Jon Mee explores the popular democratic movement that emerged in the London of the 1790s in response to the French Revolution. Central to the movement’s achievement was the creation of an idea of ‘the people’ brought into being through print and publicity. Radical clubs rose and fell in the face of the hostile attentions of government. They were sustained by a faith in the press as a form of ‘print magic’, but confidence in the liberating potential of the printing press was interwoven with hard-headed deliberations over how best to animate and represent the people. Ideas of disinterested rational debate were thrown into the mix with coruscating satire, rousing songs, and republican toasts. Print personality became a vital interface between readers and text exploited by the cast of radicals returned to history in vivid detail by *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism*. This title is available as Open Access at 10.1017/978110716459935.

Jon Mee is Professor of Eighteenth-Century Studies at the University of York and Director of the Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies. He has published many essays and books on the literature, culture, and politics of the age of revolutions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He is also author of *The Cambridge Introduction to Charles Dickens* (Cambridge, 2010).
This series aims to foster the best new work in one of the most challenging fields within English literary studies. From the early 1780s to the early 1830s a formidable array of talented men and women took to literary composition, not just in poetry, which some of them famously transformed, but in many modes of writing. The expansion of publishing created new opportunities for writers, and the political stakes of what they wrote were raised again by what Wordsworth called those ‘great national events’ that were ‘almost daily taking place’: the French Revolution, the Napoleonic and American wars, urbanisation, industrialisation, religious revival, an expanded empire abroad, and the reform movement at home. This was an enormous ambition, even when it pretended otherwise. The relations between science, philosophy, religion, and literature were reworked in texts such as *Frankenstein* and *Biographia Literaria*; gender relations in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Don Juan*; journalism by Cobbett and Hazlitt; poetic form, content and style by the Lake School and the Cockney School. Outside Shakespeare studies, probably no body of writing has produced such a wealth of comment or done so much to shape the responses of modern criticism. This indeed is the period that saw the emergence of those notions of ‘literature’ and of literary history, especially national literary history, on which modern scholarship in English has been founded.

The categories produced by Romanticism have also been challenged by recent historicist arguments. The task of the series is to engage both with a challenging corpus of Romantic writings and with the changing field of criticism they have helped to shape. As with other literary series published by Cambridge, this one will represent the work of both younger and more established scholars, on either side of the Atlantic and elsewhere.

For a complete list of titles published see end of book.
For
Marilyn Butler
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Acknowledgements

And nothing starts in the archive, nothing, ever at all, though things certainly end up there. You find nothing in the Archive but stories caught half way through: the middle of things; discontinuities

(Carolyn Steedman, Dust)

My own strain of archive fever has driven this project forward for nearly three decades. The final periods of intensive research were made possible by an AHRC Fellowship that gave me invaluable time at the British Library, the National Archives, Kew, and in the Seligman Collection at Columbia University. I’d like to thank the archivists and librarians at these institutions and also the Bodleian Library, the Henry E. Huntington Library, the John Rylands Library, the Lewis Walpole Library, Nuffield College, Oxford, and Worcester College, Oxford. I am also grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for funding the ‘Networks of Improvement’ project. My work on associations in the late eighteenth century for the project has fed directly into this book.

I can easily recover the book’s moment of inception. It came when reading E. P. Thompson’s The Making of the English Working Class as an undergraduate in 1981, but my fascination with the subject matter was sealed when Marilyn Butler very kindly lent me the manuscript of Iain McCalman’s Radical Underworld to read as a Ph.D. student. My debts to Marilyn, who is deeply missed by everyone, are many and varied, but few compare to this introduction to a lasting and inspiring friend. Soon afterwards, Marilyn also introduced me to Mark Philp whose encouragement and inspiration also pervade these pages. Near the end of the research, he and I spent some happy days in the Treasury Solicitor’s papers hunting down radicals. I was lucky to have the fruit of his research, in the shape of Reforming Ideas in Britain, to see me through the final year of writing this book.
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Some of the material, especially in Part 11, has been discussed in essays and articles published over the past twenty years or so. I am grateful to the editors in each case for their advice and support; details can be found in the bibliography. Thanks also to James Chandler, Linda Bree, and Anna Bond for shepherding me through the press. I’m also grateful to the readers who provided the reports that enabled me to focus my argument more clearly through the last stage of writing. Most of all I am grateful to Jane, Sharmila, and the rest of my family, not least for putting up with my mind being on the Treasury Solicitor’s papers, when it should more often have been on them.
Note on references

Where manuscripts are reproduced in Mary Thale’s *Selections from the Papers of the London Corresponding Society*, then I have used it as a reference to make access easier for the reader. Otherwise I have referred to the original manuscripts in either the British Library or National Archives. See notes and bibliography for details of the individual manuscripts.

Bibliographical references to printed materials are given in short form in the notes with full details in the bibliography, newspapers and periodicals excepted, where details are provided in the relevant note, or sometimes simply by date in the main text in the case of eighteenth-century newspapers.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUM</td>
<td><em>American Universal Magazine</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>LCS</td>
<td>London Corresponding Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>Thelwall, Mrs [Henrietta Cecil], <em>The Life of John Thelwall, by his Widow</em>. Vol. 1, London: 1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI</td>
<td>Society for Constitutional Information</td>
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