mighall's observation that 'The Gothic by definition is about history and geography', but it is equally an emphatic non-fictional corroboration of Mighall's recognition that gothicised anachronism could be understood in celebratory as well as terrific terms.⁶⁶ Central to the study is Ruskin's instruction to his readers to look again on the 'old cathedral front', complete with its 'ugly

goblins, and formless monsters', there to find evidence of a labouring 'life and liberty' that cast in relief the degrading slavery blighting industrial capitalist society.⁶⁷ Commenting upon the way in which Ruskin's aesthetic treatise took on such socio-economic significance, George P. Landow notes that 'because the Gothic style permits and even demands the freedom, individuality, and spontaneity of its workers, it [...] represents a finer, more moral society and means of production'.⁶⁸ In an interesting elaboration on the way Ruskin's vision thus functioned as a discursive site of resistance, Chris Brooks comments that Ruskin's was a 'heroic architecture' the serious, truthful and vigorous 'reality' of which furnished 'a means of striving against corrosive doubts and anxieties' associated with the modern age:

Gothic's 'reality' was a talisman to ward off a world many felt to be increasingly unreal. The thronged cities appeared ever more anonymous and alienating, the face-to-face dealings of community vanished in an impersonal capitalist order. Capitalism itself depended increasingly on intangible credit, fortunes materializing then vanishing in the shadow-lands of economic speculation. [...] For all its apparent stability, the mid-Victorian world frequently seemed to writers ominous and estranging, its terrors all the more nightmarish because obscure.⁶⁹

Underscoring Shapiro's commentary on the Gothic resonances that the world-system took on in the mid-nineteenth century, Brooks's analysis is especially useful for its insistence that at one and the same time the Gothic could be held to constitute a more 'real' as well as more moral society and mode of production. What is interesting in the light of this insistence in particular, and the above commentary more generally, is to think through the way in which Collins's

Cornwall was positioned with relation to industrial capitalist civilisation in a similar manner to Ruskin's cathedral: as a gothicised vestige that bore witness to the kind of socio-economic organicism lacking from modern life.

Here Collins's description of the town Looe, which comes early on in the narrative, is revealing. As 'one of the prettiest and most primitive places in England', Looe is heralded because 'there is no such thing as a straight street in the place. No martinet of an architect has been here, to drill the old stone houses into regimental regularity'. Rehearsing the link Ruskin would come to explicate in 'The Nature of Gothic', Collins was drawn to connect such a lack of architectural discipline – that contrasted so sharply with modernity's systematic, grid-like aesthetic – with a mode of life that had not been subjected to the economic 'improvements' (diminishments) of modern civilisation. Looe's commercial organisation was thus praised for refusing those kinds of market-driven rationalisations which encouraged the specialisation of business, as well as divisions of labour more generally:

The shops, too, have their diverting irregularities, as well as the town. Here you might call a man a Jack of all trades, as the best and truest compliment you could pay him – for here one shop combines in itself a drug-mongering, cheese-mongering, stationary, grocery, and oil and Italian line of business; to say nothing of such cosmopolitan miscellanies as wrinkled apples, dusty nuts, cracked slate pencils and fly-blown mock jewellery.⁷⁰

Clearly linked to international circuits of exchange, and the exotic commodities rendered available as a result of Britain's increasing global expansion, it is also the case that Looe appears 'overlooked' by the drive to organise commerce and

industry according to the strictly competitive logic of market economics. Privileging 'diverting irregularities' over disciplined refinements, it stands at a remove from the continually evolving, inherently progressive mode of socio-economic organisation that political economy associated with Adam Smith's 'commercial society', and that Marx and Engels claimed swept away 'All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions'.⁷¹ Thus set apart from the dynamic but equally disorientating and destructive effects of industrialised time and space, Looe becomes representative of other parts of Cornwall that Collins visits.

What emerges throughout *Rambles Beyond Railways*, then, is the sense that Cornwall hosts communities that have not been subject to the alienating, atomising impact of modernisation decried by Ruskin as well as Carlyle and Arnold. Held beyond the railways, these peoples are also held to exist beyond the daily drudgery, communal disconnect and spiritual failures that these thinkers associated with mechanised production, urban existence and *laissez-faire* dogma. Thus the eighty-year old furze-cutter, 'working away with all the vigour of youth', on a 'wild moor' where 'he had lived and laboured from childhood'.⁷² Or the description of pilchard fishing, which is as 'picturesque' as it is productive.⁷³ Or the miners – 'a fine-looking race of men – strong and well-proportioned' – who are held to 'gain more, physically, by the pure air of the cliffs and moors on which their cottages are built, and the temperance of their lives [...] than they lose by their hardest exertions in the underground atmosphere in which they work'.⁷⁴ Or finally the fact that among both fishermen and agricultural workers 'the strong superstitious feelings of the ancient days of Cornwall still survive, and promise long to remain, handed down from father to son as heirlooms of

tradition, gathered together in a remote period, and venerable in virtue of their antiquity'.⁷⁵

Discussing the Victorian reaction against industrial capitalist civilisation, Raymond Williams notes that as 'the new industrial society established itself, critics like Carlyle and Ruskin could find the "organic" image only in a backward look: this is the basis of their "medievalism", and that of others'.⁷⁶ In *Rambles Beyond Railways* Collins generated such a 'backward look' by turning his gaze upon a 'savage' but contemporary Cornwall, and the enriching if archaic connection between the rural region and its industrious, indigenous inhabitants it was seen to inspire. More than simply an anachronistic environment, populated by atavistic peoples and out of kilter with the ever-changing impact of enlightened, industrialised modernity, then, Collins traced in the region communities able to mix their labour with their land in much the same enlivening yet ordered manner that Ruskin was writing about in 'The Nature of Gothic'. So if Cornwall could be heralded for its capacity to excite adventures that the 'real world' rendered a thing of the past, so too its remote character and isolated peoples could be understood in terms of a vitalising and deep-rooted synergy between place and populace that seemed far more 'real' than the dehumanising and indeterminate conditions imposed by the mechanised production techniques, abstracted financial arrangements, complex divisions of labour and urbanisation associated with globalised progress. When Collins noted that 'The Cornish are essentially a cheerful, contented race', then, he did so with a view to the kind of gothicised labour and life that Ruskin came to associate with the 'rude and wild' mode of existence that had distinguished earlier times throughout Northern Europe.⁷⁷

Collins's account of Cornwall's pre-modern, Gothic status was, however, far from universally accepted in mid-nineteenth century Britain. At the same historical moment that the author visited Cornwall, Bernard Deacon has noted that the growth and expansion of mining throughout the region, coupled with its history of technological achievement, generated a pervasive view of the Cornish as 'paragons of industrialisation'.⁷⁸ And this view was not confined locally; Deacon remarks that 'for a period, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, where the dominant representation of Cornwall was that of "industrial civilisation", insider and outsider representations of Cornwall were closer together than at any time since'.⁷⁹ If it provided an almost unrelenting counter to such prevailing accounts of Cornwall, *Rambles Beyond Railways* did not succeed entirely in placing Cornwall beyond industrialised time and space. Set against the gothicised locale that Collins pushed to the fore throughout his text is the brief description of 'the central part of the mining district of Cornwall', with its 'Chimneys and engine-houses', well-laid roads and large and populous towns and villages. Forced to admit that he had 'got into the commercial part of the country, among sharp, prosperous, businesslike people', and remarking that 'it was like walking out of a painter's studio into a merchant's counting-house!', Collins recorded his haste in fleeing from this 'highly civilized region of Cornwall' towards the 'picturesque and primitive' areas to be found elsewhere.⁸⁰ Giving the lie to Collins's insistence that to penetrate Cornwall was to move beyond the 'unreal' modern world, and the debilitating mode of existence it engendered, this incident serves usefully to introduce the final section of this paper, which turns to consider how the scalar opposition between gothicised place and globalised

space established by Collins worked against contemporaneous material and conceptual efforts to network an industrialised region.

In the advertisement to the second edition of *Rambles Beyond Railways*, published in 1852, Collins declared that ‘the all-Conquering Railway has invaded Cornwall; and the title of my book has become a misnomer already’. As a result he found it necessary to append the following qualification to his suggestion that trains shrank before Cornwall’s ‘savage regions’:

This was written little more than a year ago; and it has become an obsolete remark already. A new Cornish Railway, from Penzance to Redruth (to be hereafter extended to Truro and Plymouth) will open in two months from the present time (December, 1851). I heard the mere idea of this railway talked of as a joke, when I was in Cornwall!⁸¹

Like Collins’s title, this final comment is somewhat misleading. Cornwall would not be linked by railway to the rest of Britain until Isambard Kingdom Brunel’s Royal Albert Bridge was built across the Tamar in 1859. But given the significance of Cornwall’s mining and fishing industries, and particularly given the prominent historical role played by the region in the development of steam-powered engines and locomotives, it is unsurprising that there was a pronounced demand for railway connections to be forged.⁸² Indeed, at one point in his narrative Collins admits a revealing case of mistaken identity, as a pub landlord hazarded a guess at the reason behind the presence of two strangers in the area: ‘well, I think you are both of you *mappers* – mappers who come here to

make new roads – you may be coming to make a railroad, I dare say [...] here's both your good healths!'⁸³ If railways were joked about in some quarters of mid-nineteenth-century Cornwall, they were also vigorously campaigned for and welcomed in others.

Typifying this demand was a collection of poetry published in 1838 by Richard Townsend, under the title *Visions of the Western Railways*. Here Townsend argued that Cornwall must be 'taught to plead for Railways', celebrating as he did so the economic opportunities that would be opened up as a result: 'As Art has enabled Cornwall to reveal riches from below, it will be a greater triumph if a surface, hitherto barren, can be made to feed her children by the speed of traffic.'⁸⁴ Thus appealing to the form of territorial appropriation Virilio would term 'the non-place of speed', Townsend was also keen to point out the railway's industrialisation of time and space should be understood to augment rather than eradicate Cornwall's distinctive and empowered socio-economic status within the modern world. The 'Song of the Railway Workmen' made this manifest:

The vessel bold that gives us gold,
Floats on an iron rail:
She feels no shock, tho' on a rock,
She's swift without a sail.
And ev'ry morn, when day is born,
And swath'd in twilight pale,
And the Cornishmen go a-field again,
They tell the moving tale,

How their fish, tin, and copper

Along the railway fly:-

If anyone should stop her,

They'll know the reason why.⁸⁵

Appropriating as it did the railway's universal narrative in order to generate a particularly Cornish 'moving tale', the poem bears out Deacon's claim that although its impact 'seemed to many observers to be erasing old customs and producing uniformity', nevertheless 'the way the global process of industrialisation was experienced in Cornwall was itself interpreted as part of a local discourse of differentiation'.⁸⁶ But in so doing, it should be noted, it generated a vision of differentiation based around outward-facing, integrated relationality rather than introspective, bounded segregation. Townsend's text is notable for the way in which it mobilised an articulated, networked sense of place; Collins's text stands out for the way in which it refused it.

'They may make a Railway in Cornwall; but they can't make an alteration in MY TITLE!'.⁸⁷ With this declaration, which again appeared in the advertisement to the second edition, Collins posed his literary imagination against the perceived homogenising effects of the train, and industrial capitalism more generally. But there is something of an irony to the notion that this constituted a last symbolic stand against mechanised modernity. If the Gothic accent of *Rambles Beyond Railways* all but disregarded the up to date, industrialised and interconnected status of Cornwall in the mid-nineteenth century, it also served to rehearse many of the images and tropes that would come to characterise Cornwall following the downturn in the mining economy from the 1860s. Remarking the important role played by the development of

train travel in such representations, and summarising much of the work done by Deacon in this area, Hale notes that ‘Romantic portrayals of Celtic Cornwall’ took shape as ‘the mining economy shifted and the Great Western Railway began promoting Cornwall from 1859 as an elite tourist destination’. As a result, ‘middle-class writers and artists who visited Cornwall “reimagined” the Duchy as wild and “primitive”, and natural rather than industrial’.⁸⁸ Far from integrating Cornwall within modern, globalised space, then, it is in this sense that the introduction of trains to the region can be understood to have promoted precisely the view of Cornwall as the uncivilised, mysterious, anachronistic and bounded place that its Gothic rendition in *Rambles Beyond Railways* had proposed. And returning to Jones’s comments concerning the material effects of scalar discourses, it is in this sense that if Collins’s account of Cornwall’s Gothic difference can be read as a Ruskinian critique of industrial capitalist modernity, then so too it can be read with relation to what Philip Payton describes as the socio-economic ‘paralysis or “fossilisation” of the region’ in the years that followed its publication.⁸⁹

In ‘A Global Sense of Place’, the geographer Doreen Massey has proposed that instead ‘of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated movements in networks of social relations and understandings’. She goes on to suggest that ‘this in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local’.⁹⁰ While

Townsend's *Visions of Western Railways* drew attention to just such an extroverted sense of place, this essay has emphasised that *Rambles Beyond Railways* worked to refuse such an integrated vision. In so doing it has explored both the way in which Collins positioned the railway as a metropolitan harbinger of industrial capitalist progress and deployed Gothic discourse in order to represent Cornwall as an isolated, primitive and mystical location, distinct from and resistant to the globalised modernity associated with the steam train. With Jones's contention that 'scale itself is a representative trope' in mind, then, the essay stands as a case study exploring the historical factors, aesthetic strategies and political motivations that fed into Collins's construction of the local and the global at a particular mid-nineteenth century moment. As a result it has drawn attention to the fact that the Gothic can be comprehended as a mode that resists rather than simply registering the perceived damage inflicted and terror induced under the conditions of the capitalist world-system. Particularly bearing in mind Brooks's remarks concerning its conflicting capacity to signal the real as well as the unreal, it is this multi-accentual way in which the Gothic can be conceived of with relation to globalised modernity that would seem to warrant further critical attention. Such attention would feed into Shapiro's definition of the 'material Gothic' as a project by which 'Gothic Studies can inform and reshape cultural and historical materialism'.⁹¹

¹ Thomas Hardy, 'The Fiddler of the Reels' (1893), in *Life's Little Ironies and A Changed Man*, ed. by F. B. Pinion (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 123-38 (p. 123).

² Wilkie Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways: or Notes in Cornwall taken A-Foot* (1851; London: Bentley, 1852), p. 25.

³ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 2-3.

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- ⁴ Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. xviii.
- ⁵ Andrew Smith and William Hughes, 'The Enlightenment Gothic and Postcolonialism', in *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre*, ed. by Andrew Smith and William Hughes (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 1-12 (p. 1).
- ⁶ Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897; London: Penguin, 1994), p. 11.
- ⁷ Bram Stoker, *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903; London: Penguin, 2008), p. 190, p. 165.
- ⁸ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 68.
- ⁹ Anthea Trodd, 'The Early Writing', in *The Cambridge Companion to Wilkie Collins*, ed. by Jenny Bourne-Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 23-36 (p. 25).
- ¹⁰ The need to emphasise the non-literary character of this particular Gothic imaginary was made by one of the anonymous reviewers of this essay. I am thankful to her or him for this and other points raised; I am equally grateful for the work and advice of my other reviewers.
- ¹¹ Katherine T. Jones, 'Scale as Epistemology', *Political Geography*, 17 (1998), 25-8 (p. 27).
- ¹² Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, p. 68.
- ¹³ Stephen Shapiro, 'Introduction: Material Gothic', *Gothic Studies*, 1 (2008), 1-3 (p. 2).
- ¹⁴ Amy Hale, 'Representing the Cornish: Contesting Heritage Interpretation in Cornwall', *Tourist Studies*, 1 (2001), 185-96 (p. 186).
- ¹⁵ Paul Virilio, 'The State of Emergency', in *The Virilio Reader*, ed. by James Der Derian (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 46-57 (p. 46).
- ¹⁶ Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman, 'Introduction: Tracks to Modernity', in *The Railway and Modernity: Time, Space, and the Machine Ensemble*, ed. by Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 13-43 (p. 19).
- ¹⁷ Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987), pp. 221-2.
- ¹⁸ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1996), p. 10.

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- ¹⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn. (London: Verso, 1991) p. 26; Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 52-3.
- ²⁰ Ian J. Kerr, 'John Chapman and the Promotion of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, 1842-1850', in *Across the Borders: Financing the World's Railways in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. by Ralf Roth and Günter Dinhobl (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 225-39 (p. 225).
- ²¹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, ed. by David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 221-47 (p. 225).
- ²² J. M. Neale, *Hierologus; or, The Church Tourists* (London: James Burns, 1843), pp. 90-2.
- ²³ Matthew Arnold, 'On the Study of Celtic Literature' (1867), in *Matthew Arnold: Lectures and Essays in Criticism*, ed. by R.H. Super (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp. 291-387 (pp. 296-7).
- ²⁴ Arnold, 'On the Study of Celtic Literature', p. 296.
- ²⁵ Arnold, 'On the Study of Celtic Literature', pp. 296-8.
- ²⁶ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 94.
- ²⁷ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 224; Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 7-8.
- ²⁸ Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 238-9.
- ²⁹ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 9.
- ³⁰ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 286.
- ³¹ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 65-7.
- ³² Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 186, p. 197.
- ³³ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 143, p. 139.
- ³⁴ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 143.
- ³⁵ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 60.
- ³⁶ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 60.
- ³⁷ Brian Friel, *Translations* (London: Faber and Faber, 1991), p. 43.
- ³⁸ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 129.
- ³⁹ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 62-3.
- ⁴⁰ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 61-2.

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- ⁴¹ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 128, p. 116.
- ⁴² Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 186-7.
- ⁴³ Wilkie Collins, *Basil* (1852; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 307.
- ⁴⁴ Collins, *Basil*, p. 49, p. 61.
- ⁴⁵ Collins, *Basil*, p. 313, p. 324.
- ⁴⁶ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 139.
- ⁴⁷ Collins, *Basil*, p. 320, p. 321, pp. 325-6.
- ⁴⁸ Ira B. Nadel, 'Introduction', in Wilkie Collins, *The Dead Secret* (1857; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. vii-xxv (xix).
- ⁴⁹ Collins, *The Dead Secret*, pp. 58-9.
- ⁵⁰ Collins, *The Dead Secret*, p. 182, p. 51, p. 185, p. 259.
- ⁵¹ Nadel, 'Introduction', p. xi.
- ⁵² Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. 48.
- ⁵³ Collins was himself excited by the possibilities such an urban Gothic afforded his work. *The Dead Secret*, for instance, is notable for the way in which Andrew Treverton, the 'Timon of London', takes 'refuge from his species in a detached house at Bayswater', living a life along with his servant Mr Shrowl that 'approached as nearly to the existence of the primitive man (or savage) as the surrounding conditions of civilisation would allow' (p. 80, p. 84). Equally, *Basil* is memorable for the scene in which Basil attacks Mannion with 'savage purpose' and 'deadly resolution', pulverising his face upon a newly macadamised road in the midst of 'a colony of half-finished streets, and half-inhabited houses, which had grown up in the neighbourhood of a great railway station' (p. 164, p. 158).
- ⁵⁴ Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. xviii.
- ⁵⁵ Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. 53.
- ⁵⁶ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 78.
- ⁵⁷ Thomas Carlyle, 'Signs of the Times' (1829), in *Thomas Carlyle: Selected Writings*, ed. by Alan Shelston (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), pp. 61-85 (p. 64, p. 67, p. 77).
- ⁵⁸ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 25.
- ⁵⁹ John Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic' (1853), in *The Works of John Ruskin*, 39 vols, ed. by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1903-12), X (1904), pp. 180-269 (p. 196).
- ⁶⁰ Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', p. 195.

⁶¹ Franco Moretti, 'Dialectic of Fear', in *Signs Taken for Wonders: On the Sociology of Literary Forms* (London: Verso, 2005), pp. 83-108 (p. 87).

⁶² Stephen Shapiro, 'Transvaal, Transylvania: *Dracula's* World-system and Gothic Periodicity', *Gothic Studies*, 1 (2008), 29-47 (p. 30).

⁶³ Shapiro, 'Transvaal, Transylvania', p. 31. More specifically, Shapiro remarks 'the uneven development of Gothic narratives [that] intermittently cluster at moments – like the 1780s/1990s, 1880s/1990s, 1950s, and most recently' (p. 30). Given this posited link between capitalism's cyclical trends and Gothic amplification, it is notable that Shapiro does not mark out the mid-nineteenth century, with its globally significant economic collapse and revolutionary unrest, as a clustering moment for Gothic narratives. This is all the more noteworthy with relation to the topic of this essay, since the train played such a pivotal role both in prompting mid-nineteenth century economic disaster and providing an opportunity to resolve it. David Harvey remarks that even though 'excessive speculation in railroad construction triggered the first European-wide crisis of over accumulation, the resolution to that crisis after 1850 rested heavily upon further exploration of temporal and spatial displacement', crucial to which was the expansion of the railway network and 'the massive long-term investment in the conquest of space it entailed' (David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 264). In the light of this historical context, and given that Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman have recently drawn attention to cultural forces that, in contradistinction to 'utopian anticipation', 'could assign satanic imagery to the technology and social relations of the railway', it would be interesting to explore the extent to which Shapiro's thesis was illuminated by the gothicised representation of the mid-nineteenth century steam train (Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman, 'Preface' in *The Railway and Modernity*, pp. 7-11 (p. 11)). Critical to such a line of enquiry would be the need to ascertain whether the imagery Beaumont and Freeman highlight could be understood to cluster in the manner outlined by Shapiro, or whether it would be more appropriate to comprehend the railway's relation with Gothic narratives and devices in terms of the ongoing process of capitalist de- and re-territorialisation for which the train was such a powerful material and symbolic agent in the Victorian period.

⁶⁴ Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', p. 194.

⁶⁵ Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', p. 188, p. 191.

⁶⁶ Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. xiv.

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- ⁶⁷ Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', p. 193.
- ⁶⁸ George P. Landow, 'Ruskin', in *Victorian Thinkers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 103-94 (p. 119).
- ⁶⁹ Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival* (London: Phaidon, 1999), pp. 305-6.
- ⁷⁰ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 30-1.
- ⁷¹ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 224.
- ⁷² Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 50.
- ⁷³ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 155.
- ⁷⁴ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 222.
- ⁷⁵ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 85.
- ⁷⁶ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society: Coleridge to Orwell*, p. 140.
- ⁷⁷ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. 40; John Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', p. 185.
- ⁷⁸ Bernard Deacon, 'The Reformulation of Territorial Identity: Cornwall in the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Open University, 2001), p. 79.
- ⁷⁹ Bernard Deacon, 'The Reformulation of Territorial Identity', p. 102.
- ⁸⁰ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 228-9.
- ⁸¹ Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. iii-iv.
- ⁸² See Philip Payton, *The Making of Modern Cornwall: Historical Experience and the Persistence of 'Difference'* (Redruth: Dyllansow Truran 1992), p. 74; and Ronald Perry, 'The Making of Modern Cornwall, 1800-2000: A Geo-Economic Perspective', *Cornish Studies*, second series, vol. 10 (2002), 166-89' (pp. 170-1).
- ⁸³ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, pp. 102-3.
- ⁸⁴ Richard Edward Austin Townsend, 'Argument of the Hymn to Art', in *Visions of Western Railways: Dedicated to Sir Charles Lemon, Bart., M.P. for the Western Division of Cornwall* (London: Samuel Bagster 1838), pp. v-vi (p. vi).
- ⁸⁵ Richard Edward Austin Townsend, 'Song of the Railway Workman', in *Visions of Western Railways* (pp. 47-9), p. 47.
- ⁸⁶ Bernard Deacon, 'The Reformulation of Territorial Identity', p. 79.
- ⁸⁷ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, p. iv.

⁸⁸ Amy Hale, 'Magical Cornwall: Boon or Burden?'. Combined Universities of Cornwall, 29 February 2008, Unpublished paper, pp. 2-3.

⁸⁹ Philip Payton, *The Making of Modern Cornwall*, p. 114.

⁹⁰ Doreen Massey, 'A Global Sense of Place', in *Exploring Human Geography*, ed. by Stephen Daniels (London: Arnold, 1996), pp. 237-45 (p. 244).

⁹¹ Shapiro, 'Introduction', p. 2.

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