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Women Writing the Nation, 1803-1815

by

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores how British women were representing the nation and their national identities during the Napoleonic wars, and draws upon the argument that British national identity was forged in the conflicts of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century, and upon Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha, and Stuart Hall's theories of the imagined nation. By suggesting that authors sought to construct a coherent account of their imagined nation, this thesis argues that their attempts were frustrated by the inherent plurality of identity. Furthermore, a contradiction is identified wherein the authors studied unconsciously manipulate this multiplicity in order to portray female patriotic roles, which evade prescriptive models of femininity based upon a separate gendered spheres paradigm. By moving away from a focus upon canonical authors, and drawing extensively upon lesser-known women writers, a broader picture of the ways in which women were imagining the nation emerges. This thesis also serves as an act of recovery, drawing attention to narratives that have remained unread for two hundred years, thereby enriching the critical understanding of the period.

Drawing upon the historical romance novels of Jane Porter, the poetry of Anne Grant, Margaret Holford, and Eliza S. Francis, and the memoirs and correspondence of Melesina Trench, Frances Burney d'Arblay, Charlotte Anne Eaton, and Jane Penrose, this thesis explores the implications of this argument in chapters which focus upon the relationship between a Scottish, English, and British sense of identity and the impact of travel upon the individual's nationality. The thesis ends, like the Napoleonic wars, with the Battle of Waterloo, exploring the impact that this cathartic moment in the British national psyche had upon the individual female Briton.

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Introduction

In 1803, the recently formed Lloyd's Patriotic Fund awarded Lieutenant William Coombe a certificate in recognition of his service in the war at sea, at the head of which was a portrayal of Britannia (Figure 1).[1] Sitting upon a rocky outcrop, she is dressed in classical robes, wears a plumed helmet, and holds aloft a trident and a sprig. Behind her, to her left, are dipped flags and ensigns topped with laurel wreaths while also behind her, to her right, are the accoutrements of a warship. The shield that rests upon her right thigh is split into four parts, each of which bears one of the emblems of the four nations that constitute the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, while a lion lies with laurel wreaths at her feet, a rose and thistle between

Figure 1: Lloyd's Patriotic Fund Certificate

[1] Sailing Navy Gallery, Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth. The Lloyd's Patriotic Fund was formed on 20th July 1803 to aid men who had been injured, and also to reward valour in battle (there were no official medals at this time). Coombe was also awarded a presentation sword to the value of fifty pounds for his role when commanding one of the six boats of HMS *Galatea*, when she captured a French ship, the *Lynx*, in 1807. Figure 1 is an example of a Lloyd's certificate.

its paws. The sun has broken through the storm clouds above to shine down upon the female symbol of the British nation, and the national identity which Lieutenant Coombe fought to protect, as she acknowledges the valour of one of her courageous sons.

The Lloyd's Britannia appears to offer a visually unified account of the nation, yet a closer inspection of the martial ephemera with which she is surrounded reveals that there is, in fact, a conglomeration of identities within this image. British symbols – such as the lion and the rose – point towards different traditions and historical differences. For example, the shield – which occupies a central position in the image – bears the emblems of the four kingdoms, highlighting the contentious history of the Union, while the Union Flag is barely visible among the crumpled folds of the ensign at the periphery of the spectator's vision. In the early nineteenth-century, Britain was a relatively recent invention; although England and Wales were united in 1536, they were only joined by Scotland in 1707 and Ireland in 1801, to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain. At the outbreak of the Napoleonic wars in 1803, the nascent identity of a nation that was barely one hundred years old was open to interpretation and its instability was a source of great anxiety. As Linda Colley argues in *Britons*, early nineteenth-century Britishness was a product of the historical moment in which it existed and, in particular, of the protracted global conflict which had begun in the mid-eighteenth century, but which intensified along with the aggressive imperialistic policies of Napoleon from 1803 through to the decisive Allied victory at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.[2] In essence, Britain was forged out of conflict, defined and interrogated by the war with the national nemesis, the French. The concepts of nation and national identity, therefore, were, and remain, elusive; yet it is precisely because of this disparity that it is possible to read apparently unified accounts of the nation – such as the Lloyd's Britannia – in different ways. For example, while imagining their British identities from specific social positions in relation to class, gender, and religion, it is likely that Lieutenant Coombe and his shipmates would have derived vastly different interpretations of this representation of the nation.

[2] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London: Vintage, 1992;1996).

In gendering the nation, the Lloyd's Britannia represents a particular idealised view of British women and their national role. While male representatives such as John Bull proliferated, Britannia drew upon influential ideas about the capacity of British women to act as guardians of the nation's morals, an indicator of the level of civilisation of the nation, and the pure ideal which inspired male Britons to defend the nation against the marauding French, whose impending invasion was habitually described in terms of a sexual attack. Thus, while women were legally excluded from the nation – at a time when they did not have a legal or political voice – their corporeal experience was also marginalised by a discourse which emphasised the symbolic role of British women. The Lloyd's Britannia framed women and their relationship with the nation in a particular way, suggesting that – although they were denied many of the rights available to some male nationals and marginalised by national ideology – female Britons could, and should, actively participate in some form of patriotism. Indeed, during the conflict-ridden decades leading up to, and including, the Napoleonic wars, women were urged to extol patriotic virtue, suggesting the necessity of a level of empathetic engagement with the nation, despite, it would seem, the gendered nature of the apparently unified account of national identity.[3] It is impossible to know exactly how women such as the female Coombes, viewing the certificate hung in a place of honour above the family mantelpiece perhaps, responded to the Lloyd's Britannia and the relationship to Britain that she apparently represents; however, it is clear from their narratives that women were actively negotiating their role within the nation.

That British women were engaging with the nation in the early nineteenth-century is without doubt; evidence of their opinions and proposals may be found in the pages of their essays, novels, poetry, letters, and diaries. Rather than merely mounting an argument for female participation in national debates, therefore, this thesis explores *how* British women imagined the nation, their position within it, and the patriotic roles available for them therein. As an examination of the Lloyd's Britannia suggests, the concept of national identity is far from straightforward and, as the analysis of the work of the authors undertaken in this thesis will show, many versions of Britain and British identities existed simultaneously in the imaginations of its nationals. For example, the sharply demarcated concept of the relationship between

[3] See Colley, Chapter Six, and Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

Englishness and Britishness portrayed in the poetry of the fourteen year old Margaret Holford differs vastly from the far more intangible, fluid perspective of the sexagenarian Frances Burney d'Arblay, married to a Frenchman. The aim of this research has been to move away from a focus upon canonical authors and to draw extensively upon lesser-known women writers, for two reasons. Firstly, it is intended that a broader picture of the ways in which women were imagining the nation might be drawn than that which would have resulted from a focus restricted to either a particular author or genre. Secondly, it is the intention that this thesis should also serve as an act of recovery, drawing attention to narratives that have remained unread for two hundred years, thereby enriching the critical understanding of the period. In recent years, the historical romance novelist, Jane Porter, and the poet, Anne Grant, have attracted critical interest; this thesis adds the voices of the poets, Margaret Holford and Eliza S. Francis, and the memoirists, Melesina Trench, Charlotte Anne Eaton, and Jane Penrose, to a discussion of what, for them, constitutes being British.

Before proceeding, a digression is necessary in order to clarify the meaning that will be attributed to the terms 'English' and 'British' in the thesis. As Paul Langford has argued, foreign visitors used the terms British and English 'indiscriminately and confusingly, sometimes as synonyms, sometimes not, and in most cases unaware of the confusion in which they were colluding'.[4] Unlike Eric Evans, who argues that a 'distinctively *English* identification' was rare, Langford suggests that the English 'showed a notable reluctance to describe themselves as South Britons' following unification with Scotland, and he argues that it was Englishness rather than Britishness that tended to

> elide the distinction between England and Britain while preserving the strong sense of identity of the former and permitting alternative culture to flourish even in mainland Britain.[5]

As this thesis will argue, for each individual, regional and national identities were interchangeable in every circumstance. Therefore, whilst individuals may refer to themselves as English or British in different situations, it is feasible for each term to share a meaning in relation to their sense of national belonging. Thus, this thesis will

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[4] Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.12.

[5] Eric Evans, 'Englishness and Britishness: National Identities, c.1790-c.1870', in *Uniting the Kingdom?: The Making of British History*, ed. by A. Grant (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.223-243 (p.234). Evans' argument is based upon political discourse and therefore tends to miss the nuances of identity that may be derived from a reading of wider cultural texts. Langford, p.13, p.319.

draw on Langford's notion of the synonymous nature of the terms British and English and, more particularly, on his assertion that

> [m]uch of the success of Britishness derived from the way in which it offered a layer of identity compatible with potentially conflicting loyalties.[6]

I

In considering how women represented their imagined British nations, the focus of the argument will repeatedly return to the role of the imagination, a loaded term in the context of the Romantic period, but also in relation to theories of national identity. Since Benedict Anderson and Homi Bhabha suggested respectively that nation is an imaginative creation, national identity has been recognised to be a plural phenomenon. Identity, and national identity in particular, has increasingly been seen as a product of the imagination, both manifesting in, and being shaped by, representations of the nation. In his seminal contribution to the debate, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Anderson suggests that the 'nation' and its derivatives are 'cultural artefacts', subject to the influence of historical forces.[7] An individual's perception of their national identity is contingent upon their location, both physically and within intellectual and cultural discourses, past and present; a perception which alters with each contingent factor. The ambiguity of a cultural product is encompassed in Anderson's definition of the nation as 'an imagined political community' that is 'both inherently limited and sovereign'.[8] Existing in an individual's imagination – as it would be impossible to view the physical whole in its entirety – the nation is limited because boundaries are conceived between other nations and, with the decline of hierarchical dynasties, it is sovereign. '[A]lways conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship', for Anderson, the nation is a community.[9] In proposing that the nation is imagined, Anderson allows for the fluidity and ambiguity of the ever-changing concept, while the inherent uniqueness of each individual's imagination renders the notion of imagining identical nations impossible.

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[6] Langford, p.13.
[7] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983;1991), p.4.
[8] Anderson, p.6.
[9] Anderson, p.7.

Homi Bhabha focuses upon the linguistic element of an imagined nation in his introduction to *Nation and Narration*, and suggests that, as a constitutive factor, the ambiguity of language leads to ambivalence within perceptions of the nation, thereby creating the potential for subversive models.[10] In a similar vein to Anderson, the nation is conceived in the imagination, wherein the nation's origin and outcome is visualised; furthermore, in arguing that '[n]ations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realise their horizons in the mind's eye', Bhabha emphasises the linguistic relationship between the nation and the individual.[11] Examining the margins of nation, Bhabha states that using its 'narrative address' as an analytical tool 'attempts to alter the conceptual object itself', implying that a linguistic alteration or manipulation of the concept in its primary state is possible creating, in turn, the potential for subversion.[12] Indeed, the linguistic element of Bhabha's argument facilitates the conception of multiple national discourses, implying that the individual may change discourse instead of subverting their present identity.

A basis in representation accords with the medium that I am examining for evidence of national identity, and also allows for the plurality which is the basis of the models that emerge from the material. Whether located in the imagination, in language, or in cultural artefacts, nation is contingent upon the frame of reference of the individual and also upon tropes of inclusion and exclusion. As Anderson argues, an individual perceives a bond to another individual and is included in that identity, to the exclusion of other identities. This empathic experience, which occurs on a parochial level, is extended to the individual's perception of a larger national identity to which they maintain a bond by moving among multiple discourses, their exclusion or inclusion in which depends upon the contingent factors at that given moment in time. Chameleon-like, the discourses are selected in order to perpetuate the sense of belonging which validates their national identities. Thus, while the women whose work will be analysed in this thesis portray their imagined, coherent national identities, they also demonstrate how prescriptively marginalised female nationals negotiate multiple identities in order to engage with the nation.

With the advent of postmodernist methods of critical interpretation, with its emphasis on themes of displacement, fracture, and narrative rupture, the individual's

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[10] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Introduction', in *Nation and Narration*, ed. by Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), pp.1-7 (p.3).
[11] Bhabha, p.1.
[12] Bhabha, p.3.

national identity is recognised as heterogeneous, reflecting the impossibility of definitive meaning. Thus, Stuart Hall describes the postmodern subject as assuming

> different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent 'self.' Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continuously being shifted around.[13]

There is a gap of two hundred years between the subjects of this thesis and of postmodernism, each of which are historically specific, yet Hall's description is peculiarly relevant and a useful means of exploring the early nineteenth-century subject from a different perspective. For Hall, identity is constantly in flux, it is a 'production' that is never complete and, in line with Anderson and Bhabha, is 'always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth'.[14] Rather than an innate attribute, national identity is formed and transformed in direct relation to representation; as Hall stresses, '[w]e all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history, and a culture which is specific'.[15] Furthermore, in this account national identity does not subsume forms of difference; rather the individual composes a 'narrative of the self' in order to create the feeling of a 'unified identity from birth to death'.[16] As Hall puts it, the invention of national tales is an attempt to 'stitch up differences into one identity'.[17]

The impulse to tell a story of the nation is the unifying theme in the otherwise disparate texts examined in this thesis; in each narrative the author attempts to portray their imagined version of a coherent British nation. Yet a comparison of the accounts demonstrates the implausibility of a monolithic British national identity, as the heightened multiplicity of a nascent identity repeatedly disrupts their narratives of a homogenous martial nation. It could be argued that individuals experience the nation as a unified whole – suggesting that their narratives are simply a mimetic portrayal of their sense of identity – but this would necessitate a disregard of the manner in which the plurality of identity constantly undermines and frustrates any attempts at coherence and, more important, ignores the anxiety which impelled early nineteenth-century authors to tell these stories. The writers who produced what Hall would term

[13] Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in *Modernity and Its Futures*, ed. by S. Hall, D. Held, & T. McGrew (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), pp.273-316 (p.277).
[14] Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. by Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), pp.222-237 (p.222, p.226).
[15] Hall 1990, p.222.
[16] Hall 1992, p. 277.
[17] Hall 1992, p.299.

comforting narratives of the nation were writing in response to 'the need for an organic vision [of] ... British society', a theme that emerged from both the pages of novels and from the periodical press of the time.[18] In focusing upon the literature that emerged during the Napoleonic wars, therefore, this thesis draws upon a period in which the British popular imagination exhibited an increasing anxiety regarding the idea of nation and national identity; an anxiety tacitly acknowledged by the critics who have contributed to the historical debate regarding the birth date of the modern British nation.

II

The exact date of the birth of British national identity remains a bone of contention among historians; evidence can be found in the literature of periods ranging from early Celtic and Hebraic settlement, to the Renaissance, the eighteenth century, and the trenches of the First World War.[19] If nation is a multivalent phenomenon, then all of these arguments are theoretically possible; however, in focusing upon the early nineteenth-century, the protracted nature of the Napoleonic wars provides an opportunity to explore the assertion that nation and national identity are defined in relation to conflict. As Philip Shaw argues, 'nation states, like individual consciousness [and national identity, we might add], are founded precisely on the fiction that they are unified and autonomous.'[20] Providing an external enemy, an Other against which the nation as a whole can define itself, renders 'the desire for war as a deeply neurotic attempt to protect the illusion of unanimity'.[21] Thus, the fundamental basis upon which the argument of this thesis rests, in line with Shaw, is the assertion that war is 'necessary for the creation of national identity'.[22]

On 17 May 1803, the British government – believing Napoleon's aggressive imperialism to be a breach of the terms of the Treaty of Amiens – declared war on France. The declaration, in fact, marked the resumption rather than the commencement of hostilities between the neighbouring nations. Following the French

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[18] Toni Wein, *British Identities, Heroic Nationalisms, and the Gothic Novel, 1764-1824* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.12.
[19] See Howard D. Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[20] Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.7.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Shaw, p.5.

Revolution in 1789, France had declared war on Britain in 1793 – the same year that saw the execution of Louis XVI and the advent of the Terror – and, following his successful Italian campaign of 1796-7, the meteoric rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. When Britain and France signed the treaty for peace at Amiens in 1802, Napoleon had overthrown the revolutionary government of France and declared himself First Consul. The British suspicion of his imperial ambition was confirmed in 1802, when he declared himself First Consul for life, and in 1804, when Napoleon was crowned Emperor of France. Although the British navy successfully destroyed the French fleet at Trafalgar in 1805, the land war continued, on the Spanish Peninsular in particular, until Napoleon's abdication in April 1814. His subsequent reign as Emperor of Elba was short lived; Napoleon escaped on the 26th February 1815 and reigned for a period that has become known as the 'One Hundred Days' before his defeat on 18th June 1815 at Waterloo.

Antagonistic relations with the French form the basis of Gerald Newman and Linda Colley's arguments, respectively, for the rise of English and British nationalism during the long-eighteenth century, each of which adopts a position regarding the level and forms in which British women engaged with the nation. Gerald Newman identifies a 'fraternal solidarity' among the English in his study of the rise of English nationalism in the eighteenth century.[23] Focusing upon a 'uniform' national identity, Newman argues that the group consciousness necessary for the formation of nationalism is achieved through opposition to 'aliens and outsiders', and is reinforced where these 'Others' threaten national identity.[24] For the English, the archetypal Others were the French, with the English national 'Character' emerging as a reaction to all that was to be deplored in the character of their Gallic neighbours: 'the field of anti-French conflict was the mirror of British independence and might.'[25]

Newman argues that each nation manifests a Character with whom its individual members identify, and through which approved 'traits' are shared and propagated, resulting in an identification which fires 'passionate motivations [of] joining his own personal endeavours to a dream of national fulfilment'.[26] In England, writers revising native literature created this character:

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[23] Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), p.155.
[24] Newman, p.55.
[25] Newman, p.75.
[26] Newman, p.126.

> What evidently happened was that the eighteenth-century literary concept of the 'Noble Savage,' originally used as a stalking-horse in the man-in-general social criticism of the early Enlightenment, was gradually nationalized and parochialized by the literati and hence made the bearer of values supposedly distinctively English. 'Sincerity' was the name given to this manufactured ideal.[27]

As the reference to the 'nation's countrymen' evinces, the dominant discourse of the English national character which Newman identifies is distinctly male. Describing the English national identity as 'a mythic collective personality with distinct ethnic and social referents', Newman maintains that the national character of sincerity was mythically personified 'through the innocence, virtue and honesty of Britannia'.[28] Attributed with ideal traits and contained within a mythic figure, therefore, the English female national experience is excluded from Newman's account of the rise of English nationalism.

In recent years, however, critics have begun to address the disparity between idealised accounts, such as Newman's, and the evidence of the female national role that we experience overwhelmingly through primary sources. Like Newman, Linda Colley's account of British national identity is based upon an opposition to the French, as well as the presence of the all-encompassing sea, the Protestant faith, and notions of liberty. In arguing that British womanhood was defined in opposition to a female France – who was perceived as improperly involved in public matters through salon culture – Colley differentiates between the prescription of separate gendered spheres and the reality that they were 'increasingly broken through in practice'.[29] The patriotic contributions of British women to the war effort, which consisted of the making of flannel shirts and banners, were therefore necessarily domestic. Yet it is this activity, from within the domestic sphere, which Colley identifies as an assertion of *female* British national identity:

> in reality, what the women were doing represented the thin end of a far more radical wedge. By extending their solicitude to the nation's armed forces, men who were not in the main related to them by blood or marriage, women demonstrated that their domestic virtues possessed a public as well as a private relevance. Consciously or not, these female patriots were staking out a civic role for themselves.[30]

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[27] Newman, p.87, p.113, p.127.
[28] Newman, p.5.
[29] Colley, p.18, p.58, p.117, p.262.
[30] Colley, p.275.

Women were embracing their prescribed position within the domestic in order to influence the public, and Colley argues that separate spheres rhetoric produced a 'more unexpected set of consequences' wherein a 'contractual' relationship between the spheres ensued.[31] Women would remain within the private sphere 'on the understanding that their moral influence would be respected and recognised' – that they would act as the nation's moral arbiters.[32] Thus, Colley suggests, women were accorded political influence within the nation:

> When British women posed as the nation's conscience, as selfless activists who had left their customary domesticity only in order to further the greater good, they put on powerful armour against the lances of misogyny and condescension. In this guise, female voices *could* reach Westminster and be listened to there.[33]

Yet, as Colley acknowledges, such political activity was severely limited in the sense that only a small proportion of women had the opportunity to engage in those patriotic activities described. Women were certainly not granted an egalitarian position within the nation, while 'the women who did take part found themselves having to act as the angels of the state, rather than as British citizens on a par with their menfolk'.[34] In this account of national identity, women are embracing their idealised position within the domestic sphere in order to attain some level of political influence.

Although Colley's comment that fulfilling the role of 'moral exemplars' was preferable to 'being dismissed as merely inferior and irrelevant' would appear to echo Newman's account of idealised female Britons, the focus upon the active role of women in the war effort marks a significant departure from a gender-biased historical account in which women are allotted a passive role. *Britons* is groundbreaking in the sense that Colley offers a relatively balanced account of male *and* female British national identity, however the lack of interrogation of the term 'domestic' implies that it is a homogenous, monolithic term. As Anderson, Bhabha, and Hall would argue, each female Briton would imagine her role in the war effort differently, suggesting that - like national identity – there are many different versions of the domestic sphere. Indeed, domestic spheres constitute only one of the many contingent factors which influence the manner in which an individual identifies with the nation at a given

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[31] Colley, p.277.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Colley, p.294.
[34] Colley, p.295.

moment. Furthermore, recognition of the disparity of domestic spheres enables women to evade the restrictions placed upon their lives by a social code of conduct founded upon a separate gendered spheres paradigm.

The plurality of nation and of national identity has proved useful to critics writing about women during the long-eighteenth century and in particular in helping them to conceive how women imagined the nation, and themselves as patriotic members of that community. Harriet Guest's methodology in *Small Change*, for example, is underpinned by the notion of plurality, and a corresponding fluidity of movement between discourses of nation, sensibility, gender, and the public/private divide. Thus, Guest argues

> I do think that the methodological framework in the context of which we might consider, for example, women's access to printed material needs to be supple enough to allow for the possibility of small changes in readers' consciousness of themselves in relation to public issues: to the idea of the nation, or even to political debate.[35]

Subsequently Guest argues that through a series of small changes to discourses of nation and gender, an increased emphasis was placed on the 'moral value of the private and domestic as the source of public virtue and patriotic feeling', thereby enabling women to carve out a public, patriotic role.[36] This was facilitated by a neutral domestic sphere, 'strangely without content and lacking in definition', that Guest identifies as emerging in the early nineteenth-century.[37] Despite an apparent unity in the reiteration of the domestic sphere, Guest suggests that

> this apparently uniform consensus conceals, and thus perhaps make[s] it possible to articulate, significantly divergent definitions or notions of domesticity, and the femininity appropriate to them.[38]

The plurality of domesticity and, by extension, of nation, is central to Guest's argument for a female British national identity at the end of the eighteenth century. The notion of a neutral domestic sphere both indicates and facilitates the multiplicity of each individual identity, reminiscent perhaps of Hall's description of the postmodern subject. It is my intention to explore the extent to which British women writers represented the nation and individual national identity as a plural phenomenon. I also wish to shift the focus of the methodology away from the concept

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[35] Guest, p.12.
[36] Guest, p.190.
[37] Guest, p.334.
[38] Guest, p.314.

of separate spheres, which has tended to be employed in analyses of gender in this period. As Anne Mellor argues,

> it may be time to discard this binary, overly simplistic concept of separate sexual spheres altogether in favour of a more nuanced and flexible conceptual paradigm that foregrounds the complex intersection of class, religious, racial, and gender differences in this historical period.[39]

While I acknowledge that some form of gender binary cannot be ignored altogether, I would argue that one of the strongest cases against the employment of separate spheres methodology can be mounted around the ambiguities which surround representations of the home during this period. Home is portrayed not only as a place of safety and refuge, the moral centre, but also as a desolate, cold, and lonely environment, with death as its only resident.

Rather than an emphasis upon a public/private divide, therefore, this thesis will employ war as the focus of its analysis, due to the relationship between the Napoleonic wars and British national identity. Gender binaries still exist in this argument, but rather than a reliance upon separate spheres, the focus upon war allows other divisions, such as religion, class, and race, to be considered simultaneously. In accordance with my argument so far, each individual would have a multiplicity of reactions to war; indeed, war itself should be viewed as a multivalent phenomenon, manifesting in different ways to different people at different times. A useful way to conceptualise war might be in terms of Jean Bethke Elshtain's description of a 'circle surrounded by ever-widening circles' drawing men and women alike, fascinated by the spectacle, into its orbit.[40] In her seminal work, *Women and War*, Elshtain discusses male and female identities as forged around collective violence, engaging in the communal endeavour of shared sacrifice and danger, a communality which emerges consistently from the pages of the texts studied here.[41] While exploring how women imagined and represented the nation and their national identity during the Napoleonic wars, this thesis will argue that the national and the domestic converged, enabling authors to portray their female protagonists engaging in actively patriotic roles.

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[39] Anne Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000), p.7.
[40] Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War: with a new Epilogue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987; 1995), p.183, p.185.
[41] Elshtain, p.8, p.10.

III

At the beginning of this introduction, it was suggested that, despite appearing to offer a visually unified account of the nation, the Lloyd's Britannia in fact represented a conglomeration of identities. Furthermore, in arguing that the image frames women in a particular way, as symbolic representatives of the nation, the question was raised regarding how female Britons negotiated this representation in order to engage with the nation. When the Lloyd's Britannia is examined in the context of the theories of imagined identity proposed by Anderson, Bhabha, and Hall, it becomes clear that she functions as a multivalent image of shared identification, producing a different meaning for each individual depending upon their unique imagined nation. She is a picture-book story of a comforting national narrative in which historical differences are stitched up, a coherent account of a nation whose history is fraught with division and conflict. As such, her emergence during the eighteenth century – a period in which the instability of national identity was particularly visible – is timely. Furthermore, as the representative of a nation that defined itself in opposition to the French, Britannia was a staunch counter to the French figure of Marianne, who was allied with a discourse of corrupt French womanhood in British propaganda. While representing a relationship between the nation and a particular model of femininity, the Lloyd's Britannia also embodies the conflation of the national and the domestic but, more important, the plurality of identity potentially enables women from a range of social positions to identify with the sense of coherent national belonging that she purports to portray.

In each of the texts studied in this thesis – novels, letters, journals, memoirs – the authors attempt to construct a narrative of their imagined nation and national identity, one that is unified and coherent. Yet, due to the simultaneous existence of numerous identities, the bid for homogeneity is frustrated; their narratives contain moments of contradiction that belie any apparent unity. The authors are not necessarily aware of these contradictions or, indeed, of their plural identities; the comforting narratives of the self that Hall identifies maintain the individual's sense of linear congruity. It is through the perpetuation of this illusion, however, that we are able to see the multivalence that threatens to disrupt the surface of their national narratives. When the authors employ the figure of the hero as a representative of their imagined ideal national identity, for example, they appear to be drawing upon a

monolithic character. However, a comparison of the portrayal of the same hero by different authors reveals the disparity between the perceptions of different individuals. If each individual's imagined nation is unique, then it follows that the agendas with which they imbue their heroes will also be different. Thus, the employment of the apparently homogenous figure of the hero in their account of their imagined nation actually serves to highlight the heterogeneity of identity.

The figure of the hero also raises questions about the gendering of the nation and national identity. In the twenty-first century, the hero has increasingly become an androgynous figure, yet in the early nineteenth-century, heroes were predominantly masculine. Authors writing heroic national narratives were engaging with a masculine vehicle; therefore, women writers seeking to represent female patriotic roles necessarily had to appropriate a form of female heroism. In portraying national heroines the authors had to overcome both the obstacles of prescribed female behaviour and of the symbolic female national tropes encapsulated in the Lloyd's Britannia. Herein lies the basic contradiction of the national narratives studied in this thesis; while the women attempt to portray their imagined coherent nations, it is precisely the multiple nature of identity which enables them to suggest the potential for female patriotic roles. With the ability to draw upon different identities, depending upon fluctuating contingencies, exists the potential to evade those dictates of society which prevent the female protagonist from actively engaging with the nation. Rather than subverting an individual discourse, authors simply interact with an alternative identity resulting in the portrayal of their imagined British heroines.

The thesis begins with the application of this argument to two texts, Eliza S. Francis' narrative poem, *The Rival Roses; or, Wars of York and Lancaster*, and Jane Porter's historical romance, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, published respectively in 1813 and 1803. Chapter One explores how Francis and Porter negotiated the tension between the female Briton's symbolic role – as the guardian of the nation's moral welfare – and their corporeal existence as members of the nation. Each of the authors perceived a potential threat to national stability; for Francis, it is Catholic factions while, for Porter, it is the overwhelming tide of refugees seeking to make their home in Britain. While their national narratives portray a resolution to these issues, they also create heroines who negotiate their symbolic and corporeal roles through an unconscious tacit acknowledgement of the plurality which they seek to efface. Although Francis' cast of female characters adhere to notions of female self-control and subservience,

her portrayal of Queen Margaret reveals the existence of alternative, martial female identities. In drawing upon the theories of female education championed by Mary Wollstonecraft, and attributing characters to the different types, Porter's enlightened, educated heroine, Mary Beaufort, is constantly surrounded by evidence of the plurality of identity, rendering her final vision of the British nation fragile and unstable.

While the plurality of identity is confirmed in the first chapter, the concept of the four kingdoms contained within Britain is not rigorously interrogated. Yet, as a relatively recently forged nation, there was a heightened awareness of conflicting regional loyalties. In shifting the focus to Scotland, Chapter Two questions how Jane Porter, Margaret Holford, and Anne Grant negotiated the relationship between England, Scotland, and Britain, through the medium of the heroic figures of William Wallace, Bonnie Prince Charlie, and Flora MacDonald. In Porter's historical romance, *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), and in Holford and Grant's narrative poems, *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk* (1809) and 'The Highlanders' (1803), cross-dressing is employed as a narrative strategy in order to highlight the constructed nature of femininity. Consequently, each of the authors were able to appropriate a form of female heroism in order to reconcile, or not, the role of their female protagonists as metaphorical ciphers and active national agents.

Having identified the strategies employed by authors in their national narratives, and the ways in which the process of identification might work, Chapter Three turns to travel literature. An individual's sense of their national identity is brought to the fore while travelling and – with familiar frames of reference constantly changing – the intangibility of identity is highlighted, simultaneously complicating and emphasising any attempts to portray coherence. An analysis of Jane Penrose's prose travel narrative *Journal of Voyages in Mediterranean, from 1814 to 1819*, and Melesina Trench's letters and memoir, *The Recollections of Melesina Trench with Extracts from her Diary and Correspondence*, explores how travellers attempted to negotiate this challenge to their national narratives. In particular, Penrose and Trench drew upon the narrative constructions of the national hero and villain, Nelson and Napoleon, whose portrayals – upon encountering evidence of the human figures – were subject to constant re-negotiation.

In turning to the Battle of Waterloo in the fourth and final chapter, I will argue that, while the battle was being fought, the instability of the concept of the nation and

national identity was particularly visible. Marking the end of the conflict with the French – against whom the nation had been defining itself – Waterloo was a catalytic moment in the British national psyche, a moment when the possibility of alternative identities, whether regenerative or degenerative, became available. Drawing upon Charlotte Anne Eaton's *The Battle of Waterloo*, and Frances Burney d'Arblay's 'Waterloo Narrative,' I argue that while these national narratives contribute to the myths of Waterloo, they also reveal the impact that the battle had upon individual national identities. Each of the analyses carried out in this thesis will demonstrate the restrictive nature of an interpretation based upon separate gendered spheres; indeed, when the plurality of identity is explicitly acknowledged, it emerges that women repeatedly imagined a Britain in which they were engaging in active patriotic roles.

Chapter One: British National Identities

In 1803 Jane Porter published her first novel, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, the tale of a young Polish nobleman forced to flee to England following the Russian invasion of Poland in 1794. Ostensibly a romance novel in which the reader follows the eponymous hero on his search for a new home, Porter employs the figure of the refugee as a means to explore British nationality and, in particular, the situation of British females. The reader follows Thaddeus through the trials conventionally associated with the *bildungsroman*, including incarceration in debtor's prison, where he reflects upon his position in the nation, on 'all that he had been' and 'what he was'.[1] His thoughts turn to Mary Beaufort who, as the heroine of the novel, represents the strength and prowess of English educated women throughout the narrative and, by extension, the merit of the English nation. Porter is drawing upon two prevalent discourses in her portrayal of Mary and her female acquaintances; the notion that a nation's level of civilisation may be gauged by the situation of its women, and the argument for female education championed by Mary Wollstonecraft, each of which form the foundation upon which she represents a female patriotic role.

Critics argue that in engaging with national discourses, female authors adopted the symbolic role attributed to women in debates about ideal femininity, in order to make 'small changes' to their situation in society. For example, Harriet Guest argues that Elizabeth Carter was able to reconcile the disparity between her public prominence as a published author and a model of acceptable femininity by presenting her writing as a religious duty, in effect by personifying piety.[2] While these critical arguments are undoubtedly groundbreaking – refuting previous paradigms in which women were seen to occupy a rigid, apolitical, domestic sphere – they have tended to focus upon the figure of the female author rather than upon how women perceived national identity in the early nineteenth-century. Rather than arguing that women were writing about the nation, therefore, this chapter will explore how the nation was portrayed, how women expressed

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[1] Jane Porter, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803) (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme, 1809), 4:3. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

[2] Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), chapters 4-6.

their opinions concerning the nation's constitution, and how they envisaged themselves actively and patriotically engaging with discourses which habitually marginalised them.

The perception that the level of civilisation of the nation was bound up with the status of its female nationals was a commonplace throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century, and has been termed the 'corruption/progression antimony haunting eighteenth-century thought'.[3] Raising the moral tenor of the nation, women represented the status of cultural progress; while threats to the nation such as luxury were represented in negatively gendered terms, paradoxically, women were also the source of its demise. This well-rehearsed argument was evident, for example, in the work of Lucy Aikin, who argued that it was every woman's duty to be a 'noble woman' as this is what inspires men to defend the nation. Arguing that sexual equality exists based upon shared interest, Aikin requested that 'instead of aspiring to be inferior men, let us content ourselves with becoming noble women'.[4] This would suggest that each woman serves a symbolic function, as to be a marker of civilisation, to be a 'noble' woman, is on the level of abstraction. In other words, it does not relate to the everyday, corporeal experience of women. Yet each individual woman is expected to behave at all times in a manner that befits the representative of the nation. Every woman carries an element of national symbolism within, a dual personality perhaps, and this symbolism draws upon a model of femininity based upon notions of chastity and virtue.

In exploring how women represent a female patriotic role, therefore, it is necessary to elucidate how they negotiate the tension between the symbolic and the corporeal, which is achieved through a manipulation of national identity itself. Despite evidence that there were many models of national identity, both male and female authors attempted to assert a unified coherent vision of the nation in their narratives, guiding the reader toward their perception of the ideal. Due to the plural nature of national identity, this project is deeply problematic; an individual engages with many identities, depending upon the circumstances of each situation. Their identification with the nation is constantly in flux drawing upon different discourses in an attempt to maintain a sense of

[3] Barbara Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.162.
[4] Lucy Aikin, *Epistles on Women, exemplifying their Character and Condition in various ages and nations. With Miscellaneous poem* (London: J. Johnson & Co., 1810), p.vi.

belonging. Theoretically, the range of identities is boundless; however, in practice the individual is contained within a particular frame of reference depending upon social divisions such as class, gender, and religion. Therefore, despite the fact that national identity is clearly a plural phenomenon, an individual arguably does not experience this multiplicity. Rather, there is an illusion of coherence, of belonging to a particular identity, which manifests in the attempts of authors to present a unified, coherent vision of the nation. The woman writer seeking to portray an active female patriotic role manipulates this plurality, negotiating alternative national discourses in order to portray new possibilities for her patriotic heroines.

Two texts will be examined in order to demonstrate this argument; the narrative poem, *The Rival Roses; or, Wars of York and Lancaster* (1813), by Eliza S. Francis, and the historical romance, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803) by Jane Porter. Despite approaching their subject matter from different political perspectives, both narratives present an argument for how the nation is to be defended in the face of contemporary threats to national stability and, in doing so, the authors reveal their perception of British national identity. The prominence which these authors enjoyed in the early years of the nineteenth century is obscured for a twenty-first century reader, yet familiar contemporary debates concerning the state of the British nation and the position of women therein may be identified in their narratives. In particular, these texts engage in different ways with the regressive model of femininity which Mary Wollstonecraft railed against in 1792 in her polemical treatise on female education, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. As Barbara Taylor highlights, what is striking for the modern reader of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century texts debating models of femininity is the 'remoteness from any lived female experience'.[5] In presenting national visions which engage with the figure of the Emblematic Woman, Francis and Porter manipulate this disparity in order to portray the possibilities for female patriotic roles. Thus, although the annotations to *The Rival Roses* vociferously defend the symbolic role of British women, the turn of events in the main narrative is rather more ambiguous, allowing space for a subversive reading of the discourse. Similarly, while Porter embraces the figure of the symbolic woman in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, she draws on debates surrounding female education in order to

[5] Taylor, p.174.

render her an active rather than a passive patriot. An analysis of the representation of national identity in these texts reveals its multivalence; thus, this chapter explores the ways in which these authors frustrate their own attempts to present a coherent vision of their imagined nation and national identity.

1:1 *The Rival Roses*, the Hanoverian Succession, and the Regency Crisis

In her narrative poem, *The Rival Roses; or, Wars of York and Lancaster*, Eliza S. Francis argues that the constitution is at risk of attack from within the nation by the malevolent force of Catholicism. Francis argues that Catholic factions are threatening the symbol of the British constitution, the throne. Despite denying that she is a 'narrow-minded-bigot' – with the elaborate explanation that a 'Roman Catholic individual in distress would be to her an equal object of pity and benevolence with a Protestant', but that as a 'collective body' Catholics seek 'absolute power' and the destruction of the 'grand bulwark of our glorious Constitution' – a vociferous anti-Catholic argument runs throughout Francis' tale of the Wars of the Roses, and is manifested in the discussion of who is capable of ruling.[6] Among the candidates is Queen Margaret, whose portrayal as a power-wielding woman appears to contravene the model of femininity which Francis represents as the ideal. Yet Margaret's presence in the narrative complicates this ideal, and offers an alternative and, ultimately, more dynamic female national role.

The Protestant Hanoverian succession had been secured over a hundred years earlier through the Act of Settlement in 1701, when George I, the Elector of Hanover, had succeeded the childless Queen Anne and thwarted the attempts of her Roman Catholic half-brother James Edward Stuart to claim the throne.[7] That Francis still feels the need to defend the ethos of the Hanoverian succession, that the right person to rule a country is not necessarily the one in direct line of descent, reveals that the monarchy is vulnerable to attack. From 1788 George III had been subject to bouts of 'madness', which we now

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[6] Eliza S. Francis, *The Rival Roses; or, Wars of York and Lancaster. A Metrical Tale* (London: J. J. Stockdale, 1813), pp.160-161. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text. Francis suggests that Napoleon has the ear of the Pope, and that he will use Catholics to achieve a successful invasion of Britain from within.

[7] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London: Vintage, 1992; 1996), p.11.

know to have been the physical rather than mental illness, porphyria.[8] Despite his condition, which impinged heavily upon his ability to rule, Francis repeatedly emphasises the positive aspects of the reign of the 'virtuous' George III, and his 'madness' is curiously absent from her narrative. In 1810, the King relapsed prompting, in 1811, the creation of his son, the Duke of York, as Prince Regent. Many feared the consequences of the rule of a libertine Regent, yet Francis defends the Regent with recourse to his regal predecessor. She describes Henry V as a similarly dissipated regent who 'became the father of his people' (Vol. I, p.171) when he ascended the throne, implying that she is willing to give the Regent a chance to prove himself in order to preserve the Protestant Hanoverian Succession. Thus, in recounting the tale of the fifteenth-century battle between the Houses of York and Lancaster for the throne of England, Francis argues for the right of the Hanoverians to rule Britain.

By choosing the events of the Wars of the Roses as her subject matter, Francis is able to show her readership the consequences of allowing a Catholic faction to influence a vulnerable monarch, namely civil war. In making this warning, Francis is tapping into a national consciousness haunted by the events of the English Civil War exacerbated by the events of the French Revolution. For the British, a mad king was somewhat preferable to committing regicide and *The Rival Roses* portrays a nation driven into civil war by the desires and ambitions of a foreign Queen. [9] This is problematic for the author attempting

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[8] Roger Sales, *Jane Austen and Representations of Regency England* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.57.

[9] *The Rival Roses* focuses upon the period 1460-1461, the first of two periods in thirty-two years of wars which saw the House of York triumph over the House of Lancaster with Edward IV seizing the throne from Henry VI. The narrative begins at Glenmore Castle where Lady Gertrude Fitzhugh and her maid, Isadore, await news of the war. A passing minstrel, Armyn, is attracted to Isadore as he plays a ballad about the Battle of Northampton, before departing the next day.

Lady Gertrude recounts the events that led to her marriage to Glenmore Fitzhugh. Gertrude fell in love with the Yorkist Oswald Montorran while betrothed to the Lancastrian Glenmore, who refused to release her. The pair eloped to France where they had a son, who was abducted. Her tale is interrupted by the return of Glenmore, who brings news that the son of Richard Duke of York, Edward, is planning to attack the castle. In the ensuing battle Glenmore is killed and the castle falls; despite an attempt at escape, Gertrude and Isadore, who Edward falls in love with, are captured and taken to Sandale Castle.

At Sandale, Gertrude is reacquainted with Lady Cicely Neville, the wife of Richard Duke of York. Gertrude resumes her story; she is in Provence and has no word of her son when Montorran is shot with an arrow. She faints and when she revives she is with Glenmore, who her father insists that she marry. On their wedding night, she draws a sword on her husband but, when he overpowers her, a disembodied voice warns him not to touch Montorran's wife. Believing it to be Montorran's ghost, Glenmore flees in fright, leaving his wife to plead with the spectre of her first husband to take her with him. Meanwhile Henry's wife, Margaret of Anjou, has led the Lancastrian army to Wakefield, where she taunts Richard to battle.

to represent her version of a coherent nation; indeed Francis' narrative is fraught with the plurality of national identity. Civil war necessitates the acknowledgement of the existence of many identities and Francis has to negotiate this in order to create her coherent vision. Thus, despite alluding to an antagonistic relationship between the two factions in the title of her poem, the narrative repeatedly effaces the differences between the Houses of York and Lancaster, portraying civil war as an unnatural sundering of filial ties:

> The hand that once, in friendly grasp,
> Was wont a brother's hand to clasp,
> Against that brother's life was raised (III.1.13-15).

Francis believes that all men are bound by the 'social knot' of filial ties that are sundered by 'anarchy, with power malign' (III.1.9); thus when '[o]pposing kindred rush to war' it

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Taking to the field before the arrival of his son and his army from Wales, Richard is outnumbered and slain. Margaret takes his head to Sandale, where she waves it before the windows of Cicely's apartments.

Meanwhile Edward has taken Isadore to a Welsh castle, where his reign is prophesised, and introduced her to Jane de Clifford. The de Clifford family are Lancastrians, but Jane has defected because she is in love with Edward, who is adamant that Isadore will share his throne. The jealous Jane believes that no woman can resist Edward's charms yet, unbeknown to her, Isadore is in love with Armyn, who is playing at the castle. Jane plots to poison Edward and Isadore, but is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger with news of Richard's death. Edward sets out immediately, but is diverted by a mystery messenger who advises him to go to London and claim the throne before Margaret. Meanwhile Armyn, who knows Jane's plans, leads Isadore to the vault where they meet a skeletal stranger who they free and all three escape in a boat. Encountering a storm, they are rescued by Edenmere who is Isadore's father and who recognises the stranger as Montorran. Jane had been in love with Montorran and had persuaded Glenmore to kill Gertrude but, when he missed his mark, Montorran had gone to Glenmore and spoken to the newly-weds before being ambushed by Jane.

Jane imprisoned Montorran in Rock-cader's tower and tried to seduce him. When her repeated attempts failed, she imprisoned him in Sandale's vault. Their rescuer, Edenmere, is Montorran's brother-in-law, and he tells Montorran that his wife, Bertha, has died and that their child, a daughter called Isadore who wears her mother's cross, was abducted. Realising that this is her father, Isadore fears that Edenmere will frown on her love for a minstrel, and Armyn flees. Edenmere gives Isadore's hand to Edward, who has returned to fight the renewed war with Margaret. Meanwhile Montorran encounters an old friend, Manfred. Manfred had found Montorran's son, who he left with an old dame and her son, Denys, while he searched for Montorran. Hearing the tale of Montorran's death, he went to Glenmore to seek Gertrude and, on the way rescued a baby girl (Isadore) from being drowned, who he leaves with the suicidal Gertrude before returning to France. He took Montorran's son to Wales where he taught him martial skills, before joining the Yorkists at the battle of Blore Heath, where Manfred lost sight of him on the field.

Manfred's tale is interrupted by the passing of a troop of Yorkist soldiers on the way to fight Margaret at Towton, and Manfred exhorts Montorran to join them. During the battle, Edward is knocked off his horse, then rescued by a mysterious knight. There is a snow storm from which the Yorkists gain an advantage, winning the battle. Margaret flees to Scotland.

Following the victory, Jane, disguised as a knight, enters Edward's tent declaring that she is his deadliest foe and pulling a knife. Montorran comes to Edward's aid and Jane tries to stab the King but is mortally wounded. Edward's second-in-command, Warwick, recognised Montorran and his lands are restored to him. Gertrude and Montorran are reunited, but long for news of their son, Reginald. With the battle over, Edward and Isadore are to be married, but are interrupted by the arrival of Armyn, who reveals that he is Reginald Montorran and the mysterious knight that rescued Edward on the battlefield. Edward releases Isadore to marry Reginald.

is a 'dire reverse of nature's law!' (VI.9.14). Whereas the French concept of Fraternité, resonant in the reference to brotherhood and anarchy, emphasises the levelling potential of filial ties, for Francis, their preservation ensures that Catholic factions cannot overturn the British Constitution.

By returning to the period of 1460-1461, a previous moment in British history when the crown changed hands, Francis is able to discuss what she perceives to be the desirable traits of a British monarch through a comparison of the two candidates for the throne who are portrayed as not dissimilar in temperament. The Lancastrian king, Henry VI, is lauded as a morally upright person, who would have been perfectly capable had he been an 'artless, happy, rural swain' (I.2.12) or the 'inmate of a holy cell' (I.2.14). Although Henry is 'gentle, pious, just, and kind' (I.2.17), he does not possess the attributes necessary to a successful reign: 'As priest or shepherd he had shone; / But wanted powers to guard a throne' (I.2.19-20). Richard, Duke of York, on the other hand, was

> valiant, prudent, bold,
> And high, his name, had fame enroll'd;
> For daring arm, and courage high,
> Ranked first, in days of chivalry (III.17.11-14).

As Protector of the State, he is clearly better suited to the role of monarch, especially as he has the 'common love' (III.17.10) of the people, yet Francis implies that Richard's ability to rule is not the impetus driving the war: 'Just were his claims; but ne'er his right, / Had been the cause of deadly fight' (III.18.11-12). The position of the line-break renders this statement ambiguous; on the one hand it states that Richard may behave like a monarch but does not have the hereditary right to the throne, while on the other hand it states that Richard does have a right to the throne, but that this was never a cause of dispute with Henry. Thus, while Henry and Richard are united as honourable Britons, Francis sets the scene for the eventual accession of the House of York.

Yet if Francis does not place the blame for the cause of the present conflict with the two potential kings, she must offer another explanation, and she does this through criticising both men for being influenced by other people. Thus, she attributes the cause of the war to Henry's wife, Queen Margaret:

> 'Twas MARGARET, HENRY's haughty wife,

> Who first provoked intestine strife;
> The passive HENRY, long she swayed,
> She spake her will, and was obeyed.
> ...
> While SUFFOLK's crimes, and BEAUFORT's art,
> Caused York t'assume an hostile part (III.18.1-4, 7-8).

While her argument that a good monarch is not necessarily the individual in the direct line of hereditary descent validates the Hanoverian Succession, Francis' recourse to the players in the Wars of the Roses, and in particular, her negative portrayal of Queen Margaret taps into an anti-Catholic discourse. Although Margaret is not explicitly portrayed as a Catholic, Francis' argument that she was the cause of civil war would have reminded the contemporary readership of the Protestant propaganda regarding the wife of Charles I, Henrietta Maria. As Linda Colley argues, in reminding the reader that the Catholics are an 'unvarying enemy,' the Protestant version of British history refers to the Catholic queen who 'together with her interfering priests had led Charles I astray and the whole island into war'.[10] It is not necessary for Francis to make an explicit reference to Charles I as he occupied a prominent position in British popular consciousness, with sermons preached every year to mark the anniversary of his accession. The implicit association between Margaret and Henrietta Maria elides the fact that, during the fifteenth century, the entire nation was Catholic, emphasising, instead, the danger of a Catholic influence upon the monarch.

Margaret's portrayal as the national Other is reinforced by the rallying cries of Warwick the Kingmaker at the Battle of Towton. Urging his troops to 'Rush to the fight,' Warwick recalls historic battles in terms of a duty to ancestors:

> Think, how of old, your gallant sires have fought,
> Shall Poictiers [sic], Crecy, Azincourt [sic] be nought?
> Shew to the world, upon this glorious day,
> That still their feelings in your pulses play (VI.5.7-10).

Warwick's speech is double-edged, appealing both to the Yorkist forces but also to the contemporary readership to unite against the archetypal national Other, the French. In evoking the battles that their ancestors fought, Warwick asks that their sacrifice, including his, will not be made in vain. Indeed, the bellicose tone of the narrative extends

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[10] Colley, p.21.

to the footnotes as, warning against rashness, pride, and ambition, the concluding note states that

> at a time when [religious] faction boldly rears her gorgon crest, [Francis] thinks it is the duty of every well-wisher to his country, and of every loyal subject, to dare to support the right cause (Vol. II, p.162),

that cause being the defence of a Protestant British nation.

However, Francis' argument is not simply an anti-Catholic tirade. Portraying Queen Margaret as a negative character in terms of a national discourse to some extent necessitates a stereotypical representation of the Other; it is a matter of convention that the individual who is not British is Catholic and French or, at the very least, continental. Of course Margaret's Catholicism is intrinsic to the anti-Catholic thread of the narrative, however, her religious affiliation is not the main criticism levelled by Francis. Rather, Margaret is criticised for wielding power, which is deemed unnatural and unfeminine. A note to the line in which Margaret is directly accused of causing the present 'intestine strife' describes 'the haughty and beautiful MARGARET [who] easily obtained a complete ascendancy over her royal husband' (Vol. I, p.184). Margaret's main fault is that she wields a power through her husband which excludes her from the model of femininity which, as we shall see below, Francis portrays as the ideal.

That a Queen who wields too much power should be a cause of anxiety for Francis would have resonated with the contemporary audience embroiled in the debate surrounding Queen Charlotte's role in the Regency crisis. With George III plagued by recurring bouts of mental illness, anxiety regarding the libertine Regent 'forced some Tories to explore the possibilities of abandoning a commitment to male lines of descent in this particular instance'.[11] Indeed, a government newspaper, *The Courier*, 'supported the case on 31 December 1810 for allowing Queen Charlotte, advised by a council, to act as Regent.'[12] In the ensuing debate, the Queen was granted control of the Royal Household, which, despite appearing limited, actually stretched into government due to the power that she held over her son, the Regent. Although the Regent eventually took absolute control, in February 1811, Roger Sales comments that 'conservative attempts to limit the Regent's powers nevertheless opened up controversial issues such as the

[11] Sales, p.58.
[12] Ibid.

political position and power of women'.[13] Any narratives dealing with the issue of queenship would resonate with this debate, and Francis' emphasis upon the unnatural nature of Margaret's power, in conjunction with her willingness to allow the Regent to prove himself, places her firmly in opposition to the conservatives.

The negative portrayal of Margaret also functions as a foil to the characters whose idealisation as symbolic national figures rests upon the exertion of self-control. In a footnote, Francis declares:

> [l]et the females of Britain remember that upon them depends much; for the virtue and exemplary conduct of the women of a nation, inspire men with bravery and determination to defend their wives, their daughters, and their sisters, against every foreign attack: while carelessness or levity of deportment and immodesty in dress, lessen the respect of the other sex, and decrease the interest they would otherwise feel for their welfare (Vol. II, p.151).

Addressing a readership living with the constant threat of "foreign attack," Francis argues that it is a woman's national duty to conduct herself with propriety, a role which inspires men to rise to their defence. Francis' portrayal of Cicely, the wife of the doomed Duke of York and the mother of the future King Edward IV, embodies this discourse. While explaining that the unfortunate Duchess of York was related to members of both of the 'rival Houses,' Francis surmises that

> though in possession of the most valued blessings of this world, - rank, beauty, and wealth, yet was her cup of life mixed with bitterness: and the life of CICELY affords one of the grand subjects of morality, with which the history of those times, imperfect as it is, abounds (Vol. I, p.195).

A shining moral exemplar, Cicely also behaves in a manner which befits a queen. When Margaret parades the head of her dead husband before her window,

> Superior 'bove the shock of fate,
> Then 'rose, of YORK, the widowed mate,
> She sighed but shed no tear (III.24.14-16).

In a supreme act of self-control, Cicely does not respond rashly, rather she maintains the demeanour that Francis suggests elicits the respect of the men of the nation.

[13] Ibid. This would also be inflected by the rise in popularity at this time of the future Queen Caroline, the Regent's wife, which would culminate in the Queen Caroline Affair in 1820.

Drawing upon a discourse of self-control enables female characters to partake in a friendship which, akin to filial ties, bridges the political divide. When the apparently Lancastrian Gertrude arrives at Sandale Castle as a captive, she experiences the joy of renewing her friendship with Cicely. Gertrude has been portrayed as a woman who, following a thwarted elopement, had learned the trait of self-control through experience; indeed, Francis wishes her readers to draw a lesson from this character:

> [i]t is the author's wish that the history of LADY GERTRUDE should exhibit a striking lesson on the ill consequences of rashness, and disobedience; had she but the resolution to resist the entreaties of MONTORRAN, she would have avoided many of those sorrows which afterwards embittered her days (Vol. I, p.176).

Forced to marry the evil Lord Glenmore instead of her lover, Montorran, and to lead a solitary life, it would appear that Gertrude has learned to suppress her emotions, and drawing on the discourse of self-control facilitates her identification and friendship with Cicely. The political divide between the women only features in their friendship insofar as Gertrude's feelings of relief at the possibility of rescue by the advancing Lancastrian forces are tinged with the knowledge that their arrival would mean the capture of her friend. The notion that female friendship bridges the political divide is further stressed when the Duke of York asks Gertrude to shield her friend, his wife, should Margaret be victorious.

That those women who are practicing self-control are also included in a discourse of female friendship suggests that those women who are not in control of their passions are excluded from that national vision. Jane de Clifford, for example, is characterised in terms of duplicity: 'Of CLIFFORD's sister, proud and fair, / Would none, their real thoughts declare' (V.16.63-64). Possessing the maligned trait of pride, coupled with a lack of control over her passions – 'She, who to passion, yields the reign, / Nor art, nor force, can e'er restrain' (IV.27.3-4) – Jane de Clifford is depicted as unnatural, as not female:

> Strange, that the sex, for softness framed,
> That those, for winning graces famed,
> Should harbour thoughts of vengeance dire,
> And give their minds to stormy ire!
> Strange! that within the female soul,
> Passion should rage, without controul (V.2.1-6).

A lack of control over her passions excludes Jane from the model of femininity which allows her access to Francis' ideal nation. Referring to women in the plural rather than specifically to Jane implies that this stanza and the accusation of a deviant, unnatural femaleness may be applied to other women, including Margaret.

Yet the existence of alternative models of female roles, manifesting in the characterisation of Margaret and Jane, problematises Francis' attempt to portray a coherent vision of the position of women within the nation. Jane's function in the poem remains as a two-dimensional foil, but the portrayal of other characters enables Francis to subvert the symbolic model of femininity, or at the very least to suggest alternatives to it. The level of abstraction implied by a symbolic role as the nation's moral guardian is not sustained in the narrative, which is intermittently disrupted with references to the consequences of warfare, reminding the reader sharply that female corporeality is central to the conflict. Women bear physical manifestations of the upheaval wrenching the nation apart; from the first stanza, Gertrude is immersed in a melancholy depression '[f]or England's woes absorbed her soul' (I.2.6). Civil war leaves its mark on Cicely, who 'fear'd the woes of civil strife, / Which mark'd her pensive brow with care' (III.13.3-4), while Margaret's 'beauteous face, / Is marked with care' (VI.3.11-12). The habitually epic tone of the narrative is haunted by references to mourning women, and the image of [t]he wife's deep groan, the daughter's tear' which 'met the eye, and shocked the ear' (V.23.19-20) is in stark contrast to the glorifying tendency of the majority of the poem.

While the footnotes operate as a didactic guide to Francis's ideal model of femininity, the narrative reveals the author's project to be rather more ambiguous, with the turn of events subverting supposed authorial intent. The reader is told that Gertrude's tale, for example, is to serve as a warning to female readers of the imprudence and danger of passion-fuelled liaisons, yet by the end of the tale Gertrude has been reunited with her estranged lover, Montorran, and their long-lost son, Reginald. Perhaps Gertrude has learned self-restraint thereby earning the Montorran family reunion; yet, in order to serve as an object lesson for the female readership, Gertrude should arguably carve out a penitent life with Glenmore. Furthermore, if she is to be reunited with her fellow eloper,

perhaps it should be at the cost of social status rather than the reincorporation into the patriarchal nation represented by the restoration of the Montorran estates.

Although the interpretation of Gertrude's fate remains ambiguous, it is the portrayal of Margaret which offers the greatest potential subversion of the trope of the female symbolic role. In keeping with her portrayal as the national Other, Margaret does not adhere to the model of femininity embodied by Cicely and Gertrude. Like Jane de Clifford, Margaret is bereft of self-control; her

> high unbending soul,
> Had never yielded to controul.
> Hers, subtle art, and tow'ring mind,
> To conquer, not submit, inclin'd (III.19.1-4).

She is also represented as unnatural as, recoiling from Margaret's vicious taunting of Cicely with her slain husband's head, the narrative asks '[s]uits fell revenge, the female breast?' (III.24.5). Thus, Margaret is unable to identify with the trope of female friendship, her exclusion from which is metaphorically represented with an image redolent of social ostracision, as 'AUGUSTA'S GATES' (IV.15.12) – the classical name for London – would not open for her. Yet, although Margaret is unable to identify with this discourse, her portrayal is not wholly negative; indeed, her characterisation offers an alternative female patriotic role, the basis of which is a form of the female heroic. Margaret may be denigrated for the wielding of power, in the footnote which refers to the Queen's 'ascendancy over her royal husband,' but she is simultaneously lauded for heroic traits:

> [s]he was of a masculine and courageous disposition; in temper enterprising, and in understanding, solid, yet vivacious; lovely in person, as she was towering in mind (Vol. I, p.184).

Although Margaret's overt masculinity distances her from the other female characters, her portrayal as an amalgam of the best masculine and feminine traits results in rather more ambiguous, if not positive characterisation of a form of the heroic which, although predominately female, could arguably be interpreted as androgynous. In this passage, Margaret exhibits both the conventionally masculine heroic traits of courage, innovation, and wisdom coupled with feminine vivacity and beauty.

Considering that Margaret is characterised as the national Other and the cause of civil war elsewhere in the narrative, an argument that she embodies a positive female heroic would seem incongruous. After all, the footnotes repeatedly emphasise that the symbolic role represented by Cicely is the ideal model of femininity, from which Margaret is far removed. Yet Francis also draws on the figure of the Emblematic Woman in her portrayal of Margaret, opening up the possibility that alternative models of femininity, including the female heroic, may fulfil a symbolic role. Thus, in a detailed description of Margaret on the battlefield at the decisive battle of Towton, reference is made to recognisably British historic and symbolic female heroes:

As once, we read, on Ilium's sacred plain,
In pomp of power, the Queen of battles stood;
With her own hand increased the heaps of slain,
And, of Troy's chieftains, spilt the bravest blood.
So ANJOU's Princess in the fight appears,
No host she dreads, no hero's arm she fears;
Like PALLAS' self, great MARGARET seems to stand,
The faulchion waving in her lifted hand:
And, o'er her brow, with snowy feathers graced,
The beaming helm in shining pomp was placed.
"On, my brave troops!" with thrilling voice she cries,
While fiery ardor [sic] darted from her eyes;
"Let the Red Rose, once more triumphant hail,
The final downfall of its rival, pale.
Let LANCASTER's deep wrongs your zeal inspire,
Inflame your force, and kindle all your fire!
For MARGARET leads you; - in whose daring breast
No coward dread, with hope and valor [sic] rest."
Her shouting host, her high behest obey,
And boldly mingle in the fray. (VI.4.)[14]

Francis conflates the figures of Athena, the Roman goddess of war, and Elizabeth I in her representation of Margaret as the ultimate female warrior, the queen of battles, each of whom rejects conventional models of femininity. Emerging fully grown from the cloven head of her father, Zeus, Athena's unnatural birth traditionally effaces her gender, whereas Elizabeth I's constant refusal to marry led to the myth of the Virgin Queen.

[14] Margaret's presence at Towton in this stanza is evidence of Francis' manipulation of historical events, as it is generally believed that Margaret and her son were taking refuge in Scotland when this battle took place. However, Francis claims to have found a source which places the Queen at the scene of the battle, and the author states that she 'has adopted the latter idea as adding to the interest of the scene' (Vol. II, p.142).

Francis depicts each of these female warriors as they appear on the field of battle. Referring specifically to Homer's *Iliad*, in which Athena plays a pivotal role in securing the Greek victory at Troy, Francis is not only drawing upon a classical model but is also making reference to a figure recognisable to her readers as a female representative of the British nation, Britannia. As Marina Warner argues, Athena repeatedly appears as the archetypal figure of female allegory, the armed guardian of virtue, and is a 'familiar English figure'.[15] Invented by the Romans to represent a conquered country, the figure of Britannia draws upon Athenian imagery and saw a resurgence during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the representation of the free British nation, epitomised in James Thomson's 'Rule Britannia' of 1740.[16] Thomson's verse employs this allegory to convey an idea of British liberty and freedom, but here Francis is drawing upon Britannia as a female warrior, placing Margaret in the position of representing the British nation on the battlefield, in accord – albeit in a different discourse – with the notion of women inspiring men to defend the nation. This inspirational role is also intrinsic to the symbolism of Elizabeth I, also present in the passage. Margaret's reference to her 'daring breast' is reminiscent of Elizabeth's famous statement, while rallying the troops at Tilbury, that though she may have the body of a woman, she has the heart of a king. Thus, despite the rejection of a particular model of femininity, Margaret is a positive representative of the nation. It would be the Tudors who would finally supplant the Plantagenet line and, more important for Francis' purpose, Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, who would set in motion the Protestant Reformation. In portraying Margaret, therefore, Francis offers an alternative female patriotic role; one which finds women inspiring men on the field of battle rather than from the confines of home. Rather than embodying a passive abstraction, it is Margaret's physical presence, her thrilling voice and daring breast, which inspires her troops.

Ultimately, however, Margaret is banished to the periphery of Francis' imagined nation, fleeing to Scotland following her husband's defeat. Whereas the warring men are depicted as fundamentally misled honourable Britons, Francis seems unable to reconcile Margaret's Other-ness with her patriotic role, as the model of transgressive femininity

[15] Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985), p.54.
[16] Warner, pp.45-49.

outweighs her positive symbolic portrayal. Margaret's fate is also dictated by the reflexive frame narrative of the poem in which Francis muses on her role as a poetess; a frame narrative which, more importantly, ends with a long passage which attributes the advanced civilised state of the British nation to the advent of printing and the rise in print culture. Arguing that the press assisted in the dissemination of Lutheranism, which eventually led to the English rejection of Catholicism, Francis argues at length that without the press we would not know of the heroic deeds of our ancestors, and could not compare them to the equally heroic deeds of the present government. *The Rival Roses* ends with the following peroration to her readership:

> Long may the art CAXTONIAN live!
> And, to our land, due honor [sic] give;
> Yes! ever let this matchless art,
> Britannia's noble deeds impart;
> And ever may my country's claim,
> Be Glory, Honor, Virtue, Fame.
> Still may it be its task, to trace,
> Bright annals of the BRUNSWICK Race;
> Nor e'er such direful deeds disclose,
> As now, the page historic, shews [sic],
> In records of each Rival Rose. (VI.42.16-26)

For Francis, the purpose of civilisation, represented by the rise of print culture, is the dissemination of history, from which the contemporary readers can learn valuable lessons. In particular, she argues that the lessons learned from the events of the Wars of the Roses will ensure the longevity of the Hanoverian Succession.

However, Francis' portrayal of Margaret remains problematic. In order to validate her overarching argument – of a Protestant model of progress – Francis must contain the transgressive model that is intrinsic to Margaret's representation as the symbol of the British female warrior. The success of her containment is arguable, however, as the extent to which Margaret's positive and negative traits are reconciled remains ambiguous and, whereas Gertrude and Cicely attain their symbolic status through a rejection of their corporeality evident in the repression of their passions, as the 'queen of battles,' Margaret reconciles her corporeal and symbolic roles. Ultimately, the warrior Queen remains the most dynamic female character in the narrative. For Francis, the availability of female patriotic roles within her vision of the nation is linked to a particular model of femininity

yet, as her portrayal of Margaret makes clear, other models may achieve this. Furthermore, *The Rival Roses* focuses upon a particular class, the aristocracy, raising the question of whether 'everywoman' has the same access to patriotic roles. Following her hero on a journey from the peripheries to the centre of the nation, in *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Jane Porter's focus broadens to encompass different classes – and other social divisions, such as religion – and, consequently, different female patriotic roles.

1:2 *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Refugees, and National Assimilation

Thaddeus of Warsaw is set against the events leading up to and resulting in the fall of Poland. The eponymous hero is based upon Tadeusz Kosciuszko who, along with Joseph Poniatowski, King Stanislaw August Poniatowski's nephew, led the Polish resistance against the Russian invaders and was defeated in October 1794 at the battle of Maciejowice, a battle notorious for the Russians' ruthless sack of the Praga suburb.[17] Following the fall of their nation, the Poles joined the tide of refugees moving around the world and many, including Kosciuszko, found themselves in Britain; indeed, Kosciuszko was a familiar figure, appearing in newspapers, novels, and paintings.[18] Jane Porter's brother, the historical painter Robert Ker Porter, met the then ailing General, an event which the author states was one of the inspirations for *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. For the inhabitants of European metropolitan centres during an age characterised by revolutions, refugees were a familiar sight, and the 'wretched, yet noble-looking visages' of the 'hapless refugees' who populated the streets of London left their mark on the young Porter.[19]

For those reading *Thaddeus* in 1803, the tale of a nation felled by revolution and imperialism in 1794 resonated with recent major historical events closer to home.[20]

[17] Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), p.311.
[18] See Thomas McLean, 'When Hope Bade the World Farewell: British Responses to the 1794 Kosciuszko Uprising,' *Wordsworth Circle*, 29:3 (1998), pp.178-185.
[19] Cited in Fiona Price, 'Biography of Jane Porter,' *Corvey Women Writers on the Web 1796-1834*, http://www2.shu.ac.uk/corvey/CW3/ContribPage.cfm?Contrib=405 (date accessed 21/11/01), p.2.
[20] *Thaddeus of Warsaw* charts the adventures of Thaddeus Sobieski, a Polish nobleman forced to flee to England following the Russian invasion of 1792. He lives with his grandfather and his mother, who reveals that she was secretly married to an Englishman, Mr Sackville, who left when she was pregnant. Thaddeus

Following the Revolution in 1789, 1793 saw the French commit regicide and declare war on Britain. The Peace of Amiens in 1802 signalled a brief cessation of conflict, which was resumed in 1803, when Britain, suspicious of Napoleon's imperial plans, declared war on France. As a review in the *Annual Review* reveals, interpretations of *Thaddeus* were influenced by the fear of a French invasion. Throughout the protracted hostilities, Napoleon sought to invade Britain; indeed, he made an unsuccessful attempt in Ireland in 1796 and Wales in 1797. With the gift of historical hindsight, the twenty-first century reader is aware that Napoleon never set foot on British shores, yet for the nineteenth-century reader the fear of French invasion was immense, fuelled by constant rumour and

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joins the doomed battle to defend Poland, and rescues Pembroke Somerset, an Englishman who misguidedly fights for the Russians. Somerset's tutor, Mr Loftus, was instructed not to take his pupil to Poland, but was swayed by his attraction to the widowed Russian Baroness Surowkoff. Thaddeus takes Somerset to meet his mother, Therese, before he departs.

Following the treaty between the Russians and the Polish Diet, Thaddeus continues to fight with the remnants of the Polish army who recapture Warsaw but are defeated at Prague. With his grandfather dead, Thaddeus follows the dying wish of his mother that he flee to England. Believing that Somerset has forgotten him, due to the lack of response to his letters, Thaddeus (renamed Mr Constantine) rents a small room. Falling ill, he incurs debts that he pays by pawning some of his possessions. He pawns his pistols to pay the medical bills incurred by his landlady's mortally ill, smallpox-ridden son. Returning from the pawnshop, he sees Somerset but cannot speak with him, before meeting the ailing Polish General Butzou begging. Thaddeus becomes an artist to support them.

After rescuing the Countess of Tinemouth from an attack, Thaddeus is introduced to Maria Egerton, and the licentious Lady Sara Roos. Lady Tinemouth secures Thaddeus a position as a German tutor to Diana and Euphemia Dundas, the latter of whom falls in love with him. When Lady Tinemouth tells Thaddeus that her abusive husband left her and refused her access to her children, Thaddeus believes him to be his father. Stunned, he goes home, rescuing two children from a fire on the way.

The following day Thaddeus discovers that one of the other rescuers, Mary Beaufort, is a friend of Lady Tinemouth and is Somerset's cousin. She has defended him from the Dundas' gossip. Meanwhile, the Earl of Tinemouth accuses his wife of being Thaddeus' mistress and orders her to leave London, but not before she discovers that Mary is in love with Thaddeus, who has rejected Lady Sara. The Dundas' have not paid Thaddeus and he is sent to the debtor's prison. Mary enlists her cousin's help to secure his release. Pembroke recognises Thaddeus, and it transpires that Mr Loftus had intercepted his correspondence. However, Pembroke's father, Sir Robert Somerset, orders an end to the friendship. Yet Somerset is unable to tell Thaddeus, who is nursing the terminally ill Lady Tinemouth, but reunites the Countess and her daughter, Lady Albina, before returning to his sick father. Following Lady Tinemouth's death, Thaddeus nobly negotiates an argument with her husband and son and, learning Sir Robert's decree, leaves for America.

Falling ill by the roadside, Thaddeus is rescued by Sir Robert, who reveals that he is Thaddeus' father. Forming an inappropriate attachment in his youth, his father had sent him with Mr Stanhope, the Earl of Tinemouth, on a grand tour, where they had adopted the name Sackville. Stanhope soon revealed his true colours, and the pair parted company. Deceived by his father that the woman he loved had married another, Sir Robert married Thaddeus' mother but, when the truth was revealed, he returned to England to marry his true love. Pembroke is Thaddeus' half-brother and Sir Robert fears that Thaddeus will render him illegitimate. Yet Thaddeus does not want Pembroke's name and settles for one of the family estates. The tale ends with the engagements of Pembroke and Albina, Thaddeus and Mary.

propaganda. For the *Annual* reviewer, the events in Poland serve to stiffen the British resolve to resist invasion:

> [w]e cannot for one instant doubt but that *our* resistance will be more successful, and that France will lead her ineffectual hordes to disgrace, discomfiture, and death; but in order to give additional vigour and effect to that resistance, let the massacres at Ismael and Prague be present to our recollection.[21]

The reviewer's evocation effaces the complexity of the situation. Following their defeat, a large body of Polish refugees had fled to Paris and, in 1797, had formed a Polish legion in the French army.[22] Britain had been an ally of Poland, albeit a passive one, yet now the invaders and the people that the reviewer asks the reader to recollect in order to resist invasion were potentially one and the same.

Such ambiguities were not lost on Porter, whose narrative reveals a mind considering the impact of an influx of large numbers of refugees upon national stability. *Thaddeus of Warsaw* deals with the concept of national assimilation, interrogating the margins of her national vision, and questioning the fate of Polish and British identities. Porter envisages a moral nation based upon ideas of assimilation and equality for all, including immigrants and women. As Thaddeus draws upon the recognisably British discourses of Protestant Christianity and ancestral descent, Porter makes a distinction between what, for her, constitute the national periphery, middle-ground, and centre. Whereas the narrative would appear to advocate an all-inclusive Britishness, in practice an individual's ability to move between these locations depends upon their ability to participate in the correct discourses. Therefore, the stereotypical Jew and Catholic remain in a static position in the periphery. While narrating Thaddeus' tale and attempting to offer a unified vision of Britain, paradoxically, Porter demonstrates the manner in which people engage with different discourses in order to perpetuate national identification, but also situates women at the centre of this process. The women who facilitate Thaddeus' national assimilation are judged according to the kind of education they have received,

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[21] 'Review of *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, by Jane Porter,' *Annual Review*, 2 (1803), 604-5, *Corvey Women Writers on the Web 1796-1834*, http://www2.shu.ac.uk/corvey/CW3/ContribPage.cfm?Contrib=290 (date accessed 21/11/01), p.1.
[22] Davies, p.161.

which also dictates the position they occupy in the nation, and draws upon Mary Wollstonecraft's arguments for an improved female education.

Critiquing the infantilising effects of a fashionable education which schooled females in social accomplishments such as needlework and dancing, Wollstonecraft argued for educational equality on the grounds that a woman who has received a rational education not only proves to be a beneficial companion for her husband but, more importantly, acquires virtue, enabling her to fulfil her patriotic role as the mother of the next generation of Britons.[23] As Barbara Taylor argues, 'Wollstonecraft's leading ambition for women was that they should attain virtue, and it was to this end that she sought their liberation.'[24] For Wollstonecraft, recognition of a liberated female reason was not based upon gender inequality; rather, such recognition would 'fulfil women's natural potential ... [as a]ll God's children are inherently perfectible'.[25] In *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination*, Taylor redresses an imbalance in Wollstonecraftian criticism through a focus upon the author's usually overlooked religious beliefs in which, she argues, Wollstonecraft's feminism is 'embedded'.[26] Thus, Wollstonecraft argued, it is 'through the exercise of a rational will that only bows to God that women will achieve that self-respect in which inner freedom is founded'.[27] Taylor argues that *eros*, 'the love which links humanity to the divine,' was for Wollstonecraft the 'core of the religious experience' and that a 'free woman's passions ... [are] transfigured by her inner grace'.[28] This religious love is free from carnal taints however, and Taylor quotes Cora Kaplan's argument that 'the most profound anxiety about the rupturing force of sexuality' permeates the *Vindication*.[29] Thus, the ideal representatives of the woman of virtue are mothers and 'morally immaculate' widows, who have 'sublimated' their desire in to 'sacred love'.[30]

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[23] Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. by Miriam Brody (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).
[24] Taylor, p.12.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Taylor, p.99.
[27] Taylor, p.94.
[28] Taylor, pp.108-109, p.113.
[29] Taylor, p.117.
[30] Taylor, p.117, p.126.

Porter was heavily influenced by Wollstonecraft's arguments and, as will be seen in Chapter Two, she dramatises the sublimation of female desire in her historical romance of 1809, *The Scottish Chiefs*. As I will demonstrate, Wollstonecraft's arguments regarding female education are embodied by the different women in *Thaddeus*, enabling Porter to emphasis the positive or negative attributes of each individual through the position they occupy in relation to the nation. Whereas Mary Beaufort is eventually situated in the imagined national centre of Porter's vision of the nation, the level of marginalisation of the other female characters is dictated by the form of education which they have received. Therefore, not only does Thaddeus have to engage with recognisably British discourses in order to assimilate into the nation, he also has to negotiate successfully his relationships with the women he meets along the way. By portraying an immigrant entering a professedly tolerant Britain from the margins of the nation and progressing to a position of national identification, Porter is able to highlight the exclusion that is semantically and experientially inherent in concepts of inclusiveness. Furthermore, the anxieties of the characters that Thaddeus encounters upon his arrival in England reveal much about what Porter perceived to be British traits – in particular an observance of Protestant Christianity – but also about the process of identification itself. Thaddeus' religious identity is assessed in terms of his behaviour and his appearance and it immediately becomes clear that there are some individuals who would not receive a warm welcome in London.

In a vitriolic exclamation expressing his disgust and distrust, one of the first Englishmen that Thaddeus encounters, Dr. Vincent, refers to immigrants as wolves: '[t]hese wolves were his favourite metaphors, when he spoke of the unhappy French, or of any penniless foreigner, who came his way' (2:14). The Doctor hopes that Thaddeus is not a Methodist, to which Mrs. Robinson, Thaddeus' poor landlady, responds:

> No, Sir: he is a christian; and as good a reasonable sweet tempered gentleman, as ever came into a house. Alas! I believe he is more like a papist; though they say papists don't read the bible, but worship images (2:9).

Avid scripture-reading denotes that Thaddeus is a Christian, but the fact that his denominational identity remains blurred highlights the problematic nature of identifying someone's religious identity through appearance. Thaddeus is drawing upon a discourse

of Christian identity but not the same one as Mrs Robinson, therefore she cannot precisely define his denomination. Her scant knowledge, which is gleaned from popular hearsay, does not assuage her anxiety regarding the possibility that Thaddeus is a Catholic. Although professedly a Protestant, the barely literate Mrs. Robinson demonstrates a belief in superstition stereotypically attributed to the Catholic religion and, as such, she occupies a static position in the outer regions of Porter's vision of the nation.

Thaddeus, however, is clearly engaging with a discourse which enables him to assimilate with British national identity as Porter perceives it. In carefully negotiating the division between Catholic and Protestant, Porter implies that the latter is the ideal, therefore she needs to clarify the denominational identity of her hero. This is achieved through an assessment of Thaddeus' appearance, and in particular his dress as he is represented as literally donning Protestantism. When Lady Tinemouth and Maria Egerton first encounter Thaddeus, they attempt to identify him through his apparel:

> "I perceive," said the elder, as she took her seat, "that my deliverer is in the army; yet I do not recollect having seen that uniform before."
> "I am not an Englishman," returned he.
> "Not an Englishman!" exclaimed Miss Egerton, "and speak the language so accurately! You cannot be French?"
> "No, madam; I had the honour of serving under the king of Poland." (2:116)

Thaddeus' clothing does not match his command of the English language, thus the attempts of the two women to identify him are confounded. Although the subsequent request that he leave his uniform at home apparently removes the element of confusion, Thaddeus' own sense of his national identity remains the same. In fact, rather than representing the attempt of the protagonist to identify with a British national identity, Thaddeus' change of clothes signifies the anxious need of Lady Tinemouth and Maria Egerton to be able to pin down another individual's identity, an ultimately impossible act due to the elusive, multivalent nature of national identity. Thus, the women collude in an illusion of identification, constructing a narrative of Thaddeus' national identity. Guessing his financial situation, Lady Tinemouth procures Thaddeus a position as a German tutor, and gives him some money to purchase some 'English' clothes. At the sight of his new attire Maria Egerton exclaims, '[n]ow, you look like a Christian; before

you always reminded me of some stalking hero in tragedy' (2:163). Although always professed as a Christian, the capitalisation in this passage implies that his Christianity has been confirmed and, in light of Mrs. Robinson's earlier statement, it becomes clear that in donning an English greatcoat, Thaddeus has donned a Protestant religious identity.

The notion that it is possible to define aspects of an individual's identity through their dress is not unfamiliar in the context of the early nineteenth-century. As Richard Wrigley argues, for example, the French asserted that through the 'transparency of appearances: true patriotic virtue could be expressed by the adoption of a costume.'[31] In *The Politics of Appearances*, Wrigley focuses specifically on Revolutionary France, and the politicisation of dress, as opposed to fashion, that manifested in a culture of surveillance, which is also relevant to the present argument.[32] As Wrigley states,

> attitudes and responses to dress are a touchstone for matters of collective and self-representation, and the negotiation of questions of identity apprehended through the culturally complex business of the legibility of appearances.[33]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau had argued that there was a relationship between an individual's dress and their inner moral self but, as Wrigley's case study of the liberty cap, the *sans-culottes*, and the cockade demonstrates, rather than a single politics of dress, there was a 'spectrum of competing dissonant interpretative ideas and beliefs'.[34] Furthermore, there was recognition that vestimentary surveillance, as Wrigley terms it, was 'not only unreliable but also subject to insidious manipulation', contradicting the belief in transparent appearances.[35] Thus, in the context of the fear of invasion voiced by the *Annual Review* reviewer, Thaddeus' appearance is a source of anxiety among his acquaintances, which is assuaged with the construction of a narrative of identification. However, the important point for the present argument is that Thaddeus is increasingly engaging with discourses that are recognisably British, enabling him to assimilate. Indeed, once he has removed his Polish uniform, he enters a society which, although

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[31] Richard Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p.9.

[32] Wrigley qualifies the distinction between dress and fashion as the former is 'more inclusive' whereas the latter carries 'connotations of a relatively circumscribed manipulation of style.' Furthermore, Wrigley argues that Paris' reputation for 'dress-as-fashion' became 'redundant' during the Revolution due to the curtailment of the trade in luxury goods. Wrigley, p.2.

[33] Wrigley, p.5.

[34] Wrigley, p.230, p.7.

[35] Wrigley, p.249.

recognisably middle and upper-class, is marginalised from Porter's vision of the national centre by the 'flawed' femininity manifest in the portrayal of the estranged Lady Tinemouth and her circle.

Although not relegated to the peripheries, the women who gather around Lady Tinemouth are marginalised by their flaws which, although predominately educational, are manifested in sexual slurs. Despite being married to a peer of the realm, the Countess of Tinemouth has been abandoned by her husband, who refuses her access to her children and accuses her of engaging in an adulterous affair with Thaddeus, an accusation which also draws on the perceived threat that foreigners pose to female chastity. However, Porter's exploration of detrimental female education is most rigorous in the extremes of the Dundas sisters, Euphemia and Diana, and Lady Sara Roos. Embodying Wollstonecraft's argument that

> the behaviour of a few women, who, by accident, or by following a strong bent of nature, have acquired a portion of knowledge superior to that of the rest of their sex, has often been overbearing,

Porter's portrayal of Diana Dundas – and her aspirations to join the Bluestockings – critiques the acquirement of education for social advantage.[36] Diana parades her limited education as a badge of superiority, tyrannising over the occupants of the Dundas' Harley Street residence. Habitually blaming her stupidity upon Thaddeus, the lazy Diana desires to possess knowledge without working for it and the narrative scathingly comments that 'the fair Diana would have been the most learned woman in the world, could she have found any fine-lady path to the temple of science' (2:202). Her viciousness is ineffectual, however, as Lord Bennington, a frequent guest at her home, comments that

> the eloquent Miss Dundas is so kind to her friends, that she lets no opportunity slip, of displaying her power, over both the republic of words, and the empire of her mother's family (3:9).

Her political agency is limited to the confines of her home, and in the act of banishing Thaddeus from her society, Diana only serves to exclude herself from the ideal nation established at the end of the narrative.

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[36] Wollstonecraft, p.303.

While Diana is portrayed as a decidedly unlikeable character, she is not as dangerous as her sister, Euphemia. With a voracious appetite for the '"garbage" of any circulating library' (2:183), Euphemia embodies the perils of excessively reading the wrong kind of literature, in particular sentimental romance novels. Although prone to histrionic fits of fainting and crying, Euphemia is generally well-liked; however, the detrimental nature of her excessive sensibility manifests itself in her unrestrained sentimental overtures which prove dangerous to Thaddeus. He expresses the unease he feels in Euphemia's presence and, when he finally rejects her, the Dundas circle misinterpret his intent, accusing Thaddeus of forcing himself upon Euphemia and placing him and his reputation in real danger. Ultimately, the weak-willed Euphemia is expelled from the middle ground of Porter's nation, and is relegated to the national periphery where she marries a Scottish nobleman (4:253).

It is the lack of restraint of Lady Sara Roos which poses the most danger to Thaddeus. Orphaned at a young age, her education has lacked a mother's guiding hand, resulting in a complete lack of sexual morals. In portraying Sara Roos, Porter draws on the figure of the corrupting, licentious woman which has appeared in literature since early representations of Pandora and Eve.[37] The chaste woman and her licentious counterpart are mutually defining, in other words, it is necessary to meet the whore in order to recognise the angel. By placing the Misses Dundas and Sara Roos in the same circle, Porter argues that the absence of a mother figure is the worst fate for a woman; although Diana and Euphemia are certainly flawed characters, the presence of their mother, arguably, has schooled them in female sexual decorum. When Sara muses on the cultural iniquities of sexual mores – comparing the sexual freedom of polygamous Turkish men to her own situation as an adulterous British female – she demonstrates her lack of sexual morals. As long as she 'kept her husband and herself out of Doctors Commons' (2:134), she may seduce whom she pleases.

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[37] Marina Warner argues that the allegorical abstraction of Virtue was created in direct response to the ancient notion that women endanger men. Descended from the first woman, either Eve or Pandora, women are naturally duplicitous. Referring to the poet Hesiod's account of the tale of Pandora's box, Warner suggests that 'all of [Pandora's] sly morals and bitchy manners are instruments ... of the inveigling wiles of women who want to get riches' (p.217). A woman's 'beauty, desirability and her cunning speech' are all the tools with which she exacts her deceptions, traits which are all linked to her sexuality (p.216). Thus, a woman who is chaste and virtuous not only avoids slurs linked to her sexuality, but also avoids being perceived as duplicitous.

It is implied, however, that it is Lady Sara's 'nominal belief' (3:142) that is reprehensible, exacerbating her wantonness, and her dangerous lack of self-control is attributed to the absence of religious devotion caused by the Enlightenment. A tension exists in Porter's narrative between the Enlightenment's positive aspect of reason, and what has been critically identified as the 'quickening of secularisation' that occurred in the eighteenth century.[38] Although most people were 'at least nominally Church of England,'

> the main legacy of post-Restoration tolerance was not the rise of nonconformity as the result of allowing the dedicated to worship in their own way, but declining church attendance as the indifferent interpreted tolerance not so much as the right to worship but as the right to stay away.[39]

Although this may be typical of a Protestant commercial society, the argument that the Enlightenment 'furthered' this trend is illustrated in the subsequent, unusually didactic, narrative within which Porter criticises the absence of religion in Enlightened thought, thereby revealing the influence of Wollstonecraft's religious arguments.[40] Barbara Taylor describes Wollstonecraft as a 'typical Enlightenment intellectual, eschewing blind faith and evangelical purism in favour of 'rational religious impulses' and liberal toleration'.[41] While Enlightenment arguments for equality furthered the cause of female educationalists, therefore Wollstonecraft's version of the Enlightenment was inextricable from her religious beliefs. Believing that it was solely 'through the exercise of a 'rational will that only bows to God' that women will achieve that self-respect on which inner freedom is founded', Wollstonecraft asserted that she was 'dependent only on Him for the support of [her] virtue'.[42] Drawing upon Wollstonecraft, Porter argues that an Enlightenment devoid of religious belief renders female virtue powerless in its role as the guardian of the nation's moral welfare.

The narrative asserts that since the Restoration 'the word *Sin*' (3:43) had become a vagary of fashion. In framing the argument in historical terms, the narrative could be interpreted as adhering to the rejection of the 'philosophic history of the Enlightenment'

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[38] Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000), p.205.
[39] John Rule, *Albion's People: English Society 1714-1815* (Harlow: Longman, 1992), p.94.
[40] Roy Porter, p.205.
[41] Taylor, p.103.
[42] Taylor, p.94.

by imaginative historians.[43] Indeed, the change in meaning had resulted in an alteration in the moral frame of reference, veering away from monotheism. In turn, the system of judgment and punishment had changed:

> [g]uilt against Heaven, fades before the decrees of man; his law of ethics, reprobates *crime*; but crime is only a temporary transgression, in opposition to the general good; it draws no consequent punishment, heavier than the anger of the offended parties. Morality neither promises rewards after death, not chastisement for error (3:43).

Man has usurped God as the arbiter of right and wrong; thus, Porter argues, rather than an appropriate punishment, crime elicits a fleeting expression of disapproval. In his work on the British Enlightenment, Roy Porter identifies a shift of focus from the individual as a sinner to an object of pity.[44] Thus, 'what had heretofore attracted religious or moral blame might now find ambivalent exculpation.'[45] The narrative deems this lack of punishment unsatisfactory; fear for the fate of one's soul in the afterlife no longer tempers behaviour, illustrating that the 'enlightened framework was thus not one of personal guilt and atonement but of social problems and engineered solutions' impelled by the application of reason.[46] For Jane Porter, reason is applied through the exercise of virtue; however, devoid of religion, virtue has become an item of fashion, rendering it both meaningless and powerless to exert self-control. Campaigners for improved female education argued that sensibility should be tempered by reason, however Porter disagrees.[47] Whereas an individual's excess was once tempered by the fear of committing a sin, their reason now dictates what is and is not attractive. The narrative suggests that simply voicing this proposal highlights its ridiculous nature.

In a vitriolic final assault on the absence of religion, the narrative highlights a contradiction in enlightened doctrine, and foretells a calamitous outcome:

> How do these systemisers refine and subtilize? How do they dwell on the principle of virtue, and turn it in every metaphysical light, until their

[43] Lynne Hamer, 'Folklore and History Studies in Early Nineteenth-Century England,' *The Folklore Historian: Journal of the Folklore and History Section of the American Folklore Society*, 10 (1993), pp. 5-28 (p.9).
[44] Roy Porter, p.219.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Roy Porter, p.373.
[47] For an account of the relationship between sensibility and female education, see G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p.236.

> philosophy rarifies it to nothing! Some degrade and others abandon, the only basis, on which an upright character can stand with firmness. The bulwark, which Revelation erected between the passions and the soul, is levelled first; and then that *instructive rule of right*, which the modern casuist nominates the citadel of virtue, falls of course.
>
> By such gradations, is the progress of depravity accomplished (3:43).

This passage questions how the theories of the Enlightenment may be applied to the principle of virtue, and Porter asserts that the enlightened theorists will analyse virtue in every light – a source of great fascination – until it disappears; virtue is a concept that cannot be examined empirically under a microscope and reduced to a mechanism. Here, for Porter, lies the ultimate irony: the very principle that an individual requires as a point of reference for their moral reasoning is abandoned and degraded. Frail reason is built on a house of cards and the fundamental flaw in the theory of the 'modern casuist' is revealed, relegating the individual to depravity. Thus, Porter views Enlightened thought as flawed due to a rejection of religious conviction. An individual requires a religious frame of reference from within which to exercise the self-control required by reason.

Without religious belief, Sara Roos poses a real threat to Thaddeus, compelling Lady Tinemouth, in her role as the surrogate mother-figure, to issue a severe warning about the sanctity of her marriage vows. With her husband's return imminent, Sara makes a desperate declaration of her love for Thaddeus to which he responds with the exclamation that she is a 'seducing, dangerous woman!'(3:173), and that he values his 'blameless conscience' (3:179) more than her. Pitied and rejected by Thaddeus, Sara's inability to engage with the nation due to her lack of self-control is represented literally as she and Captain Roos are relegated to Italy, the 'victim[s] of a passion, which is as inscrutable as destructive' (4:252).[48] Despite the attempts of each of these women to secure Thaddeus' position in the middle ground, the manner in which he negotiates their relationships ensures his move into the national centre while, although these women engage with a number of national discourses – such as the peerage – they remain flawed and, unable to progress to the national centre, either occupy a static position in the nation or, worse still, are relegated to the peripheries.

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[48] There are connotations of the licentious European 'Other'; by sending Sara to Italy, Porter draws upon a narrative convention which allies that country with sexual excess.

Indeed, it is clear that not all individuals share Thaddeus' ability to assimilate. Some characters occupy a static position in Porter's version of the national periphery (although it could be argued that, for them, they occupy a national centre), for example, the Jew that Thaddeus encounters. Referred to in stereotypical terms as 'professed usurers' and as 'a race completely out of our line' (2:66), the Jewish pawnbroker does not represent Porter's views on Jews. Rather, he operates as a foil for the corrupt aristocratic woman who is pawning her jewellery to pay gambling debts which, in turn, demonstrates that the knowledge of England that Thaddeus has gleaned from books is deeply flawed. In the case of the Jew, therefore, national inclusion is a theoretical yearning rather than a lived experience; stridently adhering to a Jewish stereotype, there is a particular place for him to occupy, whereas Thaddeus' ability to engage with a discourse of Protestant Christianity enables him to begin the process of assimilation.

Yet from the moment that he learns that his absent father is an Englishman in the opening chapters, Thaddeus' identity is a source of consternation. As we have seen, Thaddeus' successful assimilation into the British nation is facilitated by an engagement with recognizably British discourses. Yet an engagement with British nationality necessarily replaces identification with the Polish nation; indeed, Thaddeus is faced with the dilemma of engaging with the discourses of a nation that no longer exists. This manifests in the tension between a wish to forget his origins in order to embrace his new home, and an impulse to preservation. Thaddeus informs Lady Tinemouth that it is better for him to forget his origins, stating that 'exiles from their country, if they would not covet misery, must learn to forget' (2:140). Reluctant to rescind one identity in favour of the other, he struggles to keep hold of a sabre, a pair of pistols, and some family portraits in the face of poverty, illness, and starvation. Although he finally sells these items to pay his debts, they are symbolically replaced by the ailing General Butzou who is composing a journal of the recently fought battles, in other words, he is writing a history or mythology of Poland. The narrative suggests that this act is futile, the deranged ramblings of a sick man, and he eventually dies without completing his task. At his death-bed, Thaddeus exclaims 'Dear, dear General! … my grandfather, my mother, my country! I lose them again in thee! – O! would the same summons take *me* hence!' (3:197). Following the death of General Butzou, Thaddeus is separated from the last of the

belongings which relate to the discourses with which he identified with Poland, his mother and his grandfather. He has to sell his final Polish memento, their portraits, to pay for the debts incurred during the care of the General. From this moment, he has to find alternative discourses with which to engage in order to reconcile his Polish and British identities.

In order to achieve resolution, Thaddeus experiences a conventional nadir in his fortunes, which also functions as a symbolic rebirth, simultaneously moving him beyond Lady Tinemouth's circle and into acceptance as a member of Porter's national centre. Still disillusioned by his experience of Englishmen following his release from debtor's prison, Thaddeus decides to leave England for America. As he walks along the road, his struggle with his identity is couched in religious terms as, despairing of the fate of the Poles, he cries

> "Oh, Righteous Power of Justice and Mercy!"... stretching his arms towards that heaven, over which the piercing winds of a bleak October night were scattering the thick and gloomy clouds; "grant me fortitude to bear, with resignation to thy will, the miseries I have yet to encounter. Oh!" added he, his heart melting as the idea presented itself; "teach me to forget what I have been! Teach me to forget, that on this dreadful night, last year, I clasped the dying body of my dear grandfather in these arms!" (4:158)

Thaddeus considers how much easier it would be if he could forget his Polish identity and, in particular, if he could forget the last promise he made to his dying grandfather, that he keeps the name of Sobieski. That this promise exacerbates his struggle suggests that, for Porter, familial identity is constitutive of national identity. Resigning himself to his divinely-ordained fate, Thaddeus rescinds his Polish patriarchal lineage in favour of his English lineage as, succumbing to a life-threatening illness by the side of the road, he is rescued, physically and symbolically, by his father, Sir Robert Somerset.

Thaddeus' move into the national centre is facilitated by Mary Beaufort. Orphaned at a young age, Pembroke's cousin Mary is the ward of his father, the esteemed Lord Somerset, and was 'bequeathed ... to the care of Lady Somerset, her paternal aunt' (3:18). Meeting for the first time at an assembly, Thaddeus is drawn to the 'honourable' (3:17) principles voiced by Mary, highlighting that she has been educated in a different manner to the previous female characters that have been encountered. Lady Somerset holds monthly assemblies to which she invites 'the most eminent characters which

England could produce' (3:21), from whom Mary 'gathered her best lessons in morality and taste, and from them her earliest perceptions of friendship' (3:58). In presenting Mary's mother figure as the engineer of her education, Porter adheres to Wollstonecraft's argument that women, and particularly mothers, were the overseers of their children's education.

The ideal model that is delineated in the *Vindication* calls for lessons in 'the elements of religion, history, the history of man, and politics ... taught by conversation in the Socratic form'.[49] Men and women 'must be educated in a great degree, by the opinion and manners of the society they live in', facilitating the application of reason which results in the attainment of virtue.[50] For Wollstonecraft, 'the most perfect education'

> enable[s] the individual to attain such habits of virtue as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason.[51]

Of course, independence also enables the Wollstonecraftian woman to undertake her main duty of childrearing; however, in the context of Porter's national vision, the virtue acquired from a sound education enables the individual, either male or female, to engage with the nation. Furthermore, Mary's education, which adheres to the Wollstonecraftian ideal, enables her to strike a balance between her symbolic role, as Thaddeus perceives her, and her corporeal experience of the nation.

Mary has witnessed the behaviour of the Dundas sisters and, with the benefit of a sound education, is able to avoid their flaws. Unlike Diana's status-seeking learning, the gatherings at Somerset House exhibit the true ethos of the Bluestockings. Sir Robert beheld

> not only sages, soldiers, statesmen, and poets, but intelligent and amiable women; amongst whom, the beautiful Mary, imbibed that steady reverence of virtue and talent, which no intermixture with the common *ephemera* of the day, could either displace or allay (3:21).

Mary's receptiveness to knowledge is assisted by the fact that she had never been in love: '[h]ence, she was neither afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge a correspondence, which she knew to be her highest distinction' (3:58). 'Frank and innocent,' Mary had witnessed

[49] Wollstonecraft, p.293.
[50] Wollstonecraft, pp.102-3.
[51] Ibid.

Euphemia's behaviour and the disgust that it elicited from Thaddeus, thus she is adamant that he be aware that she 'esteems' him rather than declaring love (3:160). Released from restraint while alone in her room, Mary

> shuddered at the impetuosity of her emotions, when once abandoned of their reins; and resolved from this hour to hold a stricter guard over the consequences of her ill-fated passion (4:25).

Rather than succumbing to fashionable sensibility, Mary exerts self-control, which as her comment that she feels herself to be besmirched by a 'cloud of fashion' (4:149) demonstrates, is increasingly difficult. However, she adheres to the Wollstonecraftian tenet that wisdom is derived from reflection, which women are at leisure to employ: '[b]y having learnt much, and thought more, [Mary] proved, in her conduct, that reflection is the alchymy, which turns knowledge into wisdom'(3:23). Repressing her passions, Mary appears to be adhering to the same model of femininity as Cicely and Gertrude in *The Rival Roses*, embracing her symbolic at the expense of her physical passions. Indeed, her actions reap their reward as Thaddeus actively seeks her acquaintance. Porter is drawing on a discourse which, as Harriet Guest has argued, mobilises the figure of the learned woman as a national representative; however, Mary is not a passive figure. Rather, her education enables Mary to be an actively patriotic heroine.

While Thaddeus is imprisoned, he cannot proceed to the centre of Porter's ideal nation; therefore, Mary's role in his release is of the utmost significance. Resolving to repay Thaddeus' debt, she is aware that her aunt and companion, Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, would be 'outraged … at a young woman appearing the sole mover in such a business,' so Mary decides 'on prosecuting the whole transaction alone' (3:232). The legal language employed in this statement, gleaned from her eclectic education, highlights the irregularity of a woman acting in this manner, yet the ease with which it is adopted suggests that it is frequently utilised. Faced with obstacles to her plan, however, Mary resolves that 'as a man must be the properest person to transact such a business with propriety' (3:249) that she would seek Pembroke's aid. Despite eliciting the assistance of a man, however, Mary arguably asserts her political agency, as it is her education that enables her to overcome Pembroke's reluctance. To the accusations of Thaddeus' improper conduct, Miss Beaufort responds '[u]pon the honour of my word, I declare …

that he never breathes a sentence to me, beyond mere respect,' demonstrating that she has learned sexual decorum and restraint, and she reminds Pembroke that she has not released him from his 'engagement' (3:258-9). Pembroke is '[s]taggered by the open firmness of her manner,' her well-reasoned argument, and despite the attempts of the Dundas sisters to dissuade him, he is finally persuaded to assist Mary by Mrs. Dorothy's reminder of 'the tried veracity of [his] cousin' (3:261). Thus, despite still believing Thaddeus to be a villain, Pembroke enables Mary to exert political agency within the nation by proxy. Furthermore, in eliciting Pembroke's aid, Mary displaces her agency, enabling her to retain her position as the passive Emblematic Woman, while also engaging in an actively patriotic act. Consequently, Thaddeus' release enables him to progress to the national centre and to engage with Porter's vision of a utopian society.

Thaddeus is subsequently reborn as Robert Somerset's son and Pembroke Somerset's half-brother, and finally reconciles the tension between his Polish and British identities by engaging with discourses which allow them both to co-exist in a form of dual-nationality. He enters into the lineage of the Somerset family, accepting houses and estates, but wishes to be a 'son in secret only' (4:198) in order that Pembroke is not rendered illegitimate. Thaddeus' position is consolidated through his marriage to Mary Beaufort who, as the niece of Robert Somerset's wife, is a distant enough relation to avoid the slur of incest, while anchoring Thaddeus further within the Somerset house. Retaining the name of Sobieski, Thaddeus fulfils his promise to his grandfather and, more important, is able to engage with the most amenable discourse of Polish national identity – one that cannot be destroyed by invasion – his ancestral family. Furthermore, Thaddeus and Mary are seen as the keepers of the cultural memory of the fall of Poland; Mary places a marble tablet, the substance of memorialisation, upon General Butzou's grave in Convent Garden, the text of which is reproduced at the end of the narrative, creating an air of authenticity but also book-ending Thaddeus' tale with the idea that the memory of Poland and, by extension, discourses of Polish national identity are perpetuated. By the end of the narrative the Polish immigrant has been successfully assimilated within Porter's version of the national centre, ensconced within a family whose actions have been lauded throughout the text. Yet, as Thomas McLean points out, 'Britain remains a refuge for Poles, but only those with British (and royal) lineage';

indeed, at the end of *Thaddeus* the reader is left with the clear message that the inclusion of some individuals is accompanied by the exclusion of many others, including the catalyst of national assimilation, female Britons.[52]

Each of these historical narratives demonstrates the authors' engagement with current national events, whether that is the rise of Catholic factions, the influx of immigrants, or the debate regarding female education. Perceiving a threat to national stability, Francis and Porter each attempted to represent a coherent vision of Britain, yet this was continuously undermined by the plural nature of national identity itself. As Thaddeus' journey to the national centre evinces, many identities exist simultaneously and identification with the nation depends upon which discourses the individual engages with. For the author seeking to represent active female patriotic roles, this multiplicity offers the possibility of engaging with alternative discourses, such as Margaret's warrior queen or Mary's educated heroine. Yet this rests upon a tacit acknowledgement of the very plurality that the authors seek to efface in presenting a coherent national vision. Thus, although it would appear that Francis represents a homogenous British national identity which, despite divisiveness in the past, still held the seeds of the unity evident during the reign of the present king, George III, individual plurality disrupts the narrative, drawing the reader's attention to the flaws inherent in Francis' attempt to portray coherence.

Comparisons are made throughout the poem between the turbulent past and the peaceful, prosperous present which, combined with the copious annotations, act to create a clear sense of narrative distance between the fifteenth and early nineteenth-century. Setting the scene for the battle of Towton, the narrative typically exclaims:

> Hail the day,
> Fair Albion! when a GEORGE's sway,
> In safety, guards each fertile plain,
> And bids content and concord reign.
> For once, those rivers' banks, beside,
> The battle raged with fiercest pride (VI.1.7-12).

The reference to 'a' George brings to mind the entire Hanoverian dynasty, which is depicted as ensuring the peace and prosperity of the nation.[53] In opposition to Europe,

[52] McLean, p.184.

where '[d]iscord rag[es] thro' a jarring world,' nineteenth-century Britain – a land overflowing with fertility and food – is described as commercially successful, diffusing 'graceful arts' throughout its empire.[54] Yet this is a utopian vision of Britain; while the nation's armed forces were engaged in the struggle with Napoleon abroad, the British felt the effects of the war in the form of economic depression, famine, disability, and death. The social unrest which, after the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, would become a national preoccupation was increasing. Although Francis may be perceived as adhering to a Romantic trope of transcendent escapism, the repetitive references to a bountiful land become more and more insistent, creating suspicion. In the end, that which is not directly stated in the narrative, in other words the social and political reality of nineteenth-century Britain, achieves a disruptive presence. If this was a conscious decision on the part of the author, then it reinforces her injunction to unite in the face of Catholic factions. However, as she vociferously states her opinion elsewhere in the narrative, I do not think this is the case. Rather, I would argue that this is an example of Francis' inability to represent a unified British national identity because, in directly referring to the contemporary unrest, she would have to admit that identity is inherently divided along the lines of class, gender, age, religion, and politics, to name but a few.

Porter also attempts to represent a utopian outcome, as the Polish immigrant turned English landowner has created a haven for those who would adopt the ideal national identity:

> The Unhappy of every rank and Nation, found refuge, consolation and repose, amongst the shades of Beaufort. No eye looked wistfully on him, to turn away and weep; no voice addressed him with the petition of distress, to close it with the sigh of disappointment: His smiles cheered the disconsolate; and his protecting arms, warded off the approach of new sorrows. *Peace was within his walls, and plenteousness within his palaces* (4:258).

Thaddeus and Mary appear to have fostered an identity based upon equality, yet it is inherently fragile. Although the nation is protected, it is limited as peace and happiness only occur within. Some other forms of national identity exists externally, exerting a constant pressure upon its periphery. I would argue that the narrative seeks to promote an account of the religiously virtuous English national identity which embraces equality, yet

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[53] See also I. 4.1-2.

[54] *The Rival Roses*. III. 14. 3., III. 21. 1-4., V. 23. 5-10., V. 24. 1-12.

is rendered tentative by the author's astute awareness of the pressure of societal convention. However, although Thaddeus negotiates the appearance of a conventional nation, situating women both domestically and symbolically, the narrative cannot escape the reality of the diverse fluidity of national identity, represented by the unfortunates. While definitional aporia is admitted, women have the capacity to negotiate their role within the nation aided, as demonstrated, by the correct form of education.

In writing a narrative of the nation it is necessary to contain those who are perceived as a threat to national well-being, yet the acts of containment in these narratives in themselves raise important questions. In *Thaddeus*, for example, flawed individuals are relegated to what Porter perceives to be national peripheries, whether that is Italy, Scotland, or the slums of London. Thus the question is raised regarding where the national centre is; the centre becomes something other than the capital, residing in the individual perhaps. Scotland also proves to be a special case as, technically, it is part of the British nation yet Porter obviously still deems it to be a national periphery. If national identity is plural, if every individual's identity changes with each situation they are in, then it follows that the Scots should be able to identify with the British nation. This identification, of course, is not straightforward and raises the question of how an individual identifies with the nation at all, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two: British Scots?

Throughout the ages, we have been fascinated with heroes. Tales of their exploits are told and re-told, authors create epic tomes recording the events of their lives, and artists paint their likeness, seeking to capture the elusive essence of heroism contained in the all-too-human figure. Heroes represent all that we could hope to be; they are the embodiment of an aspirational ideal and, invariably championing a cause against insurmountable odds, they are inherently politicised. An individual cannot adopt the mantle of heroism through a statement of intent; heroes are defined by their actions, by events, and by their spiritual and moral responses.[1] Thus, for the author seeking to portray their vision of a coherent nation, the figure of the hero is a perfect vehicle for representing an ideal national identity, exploiting the semantic slippage between the definition of a hero as a person who is 'admired or idealised for their courage', and the protagonist of a narrative who is 'typically identified with good qualities, and with whom the reader is expected to sympathise'.[2]

Yet the attempt of the author to represent a monolithic national identity is problematic; the national's perceived experience of one identity effaces the existence of the many identities which are drawn upon to create coherence, or a sense of belonging. At each instance, the individual negotiates their way through conflicting loyalties, some of which are more prominent than others. For the Scots in the early nineteenth-century, reconciliation of their Scottishness with their relatively new identity as Britons, significantly alongside their ancestral English enemies, was a contentious issue. The Act of Union of 1707 had bound Scotland to the kingdoms of England and Wales under the title of the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Having already negotiated their plural identity as Scots, they now had to contend with a new layer of identity as Britons, with its accompanying allegiances, resulting in multiple responses.

If there are many models of national identity then it follows that there are also many versions of heroes. During the 1790s, for example, there was a surge of interest in

[1] Nigel Spivey states this in Programme Four of his series, *How Art Made the World*. See http://www.bbc.co.uk/sn/tvradio/programmes/howart/ (date accessed, 5.10.05).
[2] 'hero', *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, ed. by Judy Pearsall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.859.

William Wallace, the thirteenth-century Scottish hero, whose portrayals emerged as many different personalities rather than as one coherent figure.[3] Sir Walter Scott supposedly complained that he could not 'bear to see the character of Wallace frittered away to that of a fine gentleman' in Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs*, suggesting that his idea of a hero differed from Porter's.[4] Indeed, it seems inevitable that this difference of perception should exist as not only does Porter's choice of subject matter call for a negotiation of national identities, but also for a reconciliation of her gendered identities. Although 'hero' is beginning to be seen as a gender-neutral term in the twenty-first century, in the early nineteenth-century heroism was a masculine trait, limiting authors seeking to represent a national ideal to a predominately male vehicle. Thus, alongside negotiating a woman's symbolic and corporeal relationship to national discourses, it was also necessary for the woman writer who strove to portray active patriotic roles to appropriate a form of heroism for her female characters. These were not mutually exclusive projects; they were inextricable obstacles which the author had to overcome, and it is the manner in which she achieved this that is the focus of this chapter.

Despite emerging from different political backgrounds, Jane Porter and her contemporaries, Margaret Holford and Anne Grant, were united by a common interest in Scotland or, more specifically, in the relationship between Scotland, England, and Britain.[5] Offering their visions of British national identity, each of their narratives focused upon a hero; Porter and Holford recounted the tale of William Wallace respectively in *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk*, and Grant drew on the tale of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 'The Highlanders'. A cast of supporting female characters was created for their heroes, diverting the gaze of a censorious reading public onto the male protagonist and thereby allowing the woman writer the freedom to explore

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[3] Different versions of the Wallace tale appeared throughout the eighteenth century, but in the 1790s, the number of publications increased four-fold before tailing off in the 1810s.

[4] James Hogg, *Domestic Manners of Sir Walter Scott* (1909), cited in A. D. Hook, 'Jane Porter, Sir Walter Scott, and the Historical Novel', *Clio: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History*, 5 (1976), pp.181-192 (p.188). I have qualified this statement as the source was a conversation that was supposed to have taken place between Hogg and Scott, but which was not written down until many years later.

[5] Margaret Holford is often referred to by her married name, Holford Hodson, but as she married the Reverend Septimus Hodson in 1826, after she had published *Wallace*, she is referred to by her maiden name in this thesis.

female national identities while both retaining the semblance of her feminine reputation and engaging with current political debates.

2:1 A 'Highlander' and a 'Scotch Woman': Female Literary Acquaintances

In August 1811, Francis Jeffrey began a review of *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* by Anne Grant with a disclaimer:

> [o]ur neglect of this lady's former productions should acquit us, we think, for ever, of all imputation of nationality. Since the commencement of our labours, she has published various very popular and meritorious volumes; and, though the only Highlander, and almost the only Scotch woman, who has graced our native literature during this period, we have heroically abstained from all mention of her name; and allowed her to fight her own way to distinction, without countenance from our compatriot fraternity.[6]

The *Edinburgh Review* had overlooked Grant's first publication in 1803, *Poems on Various Subjects*, and the subsequent publication of her successful *Letters from the Mountains* in 1806. When a review of her *Letters* was not forthcoming, Grant was disgruntled with Jeffrey and his fellow critics, accusing them of treating 'female genius and female productions with unqualified scorn'.[7] Thus, when Jeffrey reviewed Grant's fourth publication in 1811 (the third being the equally successful *Memoirs of an American Lady* published in 1808), an apology seemed long overdue.

The terms in which Jeffrey presented his apology, along with its place at the beginning of a favourable review and appraisal of Grant's literary career to date, implies that her work was being read in the context of a national discourse. In the first line, Jeffrey states that the 'neglect' of the author's former publications absolves the *Review* of any accusations of national partiality, thereby producing an excuse for omitting to address her work, while firmly locating Grant's oeuvre within the context of a discourse of Scottish national identity. Furthermore, Jeffrey aligns Grant with a particular Scottish

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[6] Francis Jeffrey, 'Mrs Grant on Highlanders,' Review of *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland; to which are added, Translations from the Gaelic, and Letters connected with those formerly published*, *Edinburgh Review; or, Critical Journal*, 18 (August 1811), pp.480-510 (p.480).

[7] Quoted in Pam Perkins, 'Survey of the Reception of the Works of Anne Grant', *Corvey Women Writers on the Web 1796-1834* (June 1999), http://www2.shu.ac.uk/corvey/cw3/ContribPage.cfm?Contrib=404 (date accessed 20.12.04), p.2.

identity; she is a Highlander, which theoretically precludes her from a Lowland identity. Grant's narrative poem, 'The Highlanders', corroborates Jeffrey's description; she offers a particular version of Highland Scottishness. Indeed, although the narratives of Grant, Porter, and Holford offer different visions of the nation, they are united by their use of a Highland Warrior as a vehicle for their vision of how Scottishness and Englishness might be reconciled within an over-arching British identity.

To be writing about Scottish national identity was not an apolitical activity; although the Act of Union had been ratified a hundred years previously in 1707, England and Scotland still formed an uneasy alliance. Tension repeatedly erupted in rebellious acts, such as the Jacobite Uprisings of 1715 and 1745, and in harsh legislation, such as the Highland Clearances. Yet the Union elicited many responses, with individual Scots forging alternative allegiances in the perpetuation of their national identity, and while there were those Scots who did not engage with potential British identities, there were also those that embraced them. As Paul Langford argues, Britishness 'offered a layer of identity compatible with potentially conflicting loyalties', and – like all national identities – was intangible and malleable enough to be moulded to individual definitions.[8] Focusing upon the British Empire, Langford is exploring the situation of Scots in London, yet Edinburgh was the scene of dynamic growth and expansion at the turn of the nineteenth century. As the home of the Scottish Enlightenment, the capital was acknowledged as the seat of a prolific Scottish literary merit.

Anne Grant, Jane Porter, and Margaret Holford were part of a network of acquaintances, both personal and professional, which emanated from the fertile arena of literary Edinburgh, and extended into Britain to include leading figures such as Mary Brunton, Maria Edgeworth, and Anna Laetitia Barbauld. It is difficult to impose an organising principle onto something as arbitrary as a circle of friends, however, the common denominator in the case of Grant, Porter, and Holford appears to have been the triumvirate of the 'educationalist and novelist' Elizabeth Hamilton, the radical Eliza

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[8] Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.13. It could be argued that the synonymous nature of the terms English and British is a result of the plurality of national identity.

Fletcher, and in particular the dramatist Joanna Baillie.[9] It is tempting to place Sir Walter Scott at the centre of these acquaintances as he was entwined in this web of relationships. Indeed, Eliza Fletcher stated that along with Elizabeth Hamilton and Anne Grant, she 'helped to provide the sociable context in which such men as Scott [and] Jeffrey... flourished'.[10]

In an atmosphere of literary reciprocity, the divide between Scott and his female contemporaries was often blurred. Acknowledged as Scotland's foremost literary son, Scott's historical novels narrate his version of a recently-formed Britain and of how the English and Scottish relate to each other on a national level; it is inevitable, therefore, that subsequent narratives treating on similar subject matter were compared and attributed to the prominent author.[11] Porter claimed repeatedly that Scott, lauded as the creator of the historical novel, had admitted that he had 'borrowed' the literary form from her, while Holford's *Wallace* was commonly held to be an imitation of Scott's *Marmion; A Tale of Flodden Field.* In February 1810, Baillie wrote to Scott recommending *Wallace* and chastising him for ignoring the manuscript that Holford had sent him; Baillie declared:

> of all the Imitators & followers you are likely to have, and they will probably be a long train, you are not, I think, likely to meet with one that will do you more credit.[12]

In an anonymous review of *Wallace* in the *Quarterly Review*, itself 'an Ironical imitation of Dr Johnson', Scott warned against the 'desire of imitating whatever the world considers as excellent', and attributed Holford's poem to the 'SCHOOL of Marmion'.[13] Imitation in response to market forces would form the basis of Scott's subsequent reassessment of the

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[9] Jane Rendall, ''Women that would plague me with rational conversation': Aspiring women and Scottish Whigs, c.1790-1830', Paper delivered in the Chawton Seminar Series, University of Southampton, 20.10.03, p.5.

[10] Rendall, p.17.

[11] Katie Trumpener argues that Scott 'enacts and explains the composition of Britain' in his historical novel. See Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.xiii.

[12] Cited in Judith Bailey Slagle, *Joanna Baillie: A Literary Life* (Madison, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2002), p.206.

[13] William Gifford, ' Letter to John Murray, March 1810' cited in *Quarterly Review Archive*, ed. by Jonathan Cutmore, http://www.rc.umd.edu/reference/qr/index/05.html (accessed 5.7.05). The *QRA* suggests that Scott's comments are playful, pointing out that 'if it is Scott, ... the living author may review his imitator's work.' Walter Scott, 'Review of *Wallace; or, the Fight of Falkirk. A Metrical Romance*', *Quarterly Review*, 3 (1810), pp.63-69 (p.63, p.64).

English literary 'canon', in his 'Essay on the Imitation of Ancient Ballads' of 1830, yet the inclusion of Holford in his followers overlooks the similarity between Holford's Wallace and Baillie's Rosinberg.[14] In her play *Count Basil: A Tragedy*, Baillie portrays a military character 'who, when removed from the arena of battle, finds it difficult to perform as something other than a soldier'.[15] Regardless of who is imitating who, however, these authors were drawing upon, and influenced by, an existing Scottish literary oeuvre, the Ossian poems. As the contemporary controversy regarding the authenticity of the translations of Ossian concurred, James Macpherson drew on 'fragments of a heroic culture' and produced narratives through an 'act of creative reconstruction'; in effect, Macpherson imitated Ossian.[16] In shifting the focus away from Scott, it becomes increasingly clear that he draws upon a pre-existing discourse when writing the 'first' historical novel. Placing these women in a secondary position to Scott would be misjudged, and would detract from our understanding of a network of female relations which, as Rendall highlights, transcended political difference.[17]

By the early years of the nineteenth century, Holford, Porter, and Grant shared acquaintances both in Edinburgh and in London. Anne Grant's husband of twenty-three years, the Reverend James Grant had died in 1801 and, faced with the prospect of raising a family on a greatly reduced income, the widowed Grant turned to a literary career in 1803. Following the family's move to Woodend near Stirling, she subsidized her writing by taking in live-in pupils in 1805, one of whom was the nephew of Scott's friend John Morrit of Rokeby, before moving to Edinburgh in 1810.[18] Meanwhile, Jane Porter and Joanna Baillie were both living in London. From the 1780s Baillie, along with her sister Agnes and their mother, had lived at various addresses in London in order to remain close to their brother, Dr. Matthew Baillie, who would become the King's physician. By the

[14] For a discussion of Scott and the 'canon', see Leith Davis, *Acts of Union: Scotland and the Literary Negotiation of the British Nation, 1707-1830* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), Chapter 5.
[15] Slagle, p.83.
[16] Fiona Stafford, 'Introduction: The Ossianic Poems of James Macpherson', in *The Poems of Ossian and Related Works*, ed. by Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), pp. v-xxi (p.xvi). Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) could be seen as an English counterpart to Macpherson's Ossianic poems. See Davis, Chapter 5.
[17] Rendall, p.6. Rendall cites the relationship between the radical Eliza Fletcher and the 'more conservative' Joanna Baillie and Anne Grant as an example.
[18] Pam Perkins, 'Biography of Anne Grant', *Corvey Women Writers on the Web, 1796-1834* (June 1999), http://www2.shu.ac.uk/corvey/cw3/ContribPage.cfm?Contrib=401 (date accessed 20.12.04), p.1.

mid-1790s Jane Porter, her sister Anna Maria, and their mother had also moved to London and, although Baillie was twenty-one years Jane's senior, they moved in the same circles. While examining Baillie's adherence to Unitarianism, Judith Bailey Slagle comments that 'in this sect were many of Baillie's friends and correspondents', including Jane Porter and their mutual acquaintances Anna Laetitia Barbauld, and her niece Lucy Aikin.[19] The little that is known of the life of Margaret Holford is mostly gleaned from her correspondence with Joanna Baillie whom she met some time between 1810 and 1813.[20] The daughter of Alan Holford of Davenham, Cheshire and Margaret Wrench Holford, a published author, Margaret Holford was only fourteen years old when her metrical romance *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk* was published in 1809.[21]

Joanna Baillie's relationship with contemporary female authors was not passive, and she often used her close personal and professional relationship with Scott actively to promote the work of lesser-known writers, as well as offering advice drawn from her own extensive experience of the fiercely competitive, predominately masculine, literary arena. It was not unusual for Scott to offer Baillie professional advice, but she also drew upon the work of her female contemporaries. Baillie acknowledged that Porter's portrayal of Wallace was an inspiration for her poem on the hero in her *Metrical Legends* and, whether Baillie knew Grant personally or not, they certainly engaged with each other professionally. In 1822, Grant contributed to Baillie's *Collection of Poems, Chiefly Manuscript, and from Living Authors* (which was published in 1823) and in the same year wrote a favourable review of Baillie's *The Legend of Lady Griseld Baillie* from her *Metrical Legends*.[22]

Holford, Porter, and Grant were entwined in a web of literary and social relationships that formed around Baillie. Furthermore, these relationships often transcended political and national differences; as Maria Edgeworth declared to Joanna

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[19] Slagle, p.234.
[20] Judith Bailey Slagle, 'Text and Context: Margaret Holford Hodson, Joanna Baillie, and the Wolfsteïn-Byron Controversy', *European Romantic Review*, 15:3 (2004), pp.425-427 (p.425). Slagle also refers to Holford in her biography of Baillie, *Joanna Baillie: A Literary Life* (2002).
[21] Whether Holford supported herself with her writing is unknown, but she published her own novels and poems while also translating the work of other authors throughout her life. V. Blain, P. Clements, I. Grundy, *Feminist Companion to Literature in English: Women Writers From the Middle Ages to the Present* (London: Batsford, 1990).
[22] Slagle 2002, p. 165, p.160.

Baillie in August 1844, 'I do not believe that two authoresses, blue or green or whatever colour ever loved one another more heartily than we two do – Scotch and Irish as we are!'[23] As will be seen, Holford, Porter, and Grant each wrote about Scottish and British nationalism and produced different narratives of the nation depending upon their individual agendas, yet in promoting what they imagined to be an ideal these authors could be perceived as sharing 'reformist ethics'. Arguing that reformist sentiments were shared by the radical Mary Wollstonecraft and the conservative Hannah More, Mitzi Myers suggests that

> to downplay political hostilities and connect middle-class groups seldom considered together is to illuminate the pervasiveness and the ideological significance of reformist ethics as an agent of the class redistribution of moral authority necessary for fundamental social change.[24]

As Jane Rendall argues, for Scotswomen such as Elizabeth Hamilton and Eliza Fletcher, these reformist ethics were founded upon a shared 'Christian benevolence', the recognition of which 'requires the transcendence of sharp distinctions between public and private worlds and an understanding of the different possibilities of familial, social, civic and patriotic identities'.[25] Although Holford, Porter, and Grant each focused upon an apparently monolithic Highland identity, an analysis of their narratives and, in particular, their portrayal of female patriotic roles, highlights the very intangibility of that identity which allows the theoretically infinite range of possibilities to exist.

2:2 'Thou stand'st like an oak, while tempests blow': Heroic National Identity and the Highland Warrior

Early in the morning of 16th June 1815, Charlotte Anne Eaton watched the Allied troops marching from Brussels to fight the final decisive battle against Napoleon at Waterloo, a

[23] Cited in Slagle 2002, p.213.
[24] Mitzi Myers, 'Reform or Ruin: "A Revolution in Female Manners"', in Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. by Carol H. Poston (London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988), pp.328-343 (p.332).
[25] Rendall, p.25, p.28.

sight which she recorded in her bestselling account of the events of those few days. In particular, she noted the departure of the 42nd and 92nd Highland Regiments, exuding admiration for 'their firm, collected, steady, military demeanour'.[26] Eaton was impressed by their martial appearance, the apparent elation with which they marched to battle, and the subsequent narrative lauds the gallant and honourable acts of the heroes. Written in retrospect, the description of the departing soldiers is couched in terms of heroic fatalism:

> [b]efore that sun had set in night, how many of that gallant band were laid low! They fought like heroes, and like heroes they fell – an honour to their country. On many a highland hill, and through many a lowland valley, long will the deeds of these brave men be fondly remembered, and their fate deeply deplored. Never did a finer body of men take the field – never did men march to battle, that were destined to perform such services to their country, and to obtain such immortal renown![27]

For Eaton, the Highlanders' heroic status was attained through martial action and confirmed by their deaths on that field; no mention is made of survivors. That their sacrifice is made primarily for Scotland is made clear by the reference to the tales of lament, but also of heroism which would spread throughout that land. Although Eaton subsequently comments that 'to every British heart it was a moment of the deepest interest', she is primarily referring to a Scottish national identity and, as such, is contributing to the myth of the Highland soldier which pervaded popular consciousness at the turn of the century.[28]

The image of the heroic Highlander at the end of the Napoleonic Wars differed vastly from that of the lawless perpetrator of the 'Highland problem' in 1746.[29] Anxiety about the Highlander was reflected in the raft of legislation passed before and after the overwhelming defeat of the Jacobite forces at the Battle of Culloden, which sought to

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[26] Charlotte Anne Eaton, *The Battle of Waterloo, containing the series of accounts published by authority, British and foreign, with circumstantial details, relative to the battle, from a variety of authentic and original sources, with connected official documents, forming an historical record of the operations in the Campaign of the Netherlands, 1815. To which is added the names alphabetically arranged of the officers killed and wounded, from 15th to 16th June, 1815, and the total loss of each regiment, with an enumeration of the Waterloo Honours and Privileges, conferred upon the men and officers, and lists of regiments, &c. entitled thereto. Illustrated by a panoramic sketch of the field of battle, and a plan of the positions of Waterloo, at different periods, with a general plan of the campaign. By a near observer.* 9th Edition (London: Booth, Egerton & Fairbairn, 1816), p.3.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero: The Image of the Highlander 1745-1830* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1995; 1998), p.3.

destroy a culture that was perceived to be a dangerous threat to national stability. While bearing arms, wearing plaid, and heritable jurisdiction – the basis of clanship – were criminalised by 1747, a campaign to 'civilise' the Highlands and Islands through education, improvement, and religion was spearheaded by the Lowland, Presbyterian Whigs. Robert Clyde charts the success of this mission and argues that by 1819, when Robert Southey toured the Highlands, the 'unattractive aspects of the Forty-Five were forgotten, and the Highland regiments had been warmly praised for their loyalty and fearlessness in wars around the world'.[30] Clyde argues that the figure of the Highlander had been rehabilitated by the turn of the eighteenth century, partly as a result of the positive, benign representation of the warrior in the literature of Scott and Ossian: 'the Highlands and Islands had become a Romantic ideal in the arts and the popular imagination in general, and the virulent anti-Highland tone of earlier years was absent.'[31] Although different Scottish identities competed in the British cultural realm, by the early nineteenth-century the Scot and the Highlander were increasingly conflated in the popular consciousness, to the disgruntlement of other Scottish identities; indeed, while acting as the Master of Ceremonies for the state visit of George IV to Scotland in 1822, Walter Scott was confident enough to attire all the guests, including the King, in Highland dress.[32]

Clyde's analysis of the role of literature in the rehabilitation of the Highlander is limited; indeed, he admits that literary analysis is an 'arcane subject' for him.[33] It is argued elsewhere that by the end of the eighteenth century the Highland warrior had become the 'national image of modern Scotland', an image which, as Clyde suggests, was cultivated and promulgated by literature.[34] Leith Davis makes similar claims for the importance of literature in the imagining of the British nation in *Acts of Union*. As the plural in the title suggests, Davis argues that Britain is constantly being negotiated; the nation is not 'a homogenous stable unit, but ... a dynamic process, a dialogue between

[30] Clyde, p.107.
[31] Clyde, p.16.
[32] Clyde, p.128.
[33] Clyde, p.121.
[34] Louis Kirk McAuley, ''She fleets, she sails away': The Horror of Highland Emigration to America in James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*' *STAR (Scotland's Transatlantic Relations) Project Archive*, www.star.ac.uk (accessed April 2004), p.5.

heterogeneous elements'.[35] For Davis, literature is the site of this dialogue, and she explores the literary relationship between Scottish and English writers at specific historical moments in order to interrogate 'how writing has served both to invent and to challenge the nation of Britain.'[36] Davis focuses upon conflicting loyalties, examining how writers from each side of the border responded to this tension, and each other, in negotiating their British identity. Neither Clyde nor Davis explores representations of Highlanders by female authors in any depth, each making only a brief reference to women writers. Yet, as will be seen in the subsequent discussion, women were actively engaging with this figure, manipulating its intangibility in order to portray how Englishness and Scottishness may, or may not, be reconciled in their versions of a coherent nation. Whereas Davis' focus upon conflicting loyalties highlights the heterogeneity of the nation, an examination of the conflicts in women's narratives and, in particular, the manner in which they negotiate a female patriotic role, reveals the multiplicity of individual national identity.

For Holford, Porter, and Grant, the figure of the heroic Highland Warrior was an existing discourse, albeit with its own set of conventions, upon which to hang their individual national agendas. Porter and Holford drew upon tales of the archetypal Highlander, William Wallace, and offered distinct portrayals of the Scottish national hero – in line with their contrasting perspective of British national identity – whereas in 'The Highlanders,' Grant portrayed an eponymous generic hero, reflecting her polemic of national inclusion. The key figure for a literary negotiation of national identity is the hero of the narrative; as an individual engages with different discourses of identity depending upon their situation, referring to the Highlander as a 'national image' implies that individual Scots would be able to relate to this construction, creating a sense of belonging between what is essentially a disparate group of people. The Highland Warrior was acting as a national sign in narrative, in a similar manner to the signs, such as flags, which Jochen and Linda Schulte-Sasse suggest create an illusionary identification between the individual and the nation. An individual's 'experience of community [is] established with the help of symbols and signs', which, in turn, 'counteract the linguistic, cognitive, and

[35] Davis, p.1.
[36] Davis, p.179.

institutional differentiation of modern societies'.[37] The Schulte-Sasse's argument contributes to an understanding of how a group of individuals with markedly different concepts of the nation are able to create a sense of coherence and belonging, in a similar manner to the attempts of authors to represent an homogenous national identity. Yet a comparison of three portrayals of the Highland Warrior, two of which were published within a year of each other, highlights the manner in which the figure of a hero may be moulded to different authorial aspirations.

Holford's epic poem, *Wallace* (1809), and Porter's historical romance, *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), both recount the tale of Wallace's thirteenth-century fight for Scottish independence from the English, yet each of the narratives offers a starkly different characterisation of the mythical hero. In Porter's narrative, the conflict is between the English and the Scots, the latter of whom is represented by the figure of the Highlander. In keeping with the genre of historical romance, the sweeping narrative of *The Scottish Chiefs* joins Wallace in seclusion with his wife, Marion, shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Arbroath in 1296, and follows the hero on his journey from his vow to defend Scotland's rights, through diplomacy and battle, to his death in London.[38] Porter continued to explore the issues of national inclusion, exclusion, and assimilation that had influenced her bestselling novel, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, seven years earlier; in her

[37] Jochen & Linda Schulte-Sasse, 'War, Otherness, and Illusionary Identifications with the State', *Cultural Critique*, 19 (Fall 1991), pp.67-95 (p.72, p,74).

[38] *The Scottish Chiefs* begins in 1296, shortly after the English and the Scottish have signed the Treaty of Arbroath. Despite seeking seclusion on his Ellerslie estate, William Wallace becomes embroiled in a plot which results in the murder of his pregnant wife, Marion, at the hands of an English governor, Hesselrigge.

Impelled to fight for Scottish freedom, Wallace joins forces with the Earl of Mar, whose duplicitous wife, Joanna, tries to prevent her husband from taking up arms, unlike his patriotic daughter, Helen. Following their victory at the Battle of Stirling, the Scottish noblemen offer Wallace the crown which he declines, swearing his loyalty to Bruce. Both Joanna and Helen Mar are in love with Wallace; the former dreams of being his queen, while the latter sublimates her passion for Wallace into passion for her country.

Subject to treasonous plots following the death of the Earl of Mar, Wallace and Bruce escape to France where they meet the former King of Scotland, Baliol, who validates Bruce's claim to the throne. Rescuing Helen from the evil English lord, De Valence, Bruce and Wallace return to Scotland to fight. Disguised as a knight, Joanna Mar fights alongside Wallace but, when he rejects her advances, she marries the Englishman De Warenne, persuading the Scottish noblemen to surrender to Edward. The injured Bruce is nursed back to health by Helen's sister, Isabella.

Finally betrayed by John Menteith, Wallace is taken to the Tower of London to await his execution, where Helen joins him and they are married. Wallace is hung. Helen takes his body back to the new King and Queen of Scotland, Bruce and Isabella, and then dies.

For a more detailed synopsis of *The Scottish Chiefs*, see Fiona Price, 'Synopsis of *The Scottish Chiefs*', *Corvey Women Writers on the Web 1796-1834* (Dec 1999), http://www2.shu.ac.uk/corvey/CW3/ContribPage.cfm?Contrib=406 (date accessed 21.11.01).

later novel she advocated a potentially assimilative Anglo-British national identity, thereby tacitly acknowledging the heterogeneous nature of the nation. The crucial feature of this identity is the personal attribute of religious virtue which, in turn, facilitates peaceful trade relations between nations. Throughout the narrative, virtue is linked to the nation through the notion of national liberty, which manifests in individual personal freedom. The repeated assertion that 'Virtue *is better than life!*' is justified in terms of societal order: 'By that we are commanded to preserve the one at the expense of the other, and we are ready to obey.'[39] Yet virtue cannot exist without liberty, a sentiment which is epitomised in the proverb that Wallace repeats to Hilton, Edward I's ambassador, and that also may be interpreted as a moral to *The Scottish Chiefs* fable: 'Know of a certainty that virtue, the best of possessions, never can exist under a bond of servility' (nn. 1, p.480). Furthermore, characters are introduced throughout the narrative that possess virtue but do not exhibit religious conviction and, therefore, are censured by those that do. Individuals reach an ideal state when they are in possession of virtue; consequently, the nation reaches an ideal when its structure is dictated by individuals, following the example of Wallace, in possession of religious virtue.

In keeping with an argument for peaceful assimilation, Porter's Highland Warrior is a benevolent, magnanimous, sentimental hero who is characterised in terms of passivity; the repeated battle-cry of 'God armeths the patriot's hand' reflects the defensive nature of the Scottish quest. Both Wallace's followers and adversaries marvel at his capacity for mercy; as Bruce questions, 'who like him, makes mercy the companion of war, and compels even his enemies to emulate the clemency he shows?' (p.412). Wallace's subsequent 'conversion' of the defeated English troops and their leader, the Earl of Gloucester, to the 'resistless' (p.187) doctrine of religious virtue highlights that the Highland Warrior is proselytising Porter's vision of national identity. Religion plays a fundamental role in this mission; assimilation into Porter's vision of the British nation is helped by the belief in a merciful God, whose capacity for forgiveness allows the individual to find redemption in this life. Thus, the misled monarch, a theme which runs throughout the narrative, finds absolution. Wallace interprets Edward's usurpation of

[39] Jane Porter, *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810) (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1882), p.281. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

God's position, in other words the divinely-ordained Scottish line of succession, as blasphemy: 'I act to one Being alone. Edward must acknowledge *His* supremacy; and by that know that my soul is above all price!' (p.480). Edward is deemed to be a villain due to his usurpation of God's role in human affairs; however, the narrative implies that he is capable of redemption. Virtue may be learned; Edward has the choice to acknowledge the will of God, thereby rendering him an effectual ruler. In Porter's portrayal of the Highland Warrior therefore, Wallace proselytises a religious virtue founded on a belief in a merciful God, that facilitates the peaceful assimilation of the English and the Scottish into a homogenous commercial British nation.

In *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk*, Holford also perceived a conflict between the English and the Scottish but, rather than interpreting Britain as a homogenous nation, she argued that Scottish and English identities were fluid and may be shared at particular points.[40] In positing a filial relationship between the two nations, Holford suggested that the English should share in the Scots' literary and martial fame, rather than scorn it. Her argument for the appropriation of positive characteristics could be perceived as a contribution to a shared British national identity, however, for Holford, Scottish characteristics served to strengthen an English rather than a British identity. Keen to

[40] *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk* focuses upon the events that occurred immediately before, during, and after the Battle of Falkirk in 1298. The poem opens with a meeting amongst the Scottish nobles at which Wallace's right to lead the Scots is being disputed, serving as an opportunity to delineate the factions. Thus, when the Scots receive reports of a large English army camped in Linlithgow Vale at the end of the first canto, Wallace has asserted his right to lead the Scots while the reader is aware of the dissembling Comyn.

Various ghosts and omens are portrayed in the second canto, presenting the idea that the Scots, and Wallace in particular, are following the path of destiny. Before the Scots march to battle, Wallace sends his page, David, to Dundaff with a love-knot that his dead wife, Agnes, gave him. The third canto opens with an invocation to the English king, Edward I, reminding him that he will be judged by God. An incident in which the English wrongly believe that Edward has been assassinated returns to the ideas of omens and destiny that were explored with the Scots, and the canto ends with Edward sending a message to his spy, Comyn, and the sentiment that divine providence will direct the outcome of the battle.

Canto four contains a sanguinary account of the battle on the banks of the River Carron, in which the appearance of a mysterious young knight, whom Warwick refuses to kill, problematises the notion that all of the English are bad. Comyn flees in the thick of the battle while, at the end of the canto, the depleted Scots retreat into Torwoodle Wood. The fifth and final canto sees Wallace fleeing into the Highlands before meeting the fate that is prophesied by three ghostly messengers – betrayal at the hands of his childhood friend, Menteith. His wife, Agnes, who – very much alive – was the mysterious knight on the field of battle, unsuccessfully pleads for her husband's life, before dying of a broken heart. The narrative ultimately refuses to follow Wallace to his death and, despite leaving the hero awaiting his death as a captive on Scottish soil, ends with the sentiment that 'His name lives still, cherish'd and shrin'd / In every Scottish patriot's mind!', thereby perpetuating his mythic immortality. Margaret Holford, *Wallace; or, The Fight of Falkirk. A Metrical Romance* (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1809), V.72.11-12. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

preserve England and Scotland as distinct entities, Holford described her portrayal of Scotland as taking an 'alien step' beyond her 'native land' in order to describe '[Scotland's] sons – their hardihood and worth!' (p. iv). It is their martial worth that she emphasises in her portrayal of Wallace, whose character bears all the hallmarks of a professional soldier whose 'bold unruffled brow / Speaks the calm of a noble mind' (I.21.1-2) and who 'stand'st like an oak, while tempests blow, / Unbent by the wavering wind!' (I.21.4-5). In contrast to the defensive passivity of Porter's Wallace, this Highland Warrior is motivated by an active aggression encapsulated in his statement that 'God to vengeance nerves my arm!' (IV.10.7). Wallace is figured as a successful, heroic soldier, but in sanguinary terms which are exacerbated by his unmerciful response to calls for quarter. Haunted by the 'ghastly scream' (IV.42.4) of the mothers of the Scottish dead, he holds to his oath that '[n]o child of English mother born, / Unskaith'd beneath my hand shall lie!' (IV.42.10-11).

The stark difference between the two portrayals of Wallace may be attributed to the choice of genre; Porter's Wallace adheres to conventions of the sentimental hero of the romance novel whereas Holford's stern Wallace is in keeping with the heroic epic poem. However, the different perceptions of God are also pertinent. Unlike the merciful, redemptive God of *The Scottish Chiefs*, *Wallace*'s God is a harsh and judgemental deity who holds each character to account for his actions. Canto Three opens with a narrative address to the conquering king which, due to the absence of reference to Edward, could be interpreted as referring to Napoleon. Holford's God judges individuals on their death-bed, '[t]hat hour which comes to all!' (III.2.9); thus, the narrator states that they would not trade all the kingdoms in the world for this king's fate, when '[t]he grim, inexorable guest, / Stands by thy couch to summon thee!' (III.2.16-17). Unlike Porter's narrative, Holford's explicit belief in divine judgment and retribution means there is no hope for redemption on earth, and that the king will be judged on his death-bed by a God who does not acknowledge rank. The narrator subsequently muses that every individual should fear judgment, profoundly questioning whether anyone dies with a clear conscience.

When the view of God expounded in *Wallace* is clear, the apparently harsh nature of Holford's representation of the Highland Warrior may be understood. Thus, alongside

the admirable trait of an efficient, professional soldier, Wallace is also unstintingly honest. The dissembling villains, Comyn and Menteith, act as a foil to Wallace's understated honesty. Describing Red Comyn in a rare direct address, the narrator states:

> I have mark'd the gloomy brow of scorn,
> I have traced the sneer of guile,
> But the darkest frown by malice worn
> Was mocked by Comyn's smile! (I. 41. 7-10).

In comparison, Wallace is portrayed as honest and strong; a contrast which is more explicit in the comparison between Menteith and Wallace. Menteith's smiling lips 'cover the heart's envenom'd guile' (V. 37. 6) while Wallace's '[f]irm, simple faith is still thine own!' (V. 38. 2). Wallace is unable to detect treachery because it is uncharted territory for him:

> He who the ways of guile can trace,
> Must long have commun'd with the base,
> And thou could'st never bend thine eye
> To the crawling course of treachery (X. 38. 3-6).

Thus, in arguing for an appropriation of Scottish martial merit, Holford's Highland Warrior is portrayed as a highly principled, unstintingly honest, professional soldier.

Grant, too, argued for the appropriation of Scottish characteristics, albeit from a different perspective. Appalled by the forced emigration of the Highlanders, Grant argued that uncorrupted Highland manners and morals would strengthen a British national identity against the vices of materialism and luxury which, Grant suggested, were the cause of the conspicuous degeneration of the Lowland Scots and English. Whereas Porter and Holford chose to employ a particular individual as a vehicle for their national arguments, Grant portrays an eponymous generic Highland Warrior. The conflict between the Highlanders and the Lowland farmers and English forms an opposition that is continually asserted throughout the majority of the narrative. Allied with nature and the terrain, the Highlanders '[l]ove the bleak heights, and scorn the fertile mould'.[41] Fiercely patriotic, their cultural and national identity is inextricably linked to the landscape; the 'rocks that oft have rung / With legends which the CELTIC muse has sung' (p.32) dictate

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[41] Anne Grant, 'The Highlanders; or, Sketches of Highland Scenery and Manners: With Some Reflections on Emigration', in *Poems on Various Subjects* (London: Longman & Rees, 1803), p.30. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

the physical location of the 'social tribes branch'd out on every side' (p.34). Grant evokes a sense of communal endeavour, of simple, honest, pious, self-sufficiency, '[w]here tranquil peace and rural joy were found' (p.24). In contrast, the Lowland farmers 'shrink' (p.26) from harsh winter gales and spring showers, which 'too rudely breathes for them' (p.27). Isolated by individualism, the Lowlanders 'plod in dull mechanic sort' and 'vegetate upon the self-same spot' (p.33). As Grant states 'all things feel improvement's aid but man' (p.33). For Grant, improvement has been spearheaded by a quest for knowledge:

> whose evanescent meaning caught meanwhile,
> Shall add new graces to enrich our stile;
> New systems of philosophy be shown,
> With happier art in language all our own (p.27).

Figured as Pride, this school of thought seeks to create a new enlightened order of government and society, based upon a knowledge that, unlike the calm and content lives of the Highlanders, renders the 'maddening crowds ... giddy while they gaze' (p.27). Ultimately, they seek to break 'custom's chains and prejudice's ties' (p.28), but as the narrative has shown, they are prejudiced against the Highlanders.

Grant is arguing that the Whig-led improvement of the Highlands and Islands was misled. 'The Highlanders' was written in reaction to the Highland Clearances; improvers, the abject 'sons of little men' (p.23), sought to clear the land of its less-profitable indigenous population in order to graze sheep. One of the most controversial clearances was undertaken by the Duchess of Sutherland who cleared the centre of her vast property for the purposes of sheep-farming, suggesting that her tenants move to the coast and take up fishing. As Clyde comments, 'the proprietors and their agents failed to consider the fierce attachments all peasants have to their ancestral lands.'[42] The narrative of 'The Highlanders' bears this argument out, contrary to Kirsten Daly's argument that nationality is located in culture rather than geographical place.[43] In her article, ''Return No More!': Highland Emigration and Romantic Nostalgia', Daly mounts a convincing case for 'considering nostalgia ... in the context of colonisation as the means of inspiring and

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[42] Clyde, p.43.
[43] Kirsten Daly, "Return no more!': Highland Emigration and Romantic Nostalgia', *Literature and History*, 9:1 (Spring 2000),pp.24-42 (p. 33).

consoling the settlers, whom [Grant] represents as hopelessly lost in their new wilderness'.[44] Although Daly finds evidence throughout the text for the promotion of emigration, I would argue that this is only one narrative thread within the poem, and that to prioritise it constitutes a misinterpretation of Grant's overarching intent in 'The Highlanders'.

From the outset, Grant claims to be writing a 'British song' to 'touch the British heart' (p.29); the intent of this poem is to focus the attention of the reader upon events at what Grant perceives to be the British centre, and specifically upon the need to strengthen a British national identity. Rather than promoting emigration, reference to 'hopeless exile' (p.105) suggests that it is a debilitating move. The logic of banishing the Highlanders rather than nurturing those attributes that would benefit a British national identity is questioned:

> Say, when such pleasures and pursuits engage
> Th'enervate sons of a degenerate age;
> Is it time to banish from our coast
> The few who uncorrupted manners boast?' (p.105).

For Grant, luxury and materialism result in a degeneration which is a direct consequence of the loss of community evident in Lowland Scottish and English culture. In employing a generic Highland Warrior, Grant makes a levelling move; his attributes are attainable by all. For Grant, not only would the incorporation of the Highlanders strengthen British identity against luxury, it would also facilitate her vision of the reconciliation of the Highland and Lowland Scots and the English. The Highlanders enjoy a shared sense of sympathy, which Grant concludes the poem by suggesting is an innate British characteristic, pre-dating the four kingdoms.

The discourse of the Highland Warrior was available for those authors who sought to undertake a literary negotiation, or as Davis argues, re-negotiation of the British nation. Furthermore, women writers were engaging in this project, and an examination of the narratives of Holford, Porter, and Grant highlight that women were employing the figure of the hero, in the form of the Highlander, as the ideal representative of their attempt to narrate a coherent nation. Yet an examination of

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[44] Daly, p. 30.

their narratives also emphasises the manner in which the Highlander operated as a malleable sign that represented disparate identities and, following his rehabilitation in the early nineteenth-century, ostensibly united the majority of the Scots within a British discourse of Scotland. However, this narrative strategy marginalised the female characters; heroism was a predominately masculine trait, therefore a national identity represented by a hero theoretically excluded women from the ideal. Indeed, they are also theoretically excluded from heroic, or patriotic, acts. Yet an exploration of the representation of female heroism in the narratives of Holford, Porter, and Grant reveals that female authors were manipulating the discourses of nation and heroism in order to portray actively patriotic heroines.

2:3 Female Heroism

The dominant model of heroism in the West can be traced back to the ancient classical civilisations of Greece and Rome, and is predicated along gendered lines; the male hero is admired and supported by his loving female relations.[45] The rubric of separate public and private spheres is both resonant in and reinforced by this representation, impelling the critics who seek to analyse female heroism to establish a position in relation to this restrictive model. Mary Beth Rose, for example, situates herself within an argument in favour of the separate spheres paradigm, suggesting that 'the argument that early modern England experienced the beginnings of a more defined public-private division that clearly separates the genders ... [has become] enriched rather than weakened'.[46] Arguing that the literary representation of heroism is an indicator of a change in cultural values – in this case, the solidification of separate spheres – Rose suggests that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the representation of heroics moved from a heroism of action to a heroism of endurance, which constituted a gendered move from male to female. She is advocating recognition of female marital heroism, in other words, the heroic act of

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[45] I have deliberately used the term 'dominant model', as I will argue that there are many models of heroism.

[46] Mary Beth Rose, *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p.xi.

enduring a disastrous marriage. In order to construct an argument for a model of female heroism, Rose engages with the semantics of the terms 'male' and 'female'. She refers to gender as an indicator of a subject position rather than of biological sex, and defines the heroic as a 'gendered position of the self in relation to pleasure and power'.[47] The fluidity of gendered subject positions enables Rose to highlight instances of female heroism without undermining the monolithic paradigm of gendered spheres; however, the instances that she cites are simultaneously restricted to domestic models.

For Marina Warner also, conventionally women occupy a secondary position to the male hero. Arguing that Joan of Arc was 'a pre-eminent heroine because she belongs to the sphere of action, while so many feminine figures or models are assigned to the sphere of contemplation', Warner implies that Joan's move into the male sphere of action was unusual.[48] Yet, that Joan is able to make this move implies that the possibility exists for other women. Anne Mellor concludes her succinct delineation of the debate surrounding the use of separate spheres as a critical tool with the welcome statement that

> it may be time to discard this binary, overly simplistic concept of separate sexual spheres altogether in favour of a more nuanced and flexible conceptual paradigm that foregrounds the complex intersection of class, religious, racial, and gender differences in this historical period.[49]

Heroism, like national belonging, is part of an individual's identity; thus, if an individual possesses national identi*ties*, it follows that they may also have access to a range of heroic identities. In her examination of the female hero in women's literature and poetry, Susan Lichtman refers to the 'intricate web of relationships through which women perceive reality'.[50] Lichtman is arguing for the existence of a specifically female literary hero-cycle, however her reference to a 'web of relationships' is a useful way to think about the presence of plurality, not only in relationships, but also in the different identities that an individual might bring to each relationship. It is in this sense that the idea of multiple models of heroism may be understood; already we have encountered a

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[47] Rose, p. xvii.
[48] Marina Warner, *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism* (London: Vintage, 1981), p.9.
[49] Anne Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000), p.7.
[50] Susan A. Lichtman, *The Female Hero in Women's Literature and Poetry* (Lewiston, N. Y., Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), p.9.

classical heroic model, Lichtman's female hero-cycle, and the female hero who endures a disastrous marriage.[51] The list is theoretically infinite.

During an analysis of the gendered space of the early eighteenth-century novel, Paula Backscheider comments that those men and women who had survived the English Civil War, the Restoration, and the Glorious Revolution were 'unlikely to think in terms of older conceptions of separate private and public spheres': '[f]or them, the personal was the political, and many of them draw upon and self-consciously operate in the public and private spheres simultaneously'.[52] However, the subsequent argument that the narrative point of view which emerged in novels of the early eighteenth-century was that of the Other rests upon a gendered binary opposition. For Backscheider, the Other was Woman, and the space that she occupied in the narrative becomes a site for the articulation of a 'competing ideology' to that of the established status quo.[53] Furthermore, the genre of the novel occupies a 'liminal space' in which the texts are a product of the public sphere while simultaneously remaining external to its agency. By using 'woman as its master signifier', the novel offers the 'potential for subversive revelation and utopian glimmers'.[54] Backscheider is engaging with the critical debate surrounding the rise of the novel, therefore the narratives she refers to predate the subject of this thesis by nearly one hundred years. However, this sense of narrative as a liminal space offers alternative ways of reading the representation of female heroes beyond a paradigm of separate spheres.

If an individual's sense of identity changes with each situation, then it is instructive to examine how that individual engages with a specific circumstance, for example, war. Each individual would have a multiplicity of reactions to war, indeed, war itself should be viewed as a multivalent phenomenon, manifesting in different ways to different people at different times. War is an ambiguous entity, randomly entering people's lives. In her seminal work, *Women and War*, Jean Bethke Elshtain describes war as a 'circle surrounded by ever-widening circles' drawing men and women alike into its

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[51] See also Lee R. Edwards, who argues for a female hero who challenges the novelistic conventions which see the heroine end in marriage or death (*Psyche as Hero: Female Heroism and Fictional Form* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1984)).

[52] Paula Backscheider, 'The Novel's Gendered Space', in *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century "Women's Fiction" and Social Engagement*, ed. by P. R. Backscheider (London: John Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 1-30 (pp.19-20).

[53] Backscheider, p.15.

[54] Backscheider, p.18, p.29.

orbit.[55] Elshtain discusses male and female identities as forged around collective violence, engaging in the communal endeavour of shared sacrifice and danger.[56] It is instructive to explore the effects of war upon an individual's sense of identity, particularly in literary representations of their heroic and national identities. Gender binaries still exist in this argument, but rather than reliance upon separate spheres, war is used as the determining factor.

Furthermore, when the notion of liminal space is applied to an examination of the portrayal of female national identity in Holford's *Wallace*, Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs*, and Anne Grant's 'The Highlanders', it is possible to move away from the gender binary implicit in Backscheider's analysis. Writing about war introduces new possibilities for national identification and, more specifically, a new national Other. The Woman/Other paradigm becomes displaced, offering authors the opportunity to represent the possibilities available to female nationals. Faced with the threat of an external Other, Woman is incorporated within the nation, yet I would argue that the liminal space which Backscheider identifies within the narratives still exist. One of the means by which the female protagonists of the narratives examined below step in and out of this liminal space is through a manipulation of appearance in the form of cross-dressing. In each of the narratives, cross-dressing is the catalyst for a new, aware, active engagement with the nation; the trope of disguise enables the authors to highlight the constructed nature of gender roles before moving on to the portrayal of an alternative in which women are actively patriotic.

Dianne Dugaw has focused upon the pervasiveness of the representation of the Female Warrior throughout English society during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This transvestite, swashbuckling heroine simultaneously engages in male, heroic activities, while preserving a feminine identity beyond any sense of the domestic sphere. Identifying the conventions of this motif, Dugaw argues that in conflating the male and the female within one figure, representations of the Female Warrior highlight the constructed nature of both gender and a heroic ideal. As a social construction, and not an innate biological given, gender can always be manipulated, but in Dugaw's analysis

[55] Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War: with a new Epilogue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987; 1995), p.183, p.185.
[56] Elshtain, p.8, p.10.

gender in fact collapses into itself. Likewise, and extending Dugaw's argument, the heroic ideal that is based upon gendered assumptions becomes an human aspiration, rather than something that is restricted to men, or a handful of unusual women. A gender binary is still maintained to the extent that Dugaw interprets the Female Warrior as depending upon a construct of gender while simultaneously exposing it.[57] Dugaw does not suggest a way forward from this point, however, her focus upon the histrionic nature of gender and heroism, in conjunction with Backscheider's notion of liminal space paves the way for a fresh analysis of representations of female patriotic roles.

Initially, Margaret Holford's *Wallace; or The Fight of Falkirk* appears to portray a martial arena distinctly divided along gendered lines. Focusing upon the events immediately before, during, and after the battle, the apparently harsh portrayal of the hero, William Wallace, is in line with Holford's national vision of Scottish martial efficiency. Holford's portrayal of an effective professional soldier necessarily requires the representation of ineffectual women. There are only two women referred to by name throughout the poem, Lady Agnes Wallace and Lady Margaret Stewart. While the reader is led to believe that the former is dead, the latter is a one-dimensional stereotype of the chivalric waiting woman, who merits merely two stanzas. Following Stewart's heroic death, the narrative focuses fleetingly on Bonkill tower, where Lady Margaret, who sent her husband off to battle with a 'patriot's pride' (IV, 70, 9), waits in vain for his return. Her fate shall be to

> sit by the taper's funeral glare,
> While the bitter drops of wasting care
> Shall wither [her] beauty's glow! (IV, 71, 13-15).

Her husband's death renders her patriotic purpose – in other words, preparing her husband for war – invalid, and her uselessness is manifested in her fate as she simply fades away. Situating Margaret at a marked distance from the action of the narrative, the battle at Falkirk, also distances her from the opportunity to engage with the narrative's portrayal of national identity, therefore Backscheider's Woman/Other paradigm is sustained. If the battle is perceived as an act of nation-formation, then Lady Margaret's

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[57] Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.150.

patriotic role is to support her husband from the confines of her home, a move which removes her national agency.

Female exclusion is further reinforced by male rejection; while Wallace is operating as an effective professional soldier, Holford portrays him as a warrior rejecting a token of his wife and, by extension, woman's love. Sending his page, David, to Dundaff, Wallace asks that he take a scarf woven by Agnes with him, stating that '[t]he warrior scorns the idle toy, / And tears it from his heart!' (II, 16, 1-10). Wallace appears to begin to show some feeling when he tells David that, in the event of his death, he does not want a 'ruffian's gory hands' to 'stain the silken fold' (II, 18, 16-17) of the scarf. However, the tender feeling expressed in these lines is undermined by his exclamation that

> the secret voice of martial pride
> Bids me throw the cherish'd toy aside;
> For I would not be found in my country's wreck,
> With a love-knot twin'd around my neck! (II, 18, 18-23).

Referred to as a toy, the scarf is an inconsequential item, a mere frippery relieved of the weight of emotional attachment. Wallace's martial pride knows that there is no place on the battlefield for womanly love, indeed his tone is disparaging and condescending with reference to the love knot. How could he be remembered as a great hero and warrior if he were found with a lady's favour? The banishment of David reinforces this point, as the young child could be seen as a cherubic symbol of love.

Holford appears to offer a vision of a martial arena in which duty and love, men and women, cannot be reconciled. However, by highlighting the theatrical nature of gender through cross-dressing, Holford conflates the two spheres. Unbeknown to Wallace, his wife is not dead and joins him on the battlefield dressed as a mysterious knight. Thus, despite rejecting the token of his wife's love, he unwittingly reconciles love and duty by fighting alongside her; Holford portrays the possibility of a companionate relationship between men and women. *Wallace* could be interpreted as negating patriarchy by highlighting the constructed nature of the gender distinctions upon which it is founded; indeed, Dugaw argues that the Female Warrior does not reinscribe patriarchy - in the tradition of carnival – as she actively chooses the moment of her unmasking, and

always nostalgically remembers her exploits.[58] However, when Agnes dons her female garb once more, she regains an ineffectual femininity; her foiled attempt to avert her husband's fate implies that women are ineffectual in both political and martial battle. Halfway through the last canto, Lady Agnes reveals herself, attempting to rescue her husband from the betrayal that he is unable to see coming, but her pleas to the false Menteith fall on deaf ears. Agnes joins Wallace in his prison cell, in a scene of terminal distress:

Again she flies – she has found him now
A wretched captive, vanquish'd, bound,
With grief-wrung heart and dewy brow,
And stretch'd in fetters on the ground!
He hears her voice – he hears her screams,
Truth, like a dismal vision, gleams;
He sees her scatter'd tresses wave,
Like corpse-lights streaming towards the grave!
She comes! his arms would fain have press'd
The frantic mourner to his breast!
To faith so prov'd, to truth so tried,
This last poor tribute was denied,
Agnes beheld her lord with bursting heart, and died! (V, 71)

Wallace has admitted grief to his heart, and is now a wretched captive rather than a soldier hero. As he no longer needs to reject women, he can see his wife, yet now that he is no longer a hero, his perception of his wife as a vengeful ghost to be appeased is defunct, and therefore Agnes has no function in the narrative and has to die. Her complete ineffectualness and inability to assert her will is encapsulated in her inability to hold her husband before she dies. Yet as the focus of this scene rests upon Wallace, rather than a comment upon female national agency, Agnes' inability to save her husband is inevitable. The revelation of truth to Wallace serves as a metaphorical bursting of the heroic bubble. This model of heroism was founded on the illusion, both that his wife was dead, but more important, that a professional soldier is able to distance himself from his emotions, that he does not need to cry. Thus, the poem ends with a portrayal of Wallace as a sorely grieving, broken man, while Agnes' role on the battlefield, and its adjoining national agency, remains intact.

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[58] Dugaw, p.155.

Ultimately, apart from a brief episode on the battlefield, Agnes was unable to reconcile her symbolic national self, as the dead love of the hero haunting the narrative, corporeal national self, as a living female Briton. Not only was the nation habitually designated female, in portrayals such as Britannia, but throughout the eighteenth century a discourse emerged in which women were deemed to be the guardians of the nation's morals and, thus, were increasingly figured in abstract terms as the symbols of the nation that men fought to defend and preserve. Thus, a tension existed between the symbolic role of the female Briton and her lived experience of the nation. Unlike Holford, Porter and Grant were able to reconcile this tension within their narratives, thereby facilitating the portrayal of potential female patriotic roles.

2:4 The 'most precious' of 'Scotland's daughters': Symbolic Female Patriotism in Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* (1809)

While representing Wallace as the embodiment of a national ideal in *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter's portrayal of his relationship with the heroine, Helen Mar, offers the possibility of a more equal relationship between British men and women. In an essay exploring the relationship between marriage and war, Eric Walker argues that the purpose of war is to 'make the world safe for conjugality':

> [w]ar is, infamously, anti-conjugal: spouses die, separated spouses sleep around and split up. But the cultural cover story is that these threats to marriage are the necessary price to pay, precisely to ensure peacetime marriage.[59]

Thus, the murder of Lady Marion Wallace by the English at the outset of *The Scottish Chiefs* seems appropriate, symbolising that Wallace and the Scots are at war. That the spiritual presence of Marion insistently permeates the narrative implies that the reassertion of conjugality in peacetime is always possible. With the death of Marion, the role of the lead female protagonist shifts to Lady Helen Mar, the daughter of Wallace's close comrade-in-arms, the Earl of Mar. Yet Helen and Marion remain inextricably

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[59] Eric Walker, 'Marriage and the End of War', in *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793-1822*, ed. by Philip Shaw (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp.208-226 (p.209).

linked, thereby constantly emphasising the importance of Helen's role while also portraying her as a living embodiment of the deceased, and therefore divine, ideal. Wallace is often struck by the resemblance between Helen and Marion but, rather than implying a romantic attachment to his friend's daughter and in keeping with the trait of religious virtue, he perceives Helen from a religious perspective: 'I shall march forth to-morrow with redoubled strength; for I shall think, holy maid, that I have yet a Marion to pray for me in earth, as well as one in heaven!' (p. 259). Wallace views Helen as representing the ideal that he is fighting to preserve; indeed, Helen is portrayed metaphorically as Scotland in the narrative, and Wallace refers to her as 'the fairest of Scotland's daughters'. Yet Helen Mar is an ambiguous character who, in portraying the patriotic roles available to a woman in a religiously virtuous society, constantly shifts between a position as a metaphorical cipher and that of an active national agent.

The murder of Marion Wallace consolidates the position of the English as the national Other of the narrative therefore, in keeping with Backscheider's Woman/Other paradigm, Helen Mar is incorporated within the nation, albeit in a marginal position. In a symbolic scene, Helen sews a lock of Wallace's hair soaked in Marion's blood into a banner, inextricably tying her to the sign around which the Scottish nation will rally. At the same moment in which national agency manifests in Helen's actions, it is undermined by the narrative which describes her as 'ignorant of the horrors of war, and only alive to the glory of the present cause' (p.42), thereby reinscribing her gendered exclusion from the battlefield. Sighs of 'were I a man' (p.49) show that the deeply patriotic Helen is acutely aware that her gender restricts her ability to engage with the cause. In effect, this scene sets up the contradiction between words and actions, the position that women ought to occupy and the one that they do.

Despite occupying an ambiguous position, Helen is not portrayed as the Other; rather she is characterised as a patriot, aspiring to freedom, and is described in heroic terms:

> [w]hile the gentlest of human beings, she was an evidence that an ardent and pious mind contains the true principles of heroism. Hope, in such a mind, treads down impossibilities; and, regardless of impediments or dangers, rushes forward to seize the prize. In the midst of hosts, it feels a conqueror's power; or, when its strength fails, sees, by the eye of faith, legions of angels watching to support the natural weakness. Lady Helen knew that the cause

> was just which had put the sword in the hand of Wallace; that it was virtue which had prompted her father to second him; and where justice is, there are the wings of the Most High stretched out as a shield! (p.70)

This description of Helen is couched in the terms of warfare and battle usually reserved for men, and also appropriates the masculine notion of heroism. Of greater importance is the reason why she is a hero; possessing a "pious mind" and inspired by virtue, Helen adheres to the same notion of religious virtue advocated by Wallace throughout the narrative. Helen repeatedly finds strength in her faith, enduring the battle of her repeated kidnaps through prayer (p.77), and is only vulnerable with her 'mind at ease' (p.82), offering the contemporary female readers a means to endure 'in terrific times as these' (p.87). The innate weakness which Helen possesses as a woman is negated in the presence of Wallace, as 'even tender woman loses the weakness of her sex when she belongs to him' (p.209). Helen deems Wallace's cause just due to his religious virtue, and it is her adherence to this trait that ensures her incorporation and agency within the Scottish nation.

Helen's patriotic acts of heroism – and reconciliation of the tension between her corporeal and symbolic relationship with the nation – depend upon a model of femininity which is based upon the repression of passion, thereby quelling its subversive potential. The threat that passion poses to religious virtue is represented through the portrayal of Joanna Mar, Helen's step-mother, who operates as foil for the heroine. Both Helen and Joanna are attracted to Wallace and Porter uses the manner in which they negotiate their passion as a means to represent her concept of an ideal femininity. Helen denies her initial attraction to Wallace due to a respect for the dead Marion and for Wallace's virtue. Recognising that '[n]ot to think of him was impossible: how to think of him was in her own power', she exerts self-control over her passion which is validated by the narrative:

> [a] sacred inspiration seemed to illuminate her features; and to brace with the vigour of immortality those limbs which before had sunk under her. She forgot she was still of this earth, while a holy love, like that of the dove in Paradise, sat brooding on her heart (p.222).

Helen's self-restraint is exhibited in the sublimation of her passion for Wallace, which she converts into a religious devotion for the divinely-ordained saviour of her country. That this is the correct course of action for all women, and not just the virtuous ideal

which Helen represents, is indicated in her comment that she is 'a woman, and formed to suffer in silence and seclusion' (p.234). Helen channels her passions into the same mould as her patriotic ardour, enabling her to exclaim '[i]t is my happiness as well as my duty, Sir William Wallace ... to regard you and my country as one' (p.139). Her restraint is powered by her religious virtue, and is rewarded as she enjoys a sororial relationship with Wallace and Bruce; the virtue intrinsic to Porter's model of national identity facilitates social cohesion.

Like Helen, Lady Mar is also attracted to Wallace but does not attempt to control her passion. At the moment where Helen channels her desire for Wallace into a form of religious patriotism, Lady Mar misinterprets her glowing countenance as evidence of Helen's desire. Thus envy enters her mind, an emotion that is repeatedly shown to be un-virtuous and detrimental to the nation (p.222). Pointedly referred to as 'impassioned' on many occasions, Lady Mar's lack of restraint is her main fault. As Edwin, Wallace's close friend, states, he 'could never pledge his faith to one whose passions had so far silenced her sense of duty' (p.354). The threat that unrestrained passion poses to religious virtue is emphasised by referring to Joanna Mar both as a witch and as an animal; she turns her 'evil eye' upon Helen and is referred to as 'hyena-hearted' (p.239), which complies with the narrative's practice of dehumanising those individuals not in possession of virtue. Excluded from Porter's vision of the nation following an unsuccessful attempt to ascend the Scottish throne, a move which has been shown to be the ultimate transgression of divinely-ordained societal order, Joanna Mar literally disappears in a puff of smoke.

Thus far, Helen has vociferously defended female self-restraint of passions and an adherence to duties, often situated domestically. Yet the manner in which she engages with the nation patriotically necessitates a radical departure from this position, at least its domestic location. She achieves this by embracing her role as the symbolic representative of the nation. Throughout the narrative, Scotland is denominated female, with each of the characters enjoying a familial relationship with the nation, and the effect of these references is to create an image the nation as a family, through the employment of the familial metaphor. Women may be isolated and idealised by this trope, yet, by directly addressing the nation as such, the narrative demonstrates the positive feeling of kindred

that exists between the virtuous Scots. Helen is able to imbibe in this feeling by actively embracing her symbolic role. Attributed with a 'seraphic form' (p.250) and a 'purity of soul' (p.258), Bruce described her as 'the angelic guard by whom Heaven points our way' (p.436), while Wallace thinks of Helen as the 'most precious' of 'Scotland's daughters' (p.414). Her kidnap adheres to romance conventions, but also the repeated abduction of the metaphorical representative of Scotland by an immoral Englishman is indicative of the struggle between the two nations for sovereignty of Scotland. Shortly after her rescue from captivity in France, in a scene reminiscent of a theatrical tableau, Bruce and Wallace guard the sleeping Helen:

> [f]or fear of disturbing her, not a word was spoken. Wallace watched at her head, and Bruce sat at her feet, while Grimsby remained with the horses, as a kind of outpost (p.410).

Scotland sleeps in a French forest guarded by her patriotic defender, her rightful king, and, at the periphery, the good Englishman. Paradoxically, the metaphor and allegory which renders the religiously virtuous Helen external to the nation, also offers her a role within the nation, although it appears to necessitate the rejection of her corporeality.

Helen is made painfully aware of her gendered exclusion from the nation, impelling her to negotiate a patriotic role out of the tension that exists between her corporeal and symbolic self. This is achieved through an engagement with what Backscheider describes as the gendered liminal space of the novel which, I would argue, is located in disguise in this narrative. In order to escape from captivity undetected, Helen dons a page's attire. Dressed as a man, she enjoys a fraternal relationship with Bruce and Wallace, which she recognises will end when they reach Paris:

> [t]hus enjoying the dear communion of hearts, the interchange of mind, and mingling of soul with soul, did these three friends journey towards the gates of Paris. Every hour seemed an age of blessedness to Helen; so gratefully did she enjoy each passing moment of a happiness, that seemed to speak of Paradise. Nature never before appeared so beautiful in her eyes: the sky was more serene, the birds sang with sweeter notes, the landscape shone in brighter charms; the fragrance of the flowers, bathed her senses in softest balm; and the very air, as it breathed around her, seemed fraught with life and joy (p.418).

Helen has achieved her wish to be a man, which the narrative represents as a corporeal engagement with the nation. That Wallace 'animated the scene' is not a reference to

feminine affection, but suggests that Helen sees him with the fraternal love of his male followers. As the ideal virtuous woman, Helen has to suppress her feelings and suffer in silence; indeed, as a symbol of the nation she becomes a divine object. In each position she is an allegorical figure, and still not privy to the feelings and experiences of a corporeal woman. It is implied that, while dressed as a man, Helen experiences the joy of being a fully active member of the nation, whereas as a woman she does not fully engage with the nation due to a lack of legal voice. Thus, in portraying Helen's escape in this manner, Porter is highlighting the fact that gendered roles are socially constructed or, in Dugaw's terms, they are histrionic. The way is paved for an active female patriotic role.

When Helen changes her clothes, therefore, she moves from a position of male corporeality to female symbolism. Bruce sees 'a lovely woman, arrayed in all the charms of female apparel' (p.420), but Wallace recognises that Helen's 'heart' and 'soul' remain the same, implying that the modesty necessary for Porter's ideal national identity is innate in both men and women. Having highlighted the theatrical nature of gendered roles, however, Porter does not reinstate patriarchy. Rather, Helen's vestimentary transgression has a liberating potential, enabling Porter to portray the possibility of an active female patriotic role; by embracing her symbolic role Helen achieves political agency. Discovering that Wallace is imprisoned in the Tower of London, Helen conspires to join him, of her own volition, to offer him comfort in his captivity. Finally, the two are married, although the narrative stresses that their union represents the marriage of the nation and the patriot, couched in heavily religious terms. The English think that they are executing a traitor, but Wallace will become a martyr in the eyes of the Scots. As the Scottish origin myth is played out, the emerging nation is solidified and sanctioned upon English soil, therefore Helen's presence is crucial; the patriot is executed but the symbolic representative of the nation continues to live. As the executioner moves to place the noose around Wallace's neck, Helen rushes forward and Wallace breaks his bonds and 'clasped her to him':

> [t]he executioner approached the prostrate chief. Helen was still locked close in his arms. The man stooped to raise his victim; but the attempt was beyond his strength. In vain he called on him – to Helen – to separate, and cease from delaying the execution of the law; no voice replied, no motion answered his loud remonstrance (p.526).

At the moment of his death, clasping his country to his heart, Wallace acknowledges the divine ordination of his fate and ensures his martyrdom. Ignoring English law, Scotland holds Wallace, prolonging his death and appearing to die with him. However, Helen survives and, contrary to historical fact, conveys Wallace's remains back to Scotland.[60] The Scottish nation survives, and conveys the relics of her martyr to the feet of her king. A woman represents and symbolically bears the nation, locating female Scots as prime movers in the origin myth of the nation; a role which is extended to British womanhood.

The narrative ends with a curious portrayal of the Battle of Bannockburn, a decisive victory for the Scottish nation and the first that Bruce leads as king. The camp followers are hidden behind a hill and mistake Scottish cries for victory:

> [a]t this crisis, the women and followers of the Scottish camp, hearing such triumphant exclamations from their friends, impatiently quitted their station behind the hill, and ran to the summit, waving their scarves and plaids in exultation of the supposed victory. The English, mistaking these people for a new army[...] flung down their arms and fled (p.549).

Plaids are a national sign, therefore the women at Bannockburn are literally 'banner-waving', emphasising that women have a patriotic role within the nation. The portrayal of Bannockburn also reminds the reader that, contrary to the theoretical relegation of women to the home front, there have always been camp followers on the frontline. When the passage quoted is juxtaposed with the representation of Helen Mar as a patriotic, political agent, it becomes clear that women are able to interact with and influence the public sphere from the frontline, precisely because they are founded upon socially constructed categories which habitually resist specific definition. In *The Scottish Chiefs*, Porter offers a vision of a coherent British nation founded upon religious virtue in which it is recognised that men and women have roles to play according to their position in the divinely-ordained structure of society.

2:5 'An Heroic Maid': Female Patriotism in Anne Grant's 'The Highlanders' (1803)

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[60] The difference between the representation of the Wallace myth by Holford and Porter also hinges on the selective choice of history. Holford chooses not to portray Wallace's death, whereas Porter alters fact radically, thereby enabling her to assign Helen Mar a political patriotic role.

Anne Grant's 'The Highlanders' differs from Holford's *Wallace* and Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* in that the main protagonist is female. Representing a generic Highland Warrior enables her to shift the focus directly onto a female character, Flora Macdonald, and to focus upon her individual traits. Thus, Grant's heroic national identity from the outset is female. In a narrative which attempts to reconcile the conflicting loyalties of the Lowland Scots, who are conflated with the English, and the Highland Scots, Grant argues that the hardy 'Character of the Mountaineers' (p.30) will strengthen a British identity which she perceives is becoming increasingly enervated by a luxury generated by the Enlightenment. Parts One to Four delineate the attributes of the Highland character, as opposed to the Lowland farmers, while in Part Five the tale of Flora Macdonald's role in Prince Charles Stuart's escape following the Battle of Culloden in 1746 is recounted, as an example of the laudable traits of the Highlanders in action within a national vision which is not gendered.

From the outset Flora operates as an autonomous, integral national. As the 'gentle guest' (p.88) of Lady Clanronald, on the island of South Uist where Prince Charles is in hiding, Flora could be interpreted as residing in a domestic arena, where women '[m]idst war's rude clamours here in safety rest '(p.88). Indeed, Lord Clanronald's absence places his wife in an awkward position; a footnote states that 'she wished not to intermeddle, [but] shrunk from the idea of [Prince Charles] being apprehended on her domain' (p.130, nn.32). The subsequent reference to Flora in the footnote operates as a means to convey credibility upon the historical veracity of the text, but also possibly reveals an anxiety about the readers' response to the portrayal of Flora:

> [i]n this dilemma [Lady Clanronald] was relieved by the calm resolution of Miss FLORA MACDONALD, then her guest; who undertook, of herself, and by herself, to supply him with food, and convey him off the island, which was done precisely as narrated in the poem (p.131, nn.32).

Couched in heroic terms, it is the autonomous nature of Flora's actions that are a focus, rendering a domestic interpretation inappropriate. Grant's narrative offers the clearest example of the alternative possibilities available through a focus upon war rather than separate gendered spheres. Following her eventual capture, a confrontation with Flora prompts King George II to think upon

> how often civil strife
> Drags blameless victims from the shades of life,
> And with blind rage, unknowing to relent,
> Involves the guilty and the innocent (p.97).

This passage functions as an insight into the workings of the mind of a just king, and justifies his subsequent acquittal of Flora; yet, it is also an astute description of the nature of conflict. With a centripetal force, war has come to the place in which Flora resides, and although conventionally seen as a domestic sphere, her subsequent actions may be interpreted as a move other than a conscious step into an alternative sphere. The war, embodied by Prince Charles, has randomly swept into her locality, dragging Flora into a chain of events that offer her the opportunity for acts of heroism.

In keeping with Grant's national vision, these acts are facilitated by Flora's Highland character. She is initially described as her friend's trusted confidante,

> Who mildly wise, and firm in artless truth
> With prudent mind, mature in early youth,
> Pois'd with reflection calm the dubious scale,
> And felt compassion's sinking weight prevail' (p.89).

The reference to compassion echoes Grant's evocation to

> raise, without disguise or art,
> The British song, and touch the British heart.
> To scenes of heartfelt sorrow turn your eye,
> Unlock the sacred source of sympathy;
> Nor let to Afric's wilds Compassion roam,
> While modest Anguish weeps unseen at home (p.29).

Grant appeals to an honest, truthful, pellucid British national identity, and in particular, to the trait of sympathy, that sacred source which it is implied may be found in all Britons, pre-dating the four kingdoms. The sentiment of heartfelt truthfulness is repeated throughout the narrative, and the notion of 'the native soul devoid of art' (p.24) is redolent in this description of Flora.

Thus, rather than being portrayed as an act of female transgression, her subsequent statement of intent is prefaced with the notion that she is loyal and wise, and has given due consideration to her proposed actions. The notion that compassion should be a 'sinking weight' conveys the idea that her empathetic response to the Prince's plight, which has been carefully thought out and thus is right, has stirred a heroic sense of duty.

Her course of action may not be pleasant, but it is the right, and more important, the only thing for her to do. Thus,

With fix'd resolve she said, "My friend, forbear,
"Nor thus perplex thy mind with fruitless care;
"Thy Lord in peace obeys the ruling pow'rs,
"Then, while this storm of fate impending lours,
"From base imputed treason keep him free,
"Who hopes his peace and honour safe with thee,
"Nor dread of guiltless blood the sanguine stain;
"I'll seek the EXILE's cavern by the main, -
"If in his cause I should my life resign,
"The guilt or danger shall be only mine" (p.90).

The conflict between Lady Clanronald's patriotic and conjugal duty is negotiated in this passage, which places the role of healing the corrupt order with women. The absent Lord Clanronald is not criticised for submitting to English rule, which implies that Flora is an advocate of peace. Rather, she is asking her friend to consider that in choosing her course of action, she chooses her husband's fate, as he will be held responsible for his wife's actions. An accusation of "base imputed treason" could result in his death. Flora is reminding Lady Clanronald to honour her husband, which could be interpreted as a different perspective upon the heroic ideal of honour. Lady Clanronald's heroic sense of personal honour will be maintained through the act of honouring her husband. Flora, on the other hand, is not married; as her heroic vow in the final couplet of this passage suggests, she does not have a family to consider.[61]

In making this oath, Flora is adhering to the notion of heroic sacrifice that is resonant throughout representations of male and female heroes. This sense of fatalism underpins the notion that all heroes are either dead or doomed to die, and Flora's fatalism fits into the heroic model that Elshtain dubs the 'Compassionate Warrior'.[62] Her preference for dying rather than killing is evident in her lack of criticism of the peaceful Lord Clanronald; also, the notion of resigning her life is non-aggressive. For Flora, Prince Charles is the rightful king of Scotland, thus the act of saving him also constitutes an act of preserving the hope for the restoration of correct and rightful rule. She is sacrificing

[61] The narrative is advocating familial duty, as we learn further on that she is engaged to her childhood sweetheart.
[62] Elshtain, p.205.

herself so that Prince Charles, the Scottish nation, and more importantly, Lord Clanronald may live.

Flora subverts gender expectations without cross-dressing like the Female Warrior. When Flora goes to Charles' aid she is described as possessing 'fortitude serene, / And tranquil courage in her modest mien' (p.90), terms which are resonant of the Highlanders and are also recognisably heroic. Furthermore, she 'obsequious[ly]' (p.90) bows to the Prince, asking him to 'grant [her] boon' and, like the champion of chivalric tales, 'trust [his] life' (90) to her. Such a request does not elicit the rebuttal of a transgression; rather the Prince views her with 'silent wonder' (p.90) and, addressing Flora as a 'Heroic maid' (p.90), submits to her 'fair faith' (p.91). The means by which Flora effects the escape is referred to briefly, but is deeply significant to the portrayal of a female heroism: '[i]n female garb the hapless youth array'd, / She leads disguis'd in semblance of a maid' (p.91). The occasion asks for Charles to be disguised, who is transformed into a 'hapless youth' (p.91), but it is significant that Flora asserts a female heroism without the need for the transvestism necessary for the construction of the Female Warrior. Rather, Flora is heroic precisely because of what could be called her female attributes. She approaches the English captain with 'specious wile' (p.91), or female cunning, and her 'suppliant beauty' (p.91) ensures that her request for passage is granted. Although her appearance briefly detracts the soldiers' attention away from her companion, who cannot disguise an 'air unsuited to a female face' (p.91), like the Female Warrior the masculine and feminine are conflated in the figure of 'th' intrepid maid' (p.91), Flora. Yet this remains a specifically female heroism; after she has succeeded in accompanying Charles to the Isle of Skye, an enraged King George II demands to know '[h]ow female stratagem, and female truth, / With guiltless art had sav'd the hapless youth' (p.93).

For Grant, Highland heroism is not solely a masculine domain. Like the Highland division of labour, which is defined by geography rather than gender, the communal culture enables individuals to fulfil roles suited to their abilities and their responsibilities to the greater good of the nation. As such, the tale does not end with Charles' escape but continues for '[t]he sequel of th' intrepid maiden's fate' (p.93), following Flora to London and her confrontation with the English king, allowing Highland simplicity to be

contrasted with the luxurious excess of the Londoners. The 'Character of the Mountaineers' defeats luxury:

> Now rumour talks of FLORA's charms around,
> Those artless charms, with matchless virtues crown'd
> And FLORA reigns the fashion of the hour (p.98).

Furthermore, the king – whose ignorance of the plight of his Scottish subjects is justified as he had been 'long misled by faction's treacherous art' (p.96) – is struck by Flora's 'chasten'd graces, and ingenuous air' (p.97) and, acknowledging that she is an innocent pawn in a larger political game, orders that the 'guileless maid' (p.97) be released. In effect, the Highland trait of honesty, loyalty, and simplicity places Flora on the side of right. Ultimately, Flora is a female hero who, in highlighting the theatrical nature of gender, successfully eludes its boundaries and restrictions.

Margaret Holford, Jane Porter, and Anne Grant each employed the figure of the Highlander in their representation of the manner in which Scotland, England, and Britain related to each other. The disparate nature of their national visions demonstrate the malleability of national signs such as the Highlander which, in turn, reflects the intangibility of national identity itself. Heroism was a predominately masculine trait, yet each of the authors exploited the plurality inherent in discourses of nation and heroism, and emphasised the theatrical nature of gendered divisions, in order to portray female patriotic roles in their narratives. For Holford, Porter, and Grant, the historical and mythical nature of William Wallace and Bonnie Prince Charlie renders the figures open to interpretation and manipulation, a narrative strategy which was not so readily available in portrayals of contemporary heroes and villains. The next chapter will explore how women who imbibed in the narrative construction of Horatio Nelson and Napoleon Bonaparte reconciled their female British national identity when faced with evidence of the person rather than the myth.

Chapter Three: A British Woman Abroad – Heroes and Villains?

During the years 1803 to 1815 vast numbers of people travelled around the globe, whether as combatants, as victims of the Napoleonic wars, or simply as travellers. For the individual confronted with other, sometimes hostile, nationalities, their own sense of national belonging was brought to the fore, along with the problems and inconsistencies of identity. As the authors examined in the previous chapters sought to represent their version of imagined British identities, so travellers attempted to construct coherent narratives of their imagined nation in letters, diaries, and in the popular genre of travel writing. Early nineteenth-century prose travelogues offer a glimpse of how British travellers perceived other nationalities, as well as how they were perceived themselves. Yet the transience of travel rendered their narratives unstable; frames of reference within which the individual constructed their identity were constantly changing, highlighting its intangibility. For the female traveller, physical and cultural boundaries which defined their gendered position also either moved or were apparently absent, so while travel complicated the portrayal of a coherent national identity, the absence of conventional boundaries was simultaneously unsettling and liberating.

Many travellers assuaged the anxiety caused by encountering the incomprehensible by drawing upon existing frames of reference, 'assimilating their new experiences to comfortable systems of belief.'[1] Elizabeth Bohls argues that, for the eighteenth-century British traveller, one of these systems was the language of landscape aesthetics. Furthermore, as the 'canonical texts' of aesthetics formed part of the curriculum of female accomplishments, 'the lexicon of landscape aesthetics found a plausible place in women's travel writing and novels'.[2] Thus, as Bohls argues, in imitating 'a counter-tradition of aesthetic thought', female authors both appropriated the language of aesthetics while challenging its founding assumptions.[3] That these narratives engaged with ideas of the nation along with aesthetics is clear from the canonical texts, for example, Joseph Addison's 'Mr. Spectator' had sought to construct a national readership.

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[1] Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.18.
[2] Bohls, p.2, p.6.
[3] Bohls, p.22.

As Amanda Gilroy states, Bohls 'turns her gaze to the peripheries of Romanticism in terms of gender and genre ... demonstrat[ing] how crucial the margins are to any definition of the centre', yet the argument of *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics* rests upon a binary opposition of masculine and feminine aesthetic language, which is rendered implausible by the plurality of identity.[4] In her book, *British Travel Writers in Europe 1750-1800*, Katherine Turner asserts that travel writing was 'the most consistently popular genre of the eighteenth century', a genre that also 'often presents a challenge to the discourse of national unity'.[5] Turner's main argument is that, by incorporating amateur as well as professional writers, and enabling them to 'address a reading public', the genre 'endorses broader intervention in public affairs, albeit on the level of textual rather than legislative activity'.[6] Authors from a variety of political positions, admittedly contained within the middling class, were able to express their differing notions regarding national identity. As Turner states, travel narratives play a

> crucial role in developing notions of British identity [or identi*ties*] – notions more protean and unexpected than the monolithic sense of Britishness which is too often assumed to characterise national identity during these formative and energetic years.[7]

As this chapter will demonstrate, not only did the narratives of female travellers draw upon familiar discourses, but they also contained evidence of the heterogeneity of individual national identities.

Melesina Trench and Jane Penrose, two women who journeyed to Europe during the Napoleonic wars, each drew upon familiar narratives in order to present their different perceptions of British national identity. As an aristocratic woman travelling between Ireland, France, and southern England, Trench embraced the opportunity for self-definition, redefining her national identity as her location altered but also falling back upon her original imagined Irish identity during times of extreme emotional stress. Penrose also drew upon a familiar frame of reference in order to maintain a sense of belonging; the daughter of a Rear Admiral, her imagined British identity was inextricably

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[4] Amanda Gilroy, 'Review of *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818*', *Wordsworth Circle*, 28:4 (Autumn 1997), pp.216-219 (p.216).
[5] Katherine Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe 1750-1800* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), p.10.
[6] Turner, p.87.
[7] Turner, p.242.

linked to representations of Jack Tar and the Royal Navy. The national narratives which these women constructed – Trench, in her memoirs and correspondence, and Penrose, in her prose travelogue – heightens awareness of individual heterogeneity, highlighting that the experience of travel repeatedly forced these women to question their national identity – consciously or unconsciously – nowhere more so than when faced with the national hero and villain, Horatio Nelson and Napoleon Bonaparte.

As Jane Porter and Margaret Holford's portrayals of William Wallace demonstrated, the figure of the hero may be employed in order to represent an author's imagined ideal nation, contributing to and reinforcing the mythical nature of their chosen subject. Yet, in the case of contemporary figures, travel increased the possibility of encountering the corporeal hero who, replete with human fallibility, may not measure up to their mythic construction. Thus, the degree to which these figures both defy identification and are manipulated to suit different agendas is highlighted. Trench's encounter with Nelson and Penrose's visit to Napoleon's home on Elba offer alternative accounts of these men which, in subverting their heroic or villainous mythical constructions, render the authors' national narratives increasingly unstable, thereby calling for a conscious reconciliation which simultaneously attempts to preserve coherence while acknowledging its impossibility.

3:1 'Interesting to us as Naval People': Jane Penrose's *Voyages in the Mediterranean*

Jane Penrose was the third daughter of Elizabeth Trevenen and Admiral Sir Charles Vinicombe Penrose who, toward the end of his career, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet. Concerned that a long separation would be detrimental to Elizabeth Penrose's fragile nerves, Sir Charles decided that his family should accompany him upon his tour of duty. Jane Penrose recorded the events of the voyage in a number of journals, including the voluminous retrospective account, *Voyages in the Mediterranean, from 1814-1819*, which recounts the Penrose family's travels aboard the HMS *Queen*, an extended stay on Malta, followed by journeys to the Ionian Islands and Rome, before their return to Plymouth aboard the HMS *Albion*. A previous reader

describes the manuscript travel narrative as 'of no naval interest' and it is true that Penrose did not offer a detailed account of life aboard ship, yet her narratives are significant when placed in an historical context. Penrose recorded day-to-day experiences that occurred in a period during which Napoleon escaped from Elba and ruled for one hundred days, before his defeat at Waterloo; furthermore, they offer an insight into how Penrose perceived British national identity in the context of the Royal Navy. Drawing upon contemporary constructions of the British sailor complicated the *Voyages* account of an imagined national identity as, in a similar manner to figures such as William Wallace, representations of Jack Tar were multivalent.

Early nineteenth-century Britons were familiar with the analogy of a ship as a microcosm of the state and national identity was increasingly linked with the figure of the sailor, particularly following the great naval victories such as the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Jack Tar was a 'popular, pervasive national stereotype' whose appearance in all forms of art and literature reflected the manner in which he

> could register as a latent but potent ideological confirmation of a unified national identity and an essential British character, transcending local regional or class differences.[8]

Exploring the representation of the British sailor in the years immediately before the turn of the century, Geoff Quilley delineates the ''mythology' of the maritime nation', a model which also manifested in Penrose's *Voyages*:

> [s]imply put, this asserted the providentially-sanctioned destiny of Britain ... a political union after the 1707 Act of Union, to achieve military and commercial glory as a maritime nation. The ideological circle was completed by the idea that the civic and individual liberty created by commercial wealth would be enacted under the special balance of the English constitution; and, further, under the unique institution of the Anglican church: which brought the project back within the orbit of divine determination.[9]

Throughout the *Voyages*, Penrose drew upon the figure of the British sailor and Protestant Anglican Christianity in order to rationalise the incomprehensible and

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[8] Geoff Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny: the aesthetics of loyalty and the representation of the British sailor c.1789-1800', in *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793-1822*, ed. by Philip Shaw (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 80-109 (p.82).
[9] Quilley, p.81.

construct her imagined nation, yet in doing so, she had to negotiate the complexities surrounding these figures.

Conflicting portrayals of Jack Tar confirmed that he was a far from immutable figure. Following the 1797 Mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, the unquestioning loyalty of sailors and their perceived inability to mobilise around a political cause could no longer be taken for granted. Thus, in referring to a model of the British seafaring national identity, Quilley identifies a contradiction in eighteenth-century representations of the sailor, between his allegorical role, as the 'symbol of the nation ... and the material provider of the state's economic prosperity', and his corporeal 'labouring identity'. [10] Analysing pictorial portrayals of the sailor, Quilley argues that the representational instability of the figure lends itself to manipulation; indeed, the rationale for focusing upon 1799 rests in the argument that with the publication of his *Naval Sermons* in 1798, James Stanier Clarke projected an identity for the sailors which was 'quite new, and entirely at odds with the recent reality of their mutinous democratic demands, and with the conventional pejorative characterisation of the lower deck'.[11] This identity, as we shall see in Penrose's *Voyages*, was predicated on a religious observation of duty. Yet, the model of naval identity that emerges from the pages of Clarke and Penrose's narratives constitute only one of many potential accounts of Britishness; as each individual drew upon multiple discourses, so many seafaring identities manifested within the wooden walls of Georgian Britain.

Multiple accounts of a voyage could theoretically exist, from the official records – for example the various logs kept on board – to the diaries of the members of the ship's company, and the other passengers. Accounts often differed in their methods, leading to a selective choice of what information to include; for example, neither the Admiral's, Captain's, or Ship's Logs for the vessels that the Penrose family travelled on has any reference to the female passengers. In their account of the voyage, the women do not exist. Recent research has negated the myth that women did not go to sea, yet if only one account of naval life – for example, the Ship's Log – were to be read, female absence

[10] Quilley, p.84, p.82.
[11] Quilley, p.101.

would seem to be the norm.[12] Such a belief is reinforced by the naval predilection for allegorical representations of Britannia in which women were mythologised and deified, while 'real' women remained firmly on land.

The discrepancy between the *Voyages* and different accounts of the journey arise, in particular, in relation to the discipline of the crew. There is no mention of insubordination or corporal punishments, of which there must have been incidences that could not be hidden from the female passengers. The Captain of the vessel, with whom the women had frequent contact, was responsible for awarding punishments, always in the form of flogging. Admittedly, this was not a subject for the dinner table, yet Captain Coode, of the *Queen*, later married Penrose's elder sister, Elizabeth, suggesting that a close relationship existed, which possibly may have extended to a discussion of his duties. Whether or not this was the case is a subject of speculation; nevertheless, corporal punishment on ships was the subject of much debate, with flogging being denounced in Parliament. Floggings were far from occasional on many ships, and, although regulations stated that the captain was only allowed to award twelve lashes at any one time, in reality, sailors often received more.[13] In an extract of the diary of Robert Clarke – who was the captain of the marines on the *Swiftsure* – covering the short period from 1st to 21st of January 1815, there is frequent reference to attending punishments that were all 'deservedly received'. [14] It is intriguing that the recording of punishments on board the *Queen* and the *Albion* is sparse; indeed, a reading of the account offered by the Captain's and Ship's Log would suggest that no punishments occurred on board. However, the Captain's Log of the *Ister*, the ship that Rear-Admiral Penrose sailed in for Algiers, contains frequent record of corporal punishments – the majority of which were above the regulatory twelve lashes – for offences ranging from drunkenness and insolence, to neglect of duty.[15] The absence of acts of discipline from Penrose's *Voyages* is then likely to be deliberate on the part of the author, although there could be many reasons for their omission. For example, brutal flogging does not conform to the 'polite' subject matter

[12] See, for example, David Cordingly, *Heroines and Harlots: Women at Sea in the Great Age of Sail* (London: Pan, 2001).
[13] 'Discipline', in *Shipboard Life and Organisation, 1731-1815*, ed. by Brian Lavery (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p.375.
[14] Robert Clarke, 'Journal of Robert Clarke, HMS *Swiftsure*, 1815', in *Shipboard Life and Organisation, 1731-1815*, ed. by Brian Lavery (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp.465-477 (p.472).
[15] 'Captain's Log HMS *Ister*, 11.10.1813-7.9.1818', Admiralty Papers, National Archive, ADM 51/2512.

deemed appropriate for the female pen. Perhaps their inclusion would have necessitated the individuation of the sailors, contradicting her account of the voyage in which the different types of sailor function purely as a representation of what, for Penrose, are the ideal British traits.

Despite spending many months on board ship, Penrose did not form an acquaintance with the sailors; or, more specifically, she did not record such a relationship. While the women were living in close proximity to the crew throughout the voyage, some form of class and gender boundaries would have been enforced. The effect is that Penrose did not portray individuals, but offered the faceless, nameless, stereotypical figure of the British Tar. She recorded anecdotal accounts of particular individuals but, rather than portraying their idiosyncratic characteristics, each sailor stands for a different type of tar. Penrose delighted, for example, in a foreign messenger's exclamation that 'it was no wonder British Sailors fought so well since they were so cool and prepared in the moment of danger'.[16] This trait of imperturbable composure is reflected in Penrose's anecdote of a sailor who used his jacket as wadding for his gun, 'then recollecting himself, exclaimed that he had forgotten his tobacco box and knife which were in his pocket' (p.146). Penrose was championing the unflinching, down-to-earth stoicism of the British Tar, and it is clear that the intent of her depiction of the sailors tends towards propaganda rather than a factual representation. She mentioned the sailor who did not inform the ship's surgeon of his illness because 'he thought there was a chance of a battle, so ... did not like to complain' (p.137). A cursory reading of Clarke's diary offers much evidence of the propensity of sailors for complaining; 'disgusted and bored' with the passengers and the 'new-made captain', he grumbled about carving the roast and the drunken steward.[17] Furthermore, an awareness of the economics of the Navy in the early-nineteenth century indicates Penrose's manipulation of this event. Ship's pay was low, and prize money was highly sought after, as this was the means by which middle-class officers could acquire the material trappings of the upper class, while the sailors' share could save their families from starvation. Although many officers

[16] Jane Penrose, *Journal of Voyages in the Mediterranean, from 1814 to 1819*, Papers of the Penrose and Coode families, 1772 - c.1880, Admiralty Library, Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, 1988/500/47/1/2.3, p.124. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.
[17] Clarke, p.474, p.475, p.477.

achieved social mobility in this manner, according to Penrose Admiral Penrose was unlucky, and never benefited from prize money throughout his career.[18] Thus, when the Rear Admiral and his crew missed the successful battle at Algiers by a few days due to a lack of wind, there were upsetting financial implications. Yet Penrose used this incident as another example of British stoicism and dedication to duty:

> those who know British Sailors may judge what was felt on board the Ister at having by so short a period of time, by a few days contrary wind – been excluded from an action of such peril and gallantry. Yet it appears that personal regrets were in a great measure overpowered by patriotic exultation, and that the exclamation of the Admiral was, "It has been a glorious day for England!" (p.144)

Penrose effusively interpreted the sailors' reactions as a wish to fulfil their duty in battle, whereas the Captain's Log merely stated 'Calm and cloudy'.[19] Her attempt to narrate the stoicism of the British by telling stories about the sailors reduced the individuals to types, and thereby created the illusion of homogeneity. Yet, as we have seen, Penrose's narrative was undermined by alternative naval accounts and the representational instability of the British sailor, which also highlights the complexity of her representation of the religious devotion of the ship's company.

On 9th October 1814, having sailed from Plymouth on 7th October, the weather was fine enough for Divine Service to be held on the quarter deck. Noting the occasion in her working journal, Penrose was obviously impressed as, rather than condensing the scene, she includes and elaborates upon it in her *Voyages*:

> [t]he order and attention which prevails on board, not a sound but of joining in the liturgy from the congregation and the necessary service of the ship carried on in silence, renders the scene so gratifying and impressive, that I never felt the want of a church on board, but used to think, while we thus sounded the praises of God in our passage over the trackless deep that we were fulfilling the words of Te Deum, "Thy holy Church throughout the world doth acknowledge Thee" (p.1).

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[18] Jane Penrose, 'Preface', in *Memoir of Penrose*, The Papers of the Penrose and Coode families, 1772 - c.1880, Admiralty Library, Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, 1988/500, p.17. The qualification of this statement is particularly significant; as an Admiral, it seems highly unlikely that Penrose's father did not receive any prize money. Whether she was repeating the Admiral's account, or consciously manipulating the facts, this statement highlights the constructed nature of the Penrose Memoir. It is a story of Admiral Penrose's career, and yet another alternative account of life on board the ships in which he served.

[19] '26.7.1816', in *Captain's Log, HMS* Ister, *11.10.1813-7.9.1818*, Admiralty Papers, National Archive, ADM 51/2512.

For the devout Penrose, the key attributes of a religious service are order and attention, which is something that she found among the Protestant Britons on board the British ships, and which accords with James Stanier Clarke's representation of the sailor. Yet the *Articles of War* of 1749, the legal statutes in force on the ships of George III's navy, present a different interpretation of the British sailors' apparent devotion. An entry in Robert Clarke's diary reads, 'Sunday forenoon, beat to divisions and heard the articles of war most unintelligently read to the crew by the man with the belly-ache', suggesting that reciting the *Articles* to the crew was a commonplace occurrence, deterring would-be troublemakers.[20] The first statute related to 'Publick Worship to be performed', and ordered that:

> [a]ll Commanders, Captains, and Officers ... shall cause the publick Worship of Almighty God, according to the Liturgy of the Church of England established by Law, to be solemnly, orderly, and reverently performed in their respective Ships ... and that the Lord's Day be observed according to Law.[21]

Thus, rather than exhibiting the British trait of religious devotion that Penrose perceived, it is far more likely that the sailors' attention was kept by the threat of corporal punishment (although that is not to discount that many sailors were Christians). Yet again, Penrose's attempt to assert a homogenous British identity is countered by an alternative account as the apparently unifying experience of attending Divine Service potentially elicited different responses from each individual in attendance.

Penrose's travels repeatedly placed her in contact with Roman Catholics, whom she perceived as the religious 'Other'. Her ideas regarding religion follow a progression from a want of devotion, which she habitually identified among the Roman Catholics, to a lack of morals, which was manifested in the dress of the inhabitants. In contrast to the order of English Divine Service, the Catholic Church was described in terms of noise and disorder. The scene at an audience with the pope was 'in the highest degree indecorous and melancholy' and 'there was not the least pretence at devotion' (p.272). Wondering 'what it would be to see them united in prayer or joining their voices in praise of their God and Saviour', Penrose 'felt relieved when the show was over' (p.272) and they could

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[20] Clarke, p.465.

[21] N.A.M. Rodger, *Articles of War: The Statutes Which Governed Our Fighting Navies 1661, 1749 and 1886* (Havant: Kenneth Mason, 1982), p.22.

leave. In contrast to the union of the voices aboard the *Queen*, Penrose interpreted the disorder apparent in the Vatican as a lack of devotion, a deficiency that she identified in every service that she attended. Thus, when 'fatigued' (p.17) by the repetitive nature of the religious processions, Penrose made a typically disparaging comment:

> [w]e are so accustomed to hear of "the enlightened age" and of the decline of superstition, that I felt surprised to see the reverence paid here to miscellanies, pictures and processions; and indulgences advertised at any church door. That the reign of superstition produced the effect that might be expected on their moral character seemed evident from the frequent stabbings we heard of (many of them attended with aggravated circumstances) and the little sensation they produced (p.23).

Devoid of the religious devotion that produced laudable traits in the British, for Penrose, practising Roman Catholics were deemed immoral. As the Catholic apparent want of devotion transposed into a lack of morals, so the value judgements that Penrose passed upon the foreigners whose dress she described were, for her, linked to their moral character. Thus, the apparel of the female Palermans 'might be a becoming dress but that they were dirty and untidy, and both men and women in the town had a way of sauntering about as if they had nothing to do' (p.24). Penrose's train of thought moved from the dirtiness of the Palerman women to a lack of industry; she deemed their uncleanliness a physical manifestation of what she perceived as indolence. Thus, with their 'neat uniformity of dress' (p.60), the English attained a moral superiority, which had its foundations in their industrious attention to duty, religion, and their stoicism.

However, Penrose's narrative undermined her attempt to portray a monolithic Roman Catholic religion. In an annotation appended to the end of her *Voyages*, Penrose commented upon 'when it was that their churches appeared to advantage':

> [b]eing always open, those who appeared poor, or afflicted, or animated by a devotional feeling would frequently come in, & kneeling with their faces towards the altar, or prostrating themselves before it, often seems to pour out their spirit in prayers (p.311)

Penrose argued that preaching in Latin was an impediment to these devout worshippers who, undistracted by movement around the church, 'cannot add his "Amen"' (p.311), and she stressed that she had 'always seen the congregation very attentive during the sermon which is always in the vulgar tongue' (p.311). This one short passage clarifies that

throughout the narrative of her *Voyages* Penrose was actually only critical of middle- and upper-class Catholics, and thereby undermines her attempt to offer a homogenous religious view with the notion that there are many differing versions of Catholicism. By extension, there are alternative accounts of the model of British national identity that she offers which, if overlooked, would render Penrose's assertion of a singular national identity successful. As the authors of the travel narratives that Turner examined offered varying portrayals of their national identity, so the experience of travel itself repeatedly surfaces in Penrose's narrative as contradictory moments, which render implausible her imagined homogenous British national identity. In drawing upon a familiar narrative, Penrose sought the comfort of coherence which, at times, proves invaluable to an individual, like Melesina Trench, who embraces the heterogeneity of national identity.

3:2 'She does not know if I am French, or Italian, or English': *The Recollections of Melesina Trench*

Melesina Chenevix St. George Trench is known to the twenty-first century reader predominately as the widowed Mrs. St. George who recorded some rather catty remarks about Horatio Nelson and his lover, Lady Emma Hamilton, when she met them in Dresden in October 1800. Her unfinished memoir, *The Recollections of Melesina Trench with Extracts from her Diary and Correspondence*, was published posthumously in 1862 as *The Remains of the late Mrs. Richard Trench, Being Selections from her Journals, Letters, and Other Papers* by her son, and it is from here that the biographers of Nelson and Emma Hamilton have drawn this tale. As always, when an anecdote is taken out of context, the subject is misrepresented and, while this section explores the manner in which Trench attempts to construct a narrative of her national identity – even as it is undermined by her conscious shifts between identities – it also seeks to rehabilitate, or at the very least, begin to understand Melesina Trench.

From the outset, it is clear that the narrative of the *Recollections* is highly polished and, although not published in the author's lifetime, intended for public

perusal.[22] Trench emerges from the pages of her memoir and correspondence as an erudite woman, au fait with the literary world, politically aware, and willing to express her opinions about national events. Writing to her second husband, Richard Trench, on 18th September 1808, she referred to the controversial Convention of Cintra as 'melancholy and disgraceful', and predicted that the consequence of this 'national humiliation' would be a 'triumph' in France.[23] Employing a third-person narrator, Trench used many tropes familiar to the reader of sentimental novels in the *Recollections*; she recounted the moment – somewhere between the age of four and twelve – when she 'felt a strong emotion of surprise on finding that a book could command those tears she thought only excited by the actual pain or misfortune, of ourselves or others'.[24] This epiphany led to a 'respect' for those 'intellectual powers, which give us an artificial existence after we have mouldered into dust, & enable a thought to survive an empire' (p.10) and, bereft of a guide to the 'proper line of study' (p.33), a 'voracious and indiscriminate appetite' (p.33) for novel-reading. Although it is questionable whether a child would be contemplating the constructed nature of identity within narrative, the elder, retrospective Trench was clearly thinking in these terms.

Apart from a period of ten years when she was unusually silent, Trench was a prolific letter-writer, corresponding with her cousin, Sarah (Sal) Chenevix Tuite and later her second husband, Richard Trench, throughout her protracted travels. Living a transient aristocratic life, Trench travelled to Germany between 1799 and 1802, during which time she met Nelson and his entourage in Dresden, then, after a short stay in London, travelled to France, where she would remain with her imprisoned husband until 1807, when she

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[22] Trench issued *Mary Queen of Scots, an Historical Ballad, and Other Poems* privately, and published two poems, *Campaspe, an Historical Tale, and other Poems* (1815) and *Laura's Dream, or, The Moonlanders* (1816), during her lifetime. Her *Thoughts of a Parent on Education, by the Late Mrs Trench* (1837) were also published posthumously by her son, Richard Chenevix Trench. Thomas Seccombe, 'Trench, Melesina (1768-1827)', rev. Rebecca Mills, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27700, (date accessed 21.7.05), p.2.

[23] Letter to Richard Trench, 18.9.1808, Austen-Leigh Archive, Hampshire Record Office, 23M93/28/75. Following British victory at Vimiero (21.8.1808), the French and the British signed an armistice at Cintra, in Portugal, the terms of which included the evacuation of French troops, arms, and equipment in British vessels to western France. Controversy ensued in London, where 'it was felt that the French had avenged military defeat by a diplomatic triumph'. The British generals, including Arthur Wellesley, were court-martialled but the Convention received a grudging retrospective approval. Alan Palmer, *An Encyclopaedia of Napoleon's Europe* (London: Constable & Co., 1998), p.83.

[24] Melesina Trench, 'Manuscript of "The Recollections of Melesina Trench with Extracts from her Diary and Correspondence"', A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/2/1, p.9-10. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

returned to her native Dublin. The majority of 1808 was spent moving between the Irish and English capitals, and the fashionable resorts of Bath, Bognor, and Chichester. During the final years of the war, Trench increasingly resided in Southampton and Bath, avoiding any visits to Ireland altogether. Moving between localities, both national and international, resulted in a constant negotiation of her national identity; indeed, Trench appeared to be consciously embracing the disparate nature of national identity brought to the fore by her travels. While the narrative that she constructed in her memoir and correspondence reflects the plurality that is central to Turner's argument, there is also evidence of the comforting systems of belief referred to by Bohls in Trench's imagined nation, particularly at moments of heightened emotional stress.

Adhering to the conventions of a sentimental orphan narrative, the opening chapters of the *Recollections* describe Trench's birth, in Dublin on 22nd March 1768, and her early years. Her father, the Reverend Philip Chenevix, was the son of Richard Chenevix, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, while her mother, Mary Elizabeth Gervais, was the daughter of Henry Gervais, the Archdeacon of Emly. Trench's parents died within a few months of each other when she was three years old, and her paternal grandfather raised her, until his death in 1779, when her maternal grandfather became her guardian. In this narrative, Trench asserted her imagined version of a Protestant Anglo-Irish identity, condemning Lord Chesterfield, a friend of her paternal grandfather, for his treatment of the 'national character of the Irish' in his 'Letters to his Son' (p.5). This is complicated, however, by her French Huguenot identity; taking pride in the romantic history of her persecuted ancestors, Trench constructed a narrative in which the French Chenevixes, 'preferring exile and poverty to a sacrifice of their religious principles' (p.12), fled religious persecution following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Her great-grandfather, 'inherited their sentiments, and was killed at the Battle of the Boyne, fighting on the side of King William' (p.12), thus validating what could be perceived as the French taint to her Huguenot lineage within her imagined Irish identity.[25]

For Trench – indeed, for any individual resident in Ireland in the early nineteenth-century – her sense of Irishness was riven with complexity. As a Chenevix, she was a

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[25] A family tree at the Hampshire Record Office suggests that her great-grandfather, a Major in the 2nd Carabineers, died at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704, and that her great-grandmother's parents were naturalised on 23rd March 1697.

member of the Protestant 'Ascendancy', the 'colonial ruling elite in close proximity to the mother country', and a class whose relationship to Irish nationalism was in constant flux; a situation that was exacerbated, in 1800, by the Act of Union.[26] In an article exploring the changing perceptions of national identity among the Protestant Ascendancy in the first half of the eighteenth century, David Hayton asks why Irish Protestants did not employ Britishness as 'an intellectual and semantic escape-route from dilemmas over national allegiance'.[27] Suggesting that the Anglo-Irish were precluded from this identity due to the presence of the 'British interest' in Ulster, the Presbyterian Scots, Hayton argues that, despite changing allegiances, 'there were important ways in which Anglo-Irish patriotism did represent a more distinctive sense of national identity.'[28] Throughout the eighteenth century – and, arguably, since Cromwell's conquest of Ireland in the seventeenth century – the Irish nation had been highly contested.[29] In such moments of heightened national anxiety and vulnerability, the inherent instability of individual identity disrupts national narratives; in other words, the apparently fickle national allegiance of the Anglo-Irish Protestants was merely the manifestation of the process of national identification. Theoretically, therefore, an individual had access to both British and Irish identities.

Yet, the relationship between Irishness and Britishness has been an enduring dilemma for historians of Britain; Linda Colley omits the Irish altogether from her study of the forging of the nation due, she argues, to the inassimilable ambiguity of their loyalties to religion and empire.[30] In response, Thomas Bartlett offers a balanced consideration of the reasons why Britishness was, and was not, available to the Irish. However, he reaches a similar conclusion to Colley, arguing that the union failed because 'the Irish were never quite accepted as being truly British'.[31] Yet, in reaching this conclusion, Bartlett ignores the strength of his own argument for successful Irish

[26] David Hayton, 'Anglo-Irish Attitudes: Changing Perceptions of National Identity Among the Protestant Ascendancy, c.1690-1750', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 17 (1987), pp.145-157 (p.145).
[27] Hayton, p.151.
[28] Hayton, p.151, p.153.
[29] Alvin Jackson suggests that the debate surrounding the union began in the 1650s, when Cromwell created a 'constitutional union between England and Ireland'. See Alvin Jackson, 'The Irish Act of Union', *History Today*, January 2001, pp.19-25 (p.19).
[30] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London: Vintage, 1992; 1996), p.8.
[31] Thomas Bartlett, 'Britishness, Irishness and the Act of Union', in *Acts of Union*, ed. by D. Keogh & K. Whelan (Dublin: Four Courts, 2001), pp.243-258 (p.258).

assimilation – and increased prominence and prosperity – within both the United Kingdom and the British Empire. 'If the hateful Scots could be accepted as British, why not the amusing Irish?' he asks, and argues that the critical consensus reached regarding the inassimilable nature of the Irish has concealed the 'increasing 'Britishness' of Irish life around the time of the union'.[32] As various critics – including Bartlett – have argued, 'the concept of Britishness could embrace contrarieties'; indeed, rather than the negotiation between two identities that is implicit in Bartlett's reference to their 'frequently overlapping and contingent' nature, the Anglo-Irish drew upon a range of British identities.[33] As a closer examination of Trench's correspondence evinces, Britishness was only one of many identities available within an individual's frame of reference. For Trench, the malleability of national identity was brought into sharp focus while she was residing in France.

Prior to her journey across the Channel in 1802, Trench appears to have been influenced by general opinion of the French; her French governess was criticised for entertaining 'the contempt peculiar to that nation, particularly in its middle classes, for every other country' (p.24) and, in a letter to Sal Tuite written immediately before her departure for Calais, she mused on French inconstancy: '[h]ow amusing to see how people change – how pleasant when as in the french [sic] instance, they change from their opinion to yours.'[34] Once in Paris, her criticisms continued; not only is the winter weather 'as unsuitable ... as it is pleasant in Summer & Autumn', but Paris 'is also expensive beyond calculation'.[35] The brief cessation of conflict signalled by the signing of the Treaty of Amiens on 25th March 1802 prompted an influx of people who had been curtailed from visiting the centre of fashion by the events of the war and, when Trench arrived in Paris in August of 1802, there were many English in residence who socialised uneasily with the French. For Trench, the fluidity of the relationship between her sense of Englishness and Irishness was both highlighted and problematised by their relationship to the French. In February 1803, Lady Yarmouth hosted a ball which the members of the *ancien regime* criticised for being 'horriblement laide' (awfully ugly), and Trench

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[32] Bartlett, p.256.
[33] Bartlett, p.258.
[34] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 28.7.1802, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/108.
[35] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 19.1.1803, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/113.

concurred that the 'Ball was by no means so magnifique as was expected'. Recounting the episode to Sal, Trench commented:

> [i]n general, whatever the English do, is severely criticised. We are well received but we are not popular – nor is it possible, the two characters should ever coalesce.[36]

The inability of the English and the French to "coalesce" is commented upon many times during her stay in France and, consequently, Trench portrays an insular expatriate English society. In referring to "the English", Trench appears to distance herself from that national identity, clearly preferring on many occasions to identify with the fashionable French. However, when placed in the situation where one identity is perceived to be attacking the other, Trench clearly felt that her allegiance lay with the English, including herself within that identity. On other occasions, Trench referred to the society in which she moves as 'Anglo-Parisians' and 'Anglo-French', implying that she has constructed an identity for herself which reconciles the disparate, and warring, national loyalties.[37]

Moving between identities, Trench was able to maintain a coherent narrative of national belonging in the face of constant change and uncertainty which, at times, took an immense effort, for example, when she tried to obtain a passport for her husband. Trench met her second husband, Richard Trench, the sixth son of an Irish land-owning family also of Huguenot descent, in April 1803.[38] The swiftness of their union is evident in the manner in which she broke the news to her cousin, amid assurances that the 'interest' of her son by her first marriage to Colonel Richard St. George, Charles, had 'not been forgotten':

> [b]etween friends like us, on certain subjects, all remark, comment, or phraseology, are impossible – Your Mel is married to Mr Trench – Her not talking of it to you before was be assured, no way inconsistent with her grateful & warm affection, for one who loves her as you do.[39]

When war resumed between Britain and France a month later, all male Britons resident in France, including Richard Trench, became prisoners-of-war and were placed under house arrest. To begin with, British women were 'at liberty', however, as time passed, their

[36] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 20.2.1803, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/115.
[37] Letter to Richard Trench, 1805?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/20, 23M93/28/28.
[38] Seccombe, p.1.
[39] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 3.4.1803, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/117.

movements became increasingly curtailed, and much of Trench's correspondence with Sal Tuite became preoccupied with her attempts to obtain a passport for her husband.[40] A passport highlights the complexity of nationality; acting as an apparent means to pin an individual to a monolithic identity, it is physical evidence of the impulse to construct a coherent narrative of national belonging, or rather the need of society to define an individual. Despite her construction elsewhere of Irish and Anglo-French identities, Trench refers to her husband and herself as English throughout this situation. Perhaps Trench believed that the French authorities defined them as English; indeed, as Paul Langford argues, for Europeans – including the French – British and English were synonymous terms.[41] In previous encounters, Trench had clearly identified with the English expatriate women as members of a fellow regional British identity at war with the French; however, in identifying herself in this manner, Trench also adhered to the Protestant Anglo-Irish tendency to view themselves as English, increasingly so after the Union. Certainly, this is a moment where the convergence of her national and gendered identities is a source of anxiety.

From the moment that Richard was arrested, Trench's correspondence was concerned with the possibility of his exchange for a French prisoner, and her relative freedom was a cause of consternation as she was torn between her maternal role, travelling to the best locations for her son, and her yearning to stay with her husband to avoid their enforced separation:

> I have been placed on this occasion, in that conflict of opposite feelings, and irreconcilable duties which seldom occurs in real life, & whichever plan I had followed must have submitted to blame, some will say, I ought at all hazards, to return & see my Son, others, that I do very wrong in leaving my husband. I am so little wedded to the part I have taken, in opinion, that I am by no means sure, it is the best - [42]

For Trench, the war had created an extraordinary situation, one of the results of which was an alteration of the boundaries by which proper feminine behaviour was measured. Torn between the demands of her son and her husband, she was aware that whatever her choice, as far as appearances were concerned, she could not do right. Although her

[40] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 8.6.1803, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/120.
[41] Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.12.
[42] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 15.4.1804, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/124.

narrative of their residence in Paris is primarily contained within letters, Trench's concern with appearances – which permeates her account of the actions she took to acquire a passport for her husband – implies that she expected the audience of her letters to extend beyond the privacy of the addressee.

Hearing of the possibility of seeking assistance, in the first instance, from General Berthier, Trench wrote from Paris to Richard, held at Orleans:

> I am sure you do not doubt but that I shall have courage to do it if necessary, & that you do not blame me for wishing to avoid it if possible. I know that by avoiding it as long as I can, I am by so many days more, absent from you, and perhaps this is a greater effort of courage then going to solicit would be - & perhaps it is not so precisely from want of resolution I put it off, as from a vague feeling, that a woman should not solicit men in person, except dans le dernier resort, & quand tous les autres moyens sont epuisés.[43]

When all else did, indeed, fail, Trench overcame her uneasiness with the proper feminine course of action, and approached General Arty who, she had been told, 'writes on the backs of all the petitions such judgements as decide the first Consul, when he has no reasons to the Contrary.'[44] Stating that she was following her husband's advice 'to speak', Trench described her visit to the General in terms of trepidation, in a carefully constructed narrative.[45] As she walked up the stairs, her thoughts 'would fill a page', but the questions Trench airs are primarily concerned with decorum: 'Will he think me very forward? Shall I be too much embarrassed to speak?'[46] Imagining that a scene of moral dissipation will greet her, Trench was pleasantly surprised to see respectable people waiting in the hall and, after a promising interview with Arty, applauded the 'civility & appearance of interest' with which she was greeted.[47] She concluded her account with a conscious reconciliation of her anxiety regarding her decorous appearance:

[43] Letter to Richard Trench, 15.4.1804, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/2.
[44] Letter to Richard Trench, April 1804?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/6.
[45] Letter to Richard Trench, 1804?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/14. It has been commonly held that Trench solicited Napoleon in person; I believe this is a misinterpretation (perhaps deliberate on the part of her son) of a reference in the same letter to a Memorial that she wrote to someone addressed as B and Gen. B, and to the private whims of a B (whom Richard Austen-Leigh identified as Berthier). I believe the Memorial is addressed to General Berthier, whom she repeatedly suggests that she was going to approach, and the latter is to Bonaparte, who had the final say in these matters and who, as she mentions elsewhere, was subject to whims. At no point does she mention an audience with Napoleon; her interviewer was General Arty.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

> I trembled so in the beginning, I could hardly speak, but like all constitutionally timid, and morally courageous people, after the first instant, I was bold as a Lion –
> What a convenient distinction this is between constitutional and moral courage – [48]

Trench maintained proper female timid behaviour and reconciled what could be perceived as unfeminine behaviour by situating her actions within a moral frame of reference, thereby alluding to the notion that women are both the benchmark and the guardians of the nation's morals. That justification for her actions was no longer necessary is reflected in her disgruntlement with Richard's cousin, who intervened at a late stage in his release, and took the credit for the outcome.

Needless to say, the period during which Trench negotiated a passport for her husband was one of heightened emotional stress, exacerbated by the death in June 1806 of their son, Frederick, when Trench was eight months pregnant with their next son. Perhaps desperate for the security and comfort of familiarity, Trench increasingly identified with her imagined Irish identity. Following the birth of her son, she wrote a poignant letter to Sal in which she consciously aligned herself with an Irish rather than an English identity:

> I watch over him with anxious apprehension, & long to bring him home where the air is so much favourable to the children of ~~English~~ Irish parents, and where the skill of all concerned in bringing them up, or attending them in sickness, is so superior to what can be met in any other part of the world.[49]

Whereas Trench had identified with the English when the French attacked them, when under attack herself she found comfort in the camaraderie of her earliest constructed Irish identity, viewing Ireland as the ideal place for her to fulfil her most important task as a mother.

Trench was grief-stricken by the death of Frederick for many years and when another of her baby sons, Philip born in 1810, was ill she fervently expressed the wish that

> Buonaparte may have a sick child, as he must meet some punishment, either in this world, or the next, & I think the cry of an infant, whose pain one

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 25.8.1806, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/130.

> cannot know or assuage, would make him feel his want of power, tho' nothing else has done it.[50]

Once the Trenches returned to Britain, however, she developed an increasing antipathy toward Ireland, preferring to spend time in her 'favourite Country' on the south coast of England.[51] Although grateful that the 'strong nerves' required to live in Ireland had inured her to the 'fretful[ness]' of Englishwomen, Trench was scathing about the 'misery which our fellow creatures endure in this province of the British Empire' and informed Richard that she was 'afraid [he] will be sorry [she] prefer[s] England'.[52] Reverting to her chameleon-like approach to her national identity, Trench was exhilarated that a Mrs. Anstruther, whom she met during an extended visit to Southampton in 1810, 'does not know whether I am French, or Italian, or English' and, on a visit to Dublin in 1812, that her Irish acquaintances 'all seemed much dissatisfied with their present Abode and observed very pointedly, with a mixture of anger & Envy, that you & I had become quite English – had deserted Ireland &c &c –'.[53] Trench could be perceived as embracing an English identity – facilitated by the Act of Union in 1800 – however the manner in which she described Southampton reveals that she thrived upon the perceived utopian heterogeneity of the city: 'Southampton is a sort of Congress where people of all sorts, professions, and nations are unexpectedly discovered'.[54] With a childlike delight of discovery, for Trench, Southampton was a utopian location containing a milieu of class and national human interaction, the perfect abode for an individual with a propensity for embracing the heterogeneity of national identity.

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[50] Letter to Richard Trench, 5.12.1810, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1/C. Napoleon's son, Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles Bonaparte, was born in March 1811 to Napoleon's second wife, the Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria.

[51] Letter to Richard Trench, October 1800?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1.

[52] Letter to Richard Trench, 1809?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/103, Letter to Richard Trench, October 1800?, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1, Letter to Richard Trench, October 1807, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/39.

[53] Letter to Richard Trench, 30.12.1810, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1/C, Letter to Richard Trench, 14.2.1812, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1/D/3.

[54] Letter to Richard Trench, 7.12.1810, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/28/1/C.

3:3 'The difference ... this one man's movements made in every body's ideas': Jane Penrose's Heroes and Villains

The figure of the hero is not confined to works of fiction; as suggested at the beginning of Chapter Two, a hero is an aspirational ideal and every individual has a perception of an individual who has heroic or, equally, villainous qualities. The events of the Napoleonic wars created many heroes and villains, but the archetypal figures in the struggle between Britain and France were Horatio Nelson and Napoleon Bonaparte. As a comparison of different interpretations of a heroic figure demonstrates, while a hero appears to be a solid, monolithic, singular figure, they in fact operate as a multivalent sign, simultaneously representing a theoretically infinite number of national identities; a plasticity which authors exploited in the portrayal of their imagined nations. In the latter half of this chapter, the focus of the discussion will turn to the representation of heroes and villains in the national narratives of Trench and Penrose, with a particular focus upon their encounters with Napoleon and Nelson. Each of the authors attempted to construct a narrative of their respective heroes and villains, which – upon encountering evidence of the man rather than the myth – rendered the frame of reference of their respective naval and Anglo-Irish identities unstable. Under closer examination the portrayals of Nelson and Napoleon were inherently ambiguous, revealing the intangibility both of Britishness and Frenchness, but also of the national narratives of Trench and Penrose.

For Penrose, the fact that she encountered potentially hostile individuals at sea lent itself to an easy assimilation into her narrative of a British national identity founded upon the figure of the sailor. When Admiral Penrose and his family were invited aboard the flagship of the American Navy, the USS *Washington*, in Naples on 1st August 1817, Penrose had to assimilate a recent enemy into her national narrative. Up until 1814 the United States had been at war with Britain; indeed, Clarke's diary of 1815 contains reference to a successful American attack upon a British convoy.[55] Penrose assessed the officers and crew of the *Washington* using the same frame of reference that she employed in her descriptions of the British sailors. Impressed by the 'grand effect' of the quarter

[55] Clarke, p.470.

deck, and the 'formidable looking batteries' located on the main and lower decks, Penrose commented that the American sailors were

> well-dressed, and every thing looked clean and nice, particularly their mess tables each of which was furnished with two Bibles by the Government. The men could all read, I was told, and there was a Presbyterian Chaplain on board. As we put off her band struck up God Save the King (p.192-193).

In comparison to the Roman Catholics, whose want of devotion and lack of morals manifested in dirtiness and disorder, the Americans exhibited cleanliness, order, and religious practice. Perhaps a reading of the American *Articles of War* would question Penrose's perception of their apparent devotion; however, her description of the American sailors could be transposed for that of the British Tars. Admittedly, American national identity would prove problematic to Penrose, as, up until 1776, the United States were a British colony, whose inhabitants were British. Yet, Penrose was writing after years of war between the British and Americans, and her awareness of their status as a recent enemy shapes her response to an incident later that evening.

After the Penrose party had left the ship, as an act of respect the band from the *Washington* played 'God Save the King' and 'The Battle of the Nile' under the stern of the *Albion*:

> [w]hen we were in bed at ½ past 1 we were surprised by again hearing God Save the King, and concluded the band was returning, but on its being followed by a most animated "Rule Britannia" we started up and exclaimed that was going too far for American Musicians (p.193).

Their exclamation could be interpreted as an expression that American civility was 'going too far', but I would argue that Penrose initially felt that an American rendition of 'Rule Britannia', arguably the most popular of Britain's nationalistic and patriotic songs, was blasphemous. The British antipathy to foreigners singing 'Rule Britannia' is an oddity which occasionally surfaces in accounts of this period, and it subsequently became clear that the band was from one of 'their other ships', which was sent 'out of compliment to the British Admiral' (p.193). Regardless of the motivation for Penrose's annoyance, what is important is that the ship which had caused offence is not the *Washington*. Of the latter she stated:

> [n]othing indeed could have been more civil & attentive than we found our American Neighbours, and there was an openness & frankness about the Commodore which particularly attracted our regard (p.193).

By moving from generalisations to the level of the individual, Penrose was able to evade a recent history of enmity, and, in so doing, justified her approval of the Commodore, and, by extension, the similarity of the American sailors to the British Tars, with her approval of the individual's personal traits. Implying that there were some 'good' Americans, she highlighted the fluidity of national identity, which undermined her attempt at a monolithic model, as the presence of one 'good' American implies there are more. Yet she evaded political comment, a move that she did not make with regard to Murat who, as a contemporary enemy, could not be assimilated into her national vision.

Placed on the Neapolitan throne by his brother-in-law, Napoleon, Joachim Murat reigned as King of Naples from 1808 until 1815, when the usurped Ferdinand IV was restored by the Austro- British alliance; indeed, it was Admiral Penrose who escorted Ferdinand back to Naples (pp. 18, 76-78). Yet, as Penrose discovered, evidence of Murat's reign did not accord with her preconceived notions of a military occupation; she admiringly notes that he undertook an extensive road-building project, converted the Convent of San Martino into an asylum for invalid soldiers, a change which was 'left untouched by Ferdinand', and re-furnished the royal palace, to the approval of both Ferdinand and Penrose (pp.92, 96, 107). Thus, while he was the villain-at-large, causing a state of 'constant alarm' (p.130), Murat also exhibited laudable traits, and Penrose dealt with this contradiction through an engagement with Murat as an individual. Upon receiving news of his death, with a kind of admiration, she imagines him as a pawn in a grand villain's game:

> [n]ever did man risk the life of himself and his followers in a rasher scheme; it seemed indeed like madly throwing them away. – But we could not but feel deeply struck with this sudden and violent close of the life of a man, the traces of whose reign we had been so recently witnessing – his roads – his improvements – his accommodations for luxury – his spacious apartments – his Champs de Mars where he used so gracefully to view his troops. – He was a … Victim – a new instance of the close of Buonaparte's ambitious projects! (p.132).

Murat was shot on 13th October 1815, a death upon which Penrose pondered at length. She applauded the deceased, usurping king along lines that were in accord with her notion of the positive attributes of industry and duty, traits that she lauded in her version of British national identity. She felt an affinity of some kind with Murat, which lends to the elegiac tone of this passage. This tone was rendered particularly poignant by her suggestion that Murat's death formed part of a kind of 'collateral damage', one necessary death in the grander demise of the master villain and architect of the rash scheme to which Penrose refers, Napoleon. Thus her elegy for Murat was also a triumphant elegy for the fall of Napoleon, who had been defeated at Waterloo in the June of that year, and was now at St. Helena.

Whereas Penrose was able to negotiate the contradictions that she discovered in Murat through an engagement with the individual, she had set Napoleon up here, and elsewhere in her *Voyages* as the arch-villain, a literary trope that I have deliberately used, thereby precluding any engagement with the historical man on an individual level. The Mediterranean was littered with scattered landmarks of the decades of war with France; passing the Spanish coast, Penrose wrote:

> the hills, Towns, villages, monasteries, & Martello Towers were thickly sown – among others, Marbella, Malaga, and Svengirola, all with castles for their defence —you will think me perhaps a little extravagant in my admiration today, but I cannot help it –.[56]

The defensive constructions were sown, like thickly planted trees, along the Spanish coast. Penrose was insistent in noting sites associated with Nelson such as Trafalgar (p.2, p.28); taking a 'Nelson Tour', she excitedly commented that the *Queen* was 'pretty nearly following the track of our great Nelson & his fleet' (Working Journal, p.13). Inevitably, Penrose also saw evidence of Napoleon's presence in the Mediterranean, the sight of which contributed to her construction of the Emperor. The port from which Napoleon departed for Elba was 'an interesting object of contemplation', prompting Penrose to consider with what 'bitter feelings of regret must he have looked back on the beautiful France he had so long ruled!' (Working Journal, p.11). Likewise, when passing the

[56] Jane Penrose, 'Anonymous Brief Diary', Papers of the Penrose and Coode families, 1772-c.1880, Admiralty Library, Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, 1988/509/88(46), p.5. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text with the title 'Working Journal'.

military road that Napoleon built through the Alps for the purpose of the 'heroic' invasion of Italy, Penrose stated 'I do not envy the feelings I should suppose to have been his in taking a farewell look at it – if within sight, on his voyage to Elba' (Working Journal, p.12). Penrose made an assumption regarding the feelings of a man whom she did not know personally, on viewing a road that he may not have seen at a given moment; yet, at this point, she was shaping Napoleon as the romantic figure of the defeated villain in exile. By imaginatively narrating the exile of Napoleon, Penrose located him within a romantic plot, thus, his escape from Elba becomes figured as a twist of that plot, the dramatic tension of which was expected to be resolved.

That Penrose was able to situate Napoleon within a romantic narrative was testament to the ambiguity inherent in representations of the First Consul, whose indefinable nature was recognised by contemporary Britons. Napoleon's character was subject to repeated narrative construction and re-construction; many stories – both positive and negative – were told about the Emperor. As Stuart Semmel contends, as 'a creature of the historical moment', Napoleon became a 'tool' of the British imagination, 'put to uses he himself never contemplated.'[57] In *Napoleon and the British*, Semmel argues that Napoleon's perceived hybridity and resistance to definition 'raised questions about the stability of national identity'.[58] In response, the broadsides aimed to 'assert unity in the face of potential division' by issuing forth a 'self-supporting, if mutually contradictory, network of narratives'.[59] The perceived radical alteration of the French national character implied that the British character was also susceptible to change and Semmel argues that many Britons, particularly those of the loyalist camp, feared that 'all too many Britons might find Napoleon a sympathetic rather than frightening figure'.[60] Perceptions of Napoleon altered around 1814 and 1815, particularly when he survived the Battle of Waterloo, in direct contravention of the popular Napoleonic narrative in which the British, assisted by divine providence, defeated Napoleon in an 'historical and

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[57] Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), p.250.
[58] Semmel, p.6.
[59] Semmel, p.57, p.7.
[60] Semmel, p.44.

imaginative apocalypse'.[61] Furthermore, Semmel suggests, a counter-myth of Waterloo emerged, particularly after the Bourbon restoration, which re-figured the battle as the 'triumph of oppression over the people's will' and the site of the defeat of the 'liberties of Europe'.[62] In the subsequent interrogation of the monarchy, British radicals constructed Napoleon as a 'counter-monarch' and Semmel argues that, following his exile to St. Helena, the deposed Emperor was increasingly portrayed as a tragic Romantic figure.

Like all heroes and villains employed to portray national identities, it was Napoleon's inherent ambiguity that enabled Penrose to reconcile her encounter with the historical figure within her imagined national narrative. When news reached Penrose at Messina on 11th March 1815 of Napoleon's escape from Elba a few weeks earlier, contemplation of the imaginary First Consul enabled her to assimilate the events into her narrative:

> [t]o me who had only to sit by and look on, it was certainly a very curious scene to see the difference which this one man's movements made in every body's ideas. At once, from the quiets of a peace establishment, every thing was in motion – conferences were held among the principal officers, despatches were received and sent off, and measures taken that their place, which was divided by so narrow a strait from a country which might now again be that of an enemy, should be put in a state of defence. But it was not only curious, but a sad prospect to look forward again to scenes of war and bloodshed which we had fondly hoped were at last past and gone, after the long, long period in which we had known peace only by name (p.45-46).

Separated from the events that she witnessed by her gender, Penrose's narrative is both detached – the account of a spectator curiously detached from her surroundings – and deeply personal. She was able to recount the actions taken while, distanced from the frenetic activity and the immediacy of the present moment, she was able to pause for reflection, and to contemplate the implications of Napoleon's escape. In reality Napoleon did not effect his escape and fight this battle unaided, yet the hyperbolic strength of the 'imaginary' persona, for Penrose, positioned him as the solitary figure in this struggle. The presence of plot enabled Penrose to endure the 'uncertainties' (p.62) of war stoically, after all, the providential plot demanded that Napoleon would ultimately be defeated. As

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[61] Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and English Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.176. In exploring the relationship between the Lake Poets and Napoleon, Bainbridge argues that one of the frames of reference that the poets drew upon was the figure of Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

[62] Semmel, p.169, p.194.

long as the imaginary Napoleon was being plotted as the arch-villain, Penrose was able to maintain both the illusion of her imagined national identity and, by extension, her simplistic world view, where the good British battle the evil Bonaparte.

All of this, however, was undermined when she came into closer contact with the historical Emperor. Visiting King Ferdinand IV's royal palace in Naples during September 1815, Penrose came across a number of paintings of the Bonaparte family leaning against a wall, including a portrait of Napoleon, offering her an idea of his appearance:

> Napoleon's face is handsome and extremely expressive; and though all the pictures are executed with great care, the painter seems to have intended to make him look like a Demigod among the others. His countenance however is far from taking (p.107).

Yet another representation of Napoleon, this portrait depicted him in a similar glorified manner to the prolific patriotic pictures of British heroes, such as Nelson and Wellington, and also fitted the opposing modes of '*hyperbole*' or '*diminutio*' that were typically employed when describing the Emperor.[63] As Simon Bainbridge points out, Napoleon was represented as either the 'greatest' or the 'meanest'.[64] Uncomfortable with the hyperbolic elevation of Napoleon, Penrose attempted to undermine the painter's abilities with the comment of apparent intent implying that it was not achieved. A cause of greater discomfort was Napoleon's handsome expressiveness, a prerequisite for Penrose's positive artistic judgements. She valued expression in a portrait, describing the Virgin's 'expression of grief' in a picture of the crucifixion, and her 'sweet expression of countenance' in a picture of the nativity, along with the 'various expressions of awe, love and admiration in the Shepherds'(p.38, p.97). Yet as the embodiment of Satan, Napoleon occupied the opposite end of the Christian scale of good and evil to the Virgin Mary; thus, Penrose counteracted his expressiveness with a disparaging comment regarding his countenance. The problem for Penrose was that, as the villain of the piece, Napoleon needed to be physically repulsive, and he clearly was not. Her response to his portrait, another imaginary representation, embodied the ambiguity that Napoleon aroused as an

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[63] Bainbridge, p.8.

[64] Bainbridge, p.7.

historical figure, an ambiguity which Penrose had directly to negotiate when confronted with his former followers on Elba.

The quest to construct a coherent national narrative rests upon the premise that the inclusion in that identity is at the exclusion of all others; for Penrose to be able to portray her imagined British nation, she had to construct an equally monolithic model of the French nation. Yet, as her visit to Elba evinced, the inherent intangibility of Frenchness – like Britishness – rendered her perception of the French unstable. Upon first entering the building in which Napoleon had resided on Elba, Penrose continued to construct a narrative of the Emperor, musing that

> [i]t was interesting to look round with the idea that we were in the spot where Buonaparte planned those measures which issued in his wonderful march thro' France and the battle of Waterloo (p.235).

By 1818, the outcome of the providential plot had been realised – the defeated Napoleon was in exile on St. Helena – and Penrose was able to acknowledge, from a position of hindsight, the deposed Emperor's military achievements. However, she was also confronted with evidence of Napoleon's industrious nature, in the form of the improvements that he made during his stay on the island. Penrose had to reconcile her patriotic hatred of the arch-enemy with evidence of his laudable traits, those very traits which she described in positive terms in Murat, and that her narrative suggests she believed to be intrinsic to her imagined British national identity. She negotiated this thorny contradiction by suggesting that Napoleon repaired roads, and built a fort and palace to give the impression that he intended to stay on Elba, and adds that 'military ardour' (p.235), a force that carries people against their own volition, caused his followers to serve him.

Yet, the men whom Penrose encountered demonstrated the same allegiance to duty and to their deposed leader that she deemed meritorious in the British Tar, and the consternation that this caused her manifests itself literally in the appearance of her narrative. The usually neat script becomes barely legible and subject to much crossing out. One man told her of the improvements wrought by Napoleon on Elba, referring to him as the 'grande homme':

> it was plain our young man would gladly throw himself into Buonaparte's arms could he see the last chance of his proceeding in the same animated

> career. As he spoke his eyes began to spark with military ardour, and his arms and body moved more and more, endeavouring to express the vivacity of his feelings (p.235).

Rather than adhering to Penrose's perception of the national Other as indolent, chaotic, and immoral – like her description of the residents of Palermo, for example – the young man exhibits a self-control and loyalty which, in emphasising the existence of alternative identities, destabilizes her national narrative. If the parameters of Frenchness could unexpectedly alter, then it followed that her sense of Britishness was also subject to change, due to the mutually defining nature of the relationship between the identities.

Identity functions within tropes of inclusion and exclusion; what was 'British' for Penrose was also 'not French'. Thus, Penrose reconciled the loyalty of Napoleon's followers by creating a narrative in which she reconfigures the relationship between the English and the French:

> [i]t was not the first time that we had observed that those attached to Buonaparte's interests seemed to think they might make themselves amends for the restraints to which they were sometimes superior, in the company of the English, and it appeared now quite a relief to the Major to talk of him (p.235).

In this passage, Penrose encapsulates the complex relationship between the visitor and the residents, while not detracting from their meritorious sense of duty and allegiance. For the loyal Elbans, Napoleon was a great leader, yet, following his defeat and exile, Penrose suggests that it became socially unacceptable for them to express their allegiance to the deposed Emperor. Penrose also implies that the honourable Elbans did not deserve this restriction, thereby validating the corresponding traits between British and French national identity. In reformulating this relationship, however, she maintains a distinction between the two – thereby also maintaining the 'not French' definition – by situating the English in a superior position to the Elbans. The residents may be above social restraints, imposed in the presence of the English, yet Penrose suggests that they readily adhered to them, maintaining her position as the victorious national. Thus, rather than a reassessment of the relationship between the Elbans and the British, her willingness to hear the Major's account of Napoleon was an act of condescending benevolence. In 'talking' of their hero, the Elbans created their own narrative, thereby ensuring that the

imaginary Napoleon endured. By reconstructing the relationship between the French and the British, Penrose was able to retain her own sense of good versus evil, and, by extension, to reconcile the ambiguous nature of historical reality in order to preserve her sense of a monolithic British national identity. While the ambiguity surrounding Napoleon enabled Penrose to maintain her coherent imagined nation, Trench allowed his intangibility to stand, in line with the heterogeneous nature of her national narrative.

3:4 'The greatest man of the age': Nelson or Napoleon?

As the question regarding the greatest man of the age indicates, Nelson and Napoleon occupied very different positions in Trench's imagined nation to that of Penrose. An analysis of the difference in representation of the putative hero and villain of the Napoleonic wars exposes the complexities of national identity. For Trench, her sense of national belonging was maintained through a constant negotiation of political, class, and sartorial discourses; tropes which, in themselves, were both mutually informing and inextricable. Thus, on closer examination, her portrayal of Napoleon, Nelson, and Lady Emma Hamilton reveals that – whether conscious of the intangibility of identity, or not – Trench was a willing participant in the construction of her imagined national identity founded upon tropes of class and dress.

Apart from the wish that he should have a sick child, generally Trench admired Napoleon, whom she thought 'bids fair to be the greatest man of the age, as soon as Washington is no more'.[65] The labyrinthine nature of political and national allegiance is implicit in this statement; while Trench was a member of the Protestant Ascendancy – an identity aligned more with a British Hanoverian than an Irish Catholic constitution – this statement also situates her within a radical, anti-Establishment political world-view. As figureheads of ostensibly republican governments, Napoleon and Washington were admired by dissenting factions. Irish Protestant and Catholic dissidents also 'traditionally looked to France for aid', further complicating Trench's Anglo-Irish Protestant identity

[65] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 18.7.1796, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/1b.

which, as Hayton points out, was constantly shifting.[66] While in Paris, Trench took every opportunity to see the First Consul, commenting when presented to him that 'Buonaparte does not lose any of his lustre on a near approach – He looks the Hero', and adding '[m]y head was monteé by what I saw of Consular, and Republican Magnificence, & I determined on seeing more'.[67] When Napoleon did not appear at the celebration of his birthday and the anniversary of the signing of the Concordat on the 15th August 1802, at the daytime or evening service, a disgruntled Trench complained that she 'saw no appearance of Devotion, and the flourish of Military music which mingled itself with [the] close [of the service], seemed to me wholly inconsistent with the spirit of a Christian Church'.[68] Two years after the death of the First Consul, Trench noted in her diary that she had finished reading his memoir:

> [f]inished the Voice from St. Helena. That voice, issuing from a barren rock, has resounded through all the shores of Europe, penetrated into Courts & cottages, disarmed many by exacting compassion & created a greater revolution in public opinion & feelings than perhaps any volume ever before effected.[69]

The notion that, though his memoirs, Napoleon was able to effect a revolutionary change in the opinions of his audience throughout Europe is reminiscent of Penrose's reaction to his escape from Elba and draws upon a prevalent narrative in which – as we shall see when we turn to Fanny Burney's 'Waterloo Narrative' in the next chapter – the Emperor was attributed with the ability directly to affect the most private and personal aspects of an individual's life. Yet there is a stark difference between Penrose's conservative, pro-Establishment portrayal of Napoleon as the scourge of the world, and Trench's dissident admiration of the deceased diplomatic genius. The degree to which Napoleon continued to be a heroic figure was reflected in the admiring tone of this passage written by the fifty-five year old Trench.

The contrast between Penrose and Trench could also be attributed to class; as a member of the middling sort, whose family's financial security depended upon the defence of the nation, it could be argued that Penrose could ill afford the luxury of dissent

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[66] Colley, p.8.
[67] Letter to Sarah Tuite, 6-12.9.1802, A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/42/33/111.
[68] Melesina Trench, 'Journal relating to a trip to Paris, with her son, Charles St. George, 5-26 Aug 1802', A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/1/9, p.22.
[69] Melesina Trench, 26.1.1823, 'Diaries copied by Richard Chenevix Trench', 23M93/1/6.

allotted to Trench, as a member of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy. Yet herein also lies a similarity; entry into the Irish landowning classes depended as much upon political connections and money as on birth. Thus, despite the illusion of a closed elite – perpetuated as much by the self-interest of the class as by others – Trench's class identity depended upon the same factors as Penrose's for social mobility. Alongside her political identity, therefore, class was also fundamental to Trench's imagined nation, and was brought into sharp relief when she encountered Nelson.

When the thirty-two year old Trench met Lord Nelson in Dresden in 1800, her assessment of the naval hero was far more ambiguous than that of Napoleon. Nelson may not have reached the pinnacle of his career, which coincided with his death at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21st October 1805, but his many decisive victories, including the tactical coup of the Battle of the Nile in August 1798, had enhanced his heroic celebrity status. By 1800, he had also embarked upon his affair with Lady Emma Hamilton, the wife of the British Ambassador to Naples, Sir William Hamilton, a relationship which attracted much censure from the British upper class. Born into a lower-class family in Cheshire, Emma Lyon went into service at an early age in London, where she changed her name to Hart and, after a brief 'acting' career, became a courtesan. Her marriage in 1791 to the widowed Sir William caused anxiety among many of the ladies in London society, 'who strongly disapproved of a woman from such a background as hers being elevated in this way.'[70] In his biography of Nelson, Christopher Hibbert suggests that Trench – then the 'pretty young widow', Melesina St. George – was 'no way more kindly disposed to [Emma Hamilton] on closer acquaintance', arguing that her opinion was influenced by their mutual host, Hugh Elliot, 'Lord Minto's snobbish younger brother ... who entertained a very low opinion of Lady Hamilton and not a much higher one of her lover.'[71] Whereas in her biography of Hamilton, Flora Fraser suggests that the 'deliberate vulgarism' of Nelson and his lover were indicative of the boredom that they experienced in the company of the 'odious trio' of the Elliots and Mrs. St. George, the emphasis which Hibbert implicitly places upon class is insightful.[72]

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[70] Christopher Hibbert, *Nelson: A Personal History* (London: Viking, 1994), p.90.
[71] Hibbert, p.218, p.217.
[72] Flora Fraser, *Beloved Emma: The Life of Emma, Lady Hamilton* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Papermac, 1994), p.273.

Trench was certainly influenced by the opinions of Mr. Elliot to some degree. Her first encounter with the party, and Lady Hamilton in particular, was mediated by Elliot's comment that she 'is fit to head a mob, and is exactly his idea of Jacks Trull' (Jack Tar's prostitute), alluding to Hamilton's dubious past.[73] Elliot was deeply concerned with appearance; at a dinner at which Nelson, full of champagne, loudly declared that Hamilton was his 'Queen to the backbone' and 'as to Queen Charlotte, she be d – d', Elliot, 'who was anxious the party should not expose themselves more than they had done already' (p.50), desperately sought to bring the evening to a close. Although Trench had much contact with the party, it seems her account of the most scandalous incidents – including when the Nelson party boarded the ship to leave, bringing an end to their 'fine acts' (p.51) – were related to her by Elliot. Hamilton's social mobility was the central preoccupation for Elliot and Trench; the manner in which she had transcended class boundaries, had escaped the confines of the lowliest of births to ascend to membership of the aristocracy, highlighted the vulnerability of their own class positions. The extent of their anxiety is evident in their elision of what they would categorise as Sir William Hamilton's legitimate position as a peer of the realm. Thus, when Trench commented on direct encounters with the Admiral and his entourage, her tone comes across as harsh; she declared that Nelson was 'a little man without any dignity' (p.40), emasculating him with the derisive comment that 'Lady H. takes possession of him, & he is a willing captive, the most submissive and devoted I have seen' (p.40). Yet, when she goes to see Nelson dressed for his appearance at Court, she is impressed by his appearance, declaring him to be 'a perfect Constellation of Stars and Orders' (p.42). While her portrayal of Nelson reveals her political and class affiliations, her fickle approval of the Admiral suggests that Trench was also influenced by his appearance.

Throughout her memoirs and correspondence, Trench maintained an equivocal relationship to the notion of assessing individuals through their appearance; she was simultaneously aware of the shallow nature of such judgements, while also employing the same practice. While it is clear that the 'frivolities of a 'modish' life' became increasingly 'repugnant' to her, Trench was a willing participant in the employment of

[73] Melesina Trench, 'Diary concerning Germany and Prussia, 20 Jul – 15 Oct 1800. Including references to Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton', A-L Archive, HRO, 23M93/1/3, p.38. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

dress as a 'diagnostic tool'.[74] Examining the intersection between the discourses of dress, female virtue, sensibility, and commerce, in *Dress, Distress, and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, Jennie Batchelor highlights the

> distress of writers at the failure of their work to unequivocally pin down and contain the heroine's or female reader's sexual and moral character through their formulation of the ideal of the adorned female body.[75]

Batchelor's argument draws upon the notion that dress may be employed as a means of reading an individual, a trope which she identifies in misogynist texts of the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century and, in particular, in the late eighteenth-century genre of sentimental literature.[76] Dress was inextricably linked in the cultural imagination with discourses of luxury and commerce – through the discourse of the 'adorned woman, who is ... marked out as both the product of and scapegoat for mercantile capitalism' – and, by extension, with contemporary concerns regarding their degenerative effects upon the moral welfare of the nation.[77] Yet, as Batchelor argues, while dress 'constituted a form of language through which meaning was generated by the wearer and read by the observer', that meaning was 'often arbitrary' and subject to constant negotiation and 'endless reinterpretation'.[78] Hand in hand with the growth of the middling class – with their propensity to imitate the aristocracy – this period saw the growth of a cycle of fashion fuelled by a thirst for 'sartorial emulation'.[79] As a result, the potential existed for situations to arise in which an individual's 'true' social class was indiscernible:

> [t]he implications of the supposed blurring of the distinction between ranks extended beyond the merely embarrassing *faux pas* of perceiving a maid as her mistress ... rather, they struck deep at the social and moral heart of eighteenth-century culture.[80]

Social mobility was an increasing source of anxiety; while the *nouveau riche* were able to rub shoulders with the aristocracy, it was also potentially possible for the peers of the

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[74] Seccombe, p.2. Jennie Batchelor, *Dress, Distress, and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.3.
[75] Batchelor, p.18.
[76] Batchelor, p.5.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Batchelor, p.9.
[79] Batchelor, p.7.
[80] Batchelor, p.8.

realm to be reduced to straitened circumstances amongst their tenants. Thus, it is within the context of the need of others to be able to define an individual – in this case, through dress, 'a site on which multiple and often competing anxieties are simultaneously focused' – that Trench's assessment of Hamilton should be placed.[81]

As the biographers of Nelson and Hamilton have highlighted, Trench made many harsh comments about her companion. Hamilton was 'bold, forward, coarse, assuming, and vain' (p.39), she 'acts her songs, which … [is] the last degree of bad taste' (p.45), 'her usual dress is tasteless, vulgar, loaded and unbecoming' (p.45), and Trench was suspicious of the incessant compliments that Hamilton paid to her, 'which proves she thinks mere exterior alone of any consequence' (p.41). Yet it was through this awareness of exterior appearance and, more precisely, the ability to manipulate and construct identity, that Trench found cause to admire Hamilton. Like her assessment of other individuals that she met, Trench included positive comments alongside the negative; thus, Hamilton's expression was 'strongly marked, variable, and interesting' (p.40) and she 'has strength of voice, & great expression' (p.42) in her singing, although 'often out of tune' (p.43). Trench was particularly drawn to Hamilton's private performance, after breakfast on 7th October 1800, of her famous 'Attitudes', in which she dressed up and assumed the pose of famous statues, portraits, or mythological scenes, drawn in particular from classical antiquity:

> [i]t is a beautiful performance, amusing to the most ignorant, but highly interesting to the lovers of Art – the chief of her imitations are from the Antique. The representation lasts about ten minutes. It is remarkable that altho' coarse and ungraceful in common life, she becomes highly graceful, and even beautiful in this performance (p.45).

What fascinated Trench was the notion that through merely changing her dress and adopting a pose, Hamilton could transform her outward appearance. Yet her obvious fascination is riven with the anxiety of the specific moment in which the discourses of dress, class, and nation both intersect and contradict one another, thereby highlighting the fragility of the identities of both Trench and Hamilton.

The notion that an individual may be judged by their external appearance and behaviour, rendering their identity open to manipulation, was central to Trench's

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[81] Batchelor, p.11.

heterogeneous national narrative, yet Hamilton's transformation through performance – evoking her transformation from lower to upper class – both highlights and disrupts the need for solid categories of identification. Although Trench may have moved between identities, the creation of a coherent national narrative depended upon the stability of definitional categories. While watching Hamilton's performance, Trench was confronted with both the possibility of transcending class boundaries, and the unreliability of dress as a means to interpret an individual's identity. As Maria Egerton and Lady Tinemouth were impelled to contain Thaddeus' potentially subversive identity through his clothing, so Trench ultimately found Hamilton's fascinating performance unsettling and resorted to a familiar class narrative for comfort:

> I think her bold, daring, vain even to folly, and stamped with the manners of her first situation much more strongly than one would suppose, after having represented Majesty, and lived in good company fifteen years. Her ruling passions seem to me Vanity, Avarice, and Love for the pleasures of the Table (p.46).

In an assertion of superiority akin to Penrose's reaction to Napoleon's followers, Trench contains Hamilton's transgression within a class identity which is inferior to her own, thereby eliding the inherent malleability of the identities of both women. It is at this contradictory moment in Trench's national narrative that the plurality of identity is most evident.

For Jane Penrose and Melesina Trench, the experience of travel repeatedly undermined their attempts to construct a narrative of their imagined homogenous nation. While they sought to assimilate the incomprehensible within existing frames of reference – a naval and an Anglo-Irish identity – the resulting contradictions which repeatedly disrupted their narratives led to the manifestation rather than the elision of national heterogeneity. For Penrose, this contradiction surfaced when her attempts to construct a coherent national narrative around the figure of the British sailor were frustrated, both by the representational instability of that figure and the corporeal experience of being at sea. Trench, on the other hand, embraced the disparate nature of national identity in her own self-definition but, when confronted with tangible evidence of the malleability of identity

during Lady Emma Hamilton's performance of her Attitudes, resorted to a familiar discourse of class in order to contain both her anxiety and Hamilton's social mobility. Throughout this thesis it has been argued that, following the Acts of Union of 1707 and 1800, Britishness was – and continues to be – a heterogeneous identity. The experience of the Napoleonic wars both exacerbated and highlighted this plurality, as the narratives examined have demonstrated. In defining their identities within the parameters of tropes of inclusion and exclusion, it followed that – despite drawing upon a variety of different discourses – as critics have argued, that which was British was also 'not French'. The overarching question of the fourth and final chapter, therefore, is how the Allied victory and, more important, the defeat of the French at the Battle of Waterloo affected British self-definition.

Chapter Four: Waterloo

On 18th June 1815, the allied British and Prussian forces defeated the French Army at Waterloo. Even as the battle was being fought, narratives were being constructed of the event and the seeds of numerous myths were sown. As the critics who debate the birth date of the modern nation state concur, the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century was a fertile period for the emergence of British nationalist discourses; whether Britain was forged at the beginning of the eighteenth century or earlier, the Battle of Waterloo was a seminal event, a catalytic moment which provided new, alternative identities for individuals. Marking the end of twenty-two years of conflict with the national nemesis, Waterloo also signified a national beginning, whether degenerative or regenerative, as the Britons who had defined their national identity in opposition to the French were forced to seek alternatives. While arguing that war 'may be necessary for the creation of national identity', for example, Philip Shaw describes Waterloo as 'a mythic event occurring outside the texture of documentary or annualised history'.[1] In *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination*, Shaw intends to return Waterloo to its original status as an impossible thing, a 'void of nothingness' with sublime status prior to its domestication as a symbol of national unity.[2] British public discourse immediately after the battle was 'peculiarly unsettled'; for Shaw, the victory at Waterloo was 'turned into an impossible object of desire, a measure of the limits of imagination and crucially of the lack at the heart of the nation state'.[3] While the British had been united in a common goal during the conflict, Shaw argues that the defeat of the French resulted in a 'confusion of identification' which centred upon the fear of 'contestation from within'.[4]

Shaw's argument rests upon the assertion that immediately after the battle British national identity was in crisis, yet there is also an argument to be made for Waterloo as the site of a reaffirmation of Britishness. Indeed, the victory at Waterloo was a rich source for authors who sought to construct coherent national narratives and, as the analysis of the texts studied in this chapter demonstrates, it also enabled women writers to explore the opportunities for, and limitations of, female patriotic

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[1] Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.5, p.3.
[2] Shaw, p.209, p.34.
[3] Shaw, p.4, p.6.
[4] Shaw, p.6.

roles. Both Charlotte Anne Eaton and Frances Burney d'Arblay were in Brussels during the events of June 1815, and the national narratives that they constructed in their accounts offer an insight into the individual experience of the battle. In *The Battle of Waterloo*, published anonymously in 1815, Eaton portrays an apparently monolithic regenerated British national identity founded upon the traits of pragmatism, adherence to duty, and loyalty, whereas Burney's experience of Waterloo – recounted in her retrospective 'Waterloo Narrative' – reveals a far more unsettled sense of identity, as she shifts between various forms of Frenchness and Britishness.

A closer analysis and comparison of Burney and Eaton's national narratives will demonstrate how the myths of Waterloo were manipulated by authors seeking to represent their imagined coherent nation and, furthermore, how separate gendered spheres became conflated – and therefore obsolete – as the national and the domestic converged within their narratives. The overarching question that this chapter seeks to explore is how Waterloo – as a cathartic moment in the British national psyche – affected the sense of national belonging at the level of the individual. In other words, at a moment when the inherent fluidity of identity was both highlighted and exacerbated, how did authors negotiate the multiplicity of identity within their national narratives? While Burney and Eaton's texts each drew upon the larger genre of nationalistic literature to emerge following the victory, which Simon Bainbridge terms the 'matter of Waterloo', they also demonstrate the implausibility of their attempts to portray a coherent imagined nation.[5]

4:1 'The most bloody battle that ever was fought': The National Myth of Waterloo

In an article exploring the transformation of Waterloo from a factual event to a myth, John Houston states:

> Waterloo had always been a mark of national achievement for the allied countries, but with the passage of time it became something more than this, almost a God-given token of national solidarity and superiority.[6]

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[5] Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and English Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.158.

[6] John Houston, 'Waterloo: From Fact to Myth', *Yale French Studies*, 26 (1960), pp.45-49 (p.46).

Situating Waterloo within a myth of national destiny, Houston argues that this transformation took place retrospectively; however, as William Wordsworth's anxious comment that Wellington would not 'pass with posterity for a hero' implies, myths were being constructed as the battle took place.[7] Both Burney and Eaton's narratives contain examples of the myth-making impulse in action, including the creation of heroic and villainous myths surrounding Wellington and Napoleon. Yet, like the heroic figures examined in Chapters Two and Three, upon closer examination these national myths lose coherence, facilitating their appropriation by individuals with differing identities for different purposes.

Although frequently employed phrases soon appear clichéd to the reader of the 'matter of Waterloo', these tropes were a useful tool for the authors seeking to create a coherent narrative of endemically irrational martial events and, by extension, of their imagined national identity. There was no doubt that a resolution would be reached by the end of the day, and the outcome of the projected linear narrative manifested in the repeated reference to Wellington's parting comment that he 'should perhaps be back to dinner' and to Napoleon's claim that the French army 'should arrive at Brussels in good time for supper'.[8] In both of these retrospectively written accounts, the fact that the Allies triumphed against a numerically superior force was testimony to the providential outcome of the conflict and the consequently greater heroism of the allied forces; Eaton repeatedly comments that

> the Enemy were in much more formidable force than had been represented, and deriving confidence from their immense superiority of numbers, they fought most furiously (Eaton, p.6).

These myths were reinforced by the stream of unfounded accounts arriving regularly from the battlefield which, in turn, imply that myths were being constructed as the

[7] Cited by Eric C. Walker, 'Wordsworth, Wellington, and Myth', in *History and Myth: Essays on English Romantic Literature*, ed. by Stephen C. Behrendt (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), pp.100-115 (p.109).

[8] Charlotte Anne Eaton, *The Battle of Waterloo, containing the series of accounts published by authority, British and foreign, with circumstantial details, relative to the battle, from a variety of authentic and original sources, with connected official documents, forming an historical record of the operations in the Campaign of the Netherlands, 1815.To which is added the names alphabetically arranged of the officers killed and wounded from 15th to 26th June, 1815, and the total loss of each regiment, with an enumeration of the Waterloo Honours and Privileges, conferred upon the men and officers, and a list of regiments, &c. entitled thereto. Illustrated by a panoramic sketch of the field of battle, and a plan of the positions at Waterloo, at different periods, with a general plan of the campaign. By a near observer.* 9th Edition (London: Booth, Egerton & Fairbairn, 1816), p. 5, p.30. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

battle was being fought. Wary of Belgian accounts, for example, Eaton was pleased to glean intelligence from one of Wellington's Aid-de-Camps, who

> brought the welcome information, that the British army, though attacked by such a tremendous superiority of numbers, and under every possible disadvantage, had completely repulsed the Enemy, and remained masters of the field of battle (Eaton, p.11).

These myths became mutually reinforcing as more and more 'matter of Waterloo' was produced; both Burney and Eaton state that they are omitting 'well known' details (Eaton, p.12). There are subtle differences between the authors' engagement with these tropes; whereas Eaton's glorifying narrative is frequently hyperbolic, Burney draws upon a different kind of myth with a more subdued, reverential tone, which relies upon retrospect:

> I attempt no description of this day, the grandeur of which was unknown, or unbelieved, in Brussels till it had taken its flight, and could only be named as time past. The Duke of Wellington and Prince Blücher were too mightily engaged in meriting fame to spare an instant for either claiming or proclaiming it.[9]

For Burney, the battle has been undertaken stoically by all involved, and may only be celebrated and mythologised in retrospect. Yet this narrative strategy, in itself, partakes in the construction of a myth of defensive warfare; indeed, Burney subsequently comments that Waterloo 'has been the most bloody battle that ever was fought, and the victory the most entire' (Burney, p.198).

While there is evidence of recurrent myths in the narratives of both Burney and Eaton, the different Waterloo myths contained in their narratives, particularly evident in the representation of the French, reflects the difference between their imagined national identities. For Eaton, the French are the national nemesis of the British, destroyers whose imperialistic actions are to be countered:

> [i]n every land and in every clime, wherever the French have appeared as oppressors, the British have sprung forward as deliverers – they have sought foreign lands, not as enemies but as friends – they have fought and conquered, not to destroy, but to save (Eaton, p.43).

Throughout *The Battle of Waterloo*, the French and the English are set up in a value-laden binary opposition; British 'valour', 'discipline', and 'a steadiness no language can do justice to' outmanoeuvred the 'fearsome French cavalry' (Eaton, p.56), while

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[9] Frances Burney d'Arblay, *Diaries and Letters of Madame d'Arblay, Author of Evelina, Cecilia, &c. Edited by her niece. Vol. Vii 1813-1840* (London: Henry Colburn, 1842-1846), p.158. All subsequent page references are included in the body of the text.

the French refusal to give quarter was morally opposed by the compassionate acts of the British and the Belgians (Eaton, p.12). In constructing Waterloo as a regenerative site of British national identity, it is imperative that Eaton can stress that, as opposed to the morally degenerate French, 'England's sons are the best in the fight' (Eaton, p.155).

For Burney, whose relationship to British and French national identities is characterised by ambivalence, representing the national enemies is not so clear-cut and her assessment of the French is complex. On occasions, she constructs a clear national opposition, for example, she berates the 'torpor' (Burney, p.66) with which the news of Napoleon's escape from Elba and subsequent invasion of France is greeted by the French and reflects upon the 'ferment' (Burney, p.70) that she imagines his arrival in England would elicit. Equivocation surrounding the relationship between her natal British and marital French identities spilled over into assessments of the French and she repeatedly sought an explanation for what could be construed as inappropriate behaviour. While breakfasting with a family in Arras, Burney comments upon the 'unaccountable' and 'indefinable' 'cheerfulness' (Burney, p.104) of her hosts – Napoleon had recently captured Paris – arguing that this could not be an example of French 'insensibility' (Burney, p.105). Rather, she attributes their demeanour to the 'long revolutionary state of the French mind, as well as nation', suggesting that as the French had 'no choice to get rid of it', they 'resolve to get through to the best of [their] ability' (Burney, p.105). In other words, for Burney, the cheerfulness of her hosts is evidence of their resilience to the effects of protracted revolution and warfare; an interpretation which removes any accusations of French insouciance thereby rendering it an acceptable identity. As Burney watches the French casualties and prisoners of war enter Brussels, she constructs the defeated army as 'heroic' but motivated by a 'misled enthusiasm, to which they were martyrs' (Burney, p.174), thereby displacing their culpability and demonising the leaders, and ultimately Napoleon whose orders they followed.

Yet, like her fluctuating representation of the French, Burney's mythic construction of Napoleon is not straightforward; indeed, a comparison of the manner in which Napoleon and Wellington are constructed as a mythical hero and villain in each of the narratives strengthens an argument for the malleability of the figure of the hero as he symbolically represents ideal imagined national identities. In keeping with the narrative strategy of *The Battle*, Eaton habitually makes a direct comparison

between Wellington and Napoleon while transforming the historical men into mythic figures within her national narrative. In a narrative that celebrates British victory, the creation of myth necessitates the manipulation of events to suit the story of that victory through an elaboration of the facts; for example, Eaton constructs a myth of Waterloo in which Napoleon the coward is compared to the calm measure of Wellington.[10] Eaton describes the moment in which Napoleon realises that the advancing troops, who he believed to be French reinforcements, were in fact Prussian:

> his countenance changed, he turned pale, and faltered in his speech; and when he saw the impetuous charge of the Allies, and the confusion and discomfiture of his own troops, his alarm became extreme and exclaiming, "Tout est perdu," he precipitately galloped from the field. It is, I believe, beyond a doubt that he was one of the first to set the example of flight (Eaton, p.30).

In comparison to the cowardly retreat of the 'pitiful scoundrel' (Eaton, p.31), the Duke of Wellington calmly leads his men on the field of battle:

> [t]o say where he afterwards was, is impossible – it would be more difficult to say where he was not; wherever his presence was most requisite, he was to be found; he seemed to be every where present. Exposed to the hottest fire, in the most conspicuous position, he stood reconnoitring with his glass, watching the Enemy's manoeuvres, and issuing orders with the most intrepid coolness, while balls and shells showered around him, and his Staff and Officers fell wounded and dying by his side (Eaton, p.31).

In the thick of the battle, Wellington's 'almost miraculous' (Eaton, p.31) escape from death contributes to the immortal quality of his representation as the mythical martial leader, a construction which is reinforced by the Spenserian dedicatory verses which situate Wellington within the context of Elizabethan victories and, by extension, a martial national history. In comparison, the 'late arrogant Ruler of France' (Eaton, p.43) led his men by trickery, by an 'enchantment' (Eaton, p.99) which 'so electrified the French troops' (Eaton, p.104) that they were driven to mad, suicidal charges.

Burney also draws upon the mythic representation of Wellington on the battlefield; there appear to be echoes of Eaton's narrative in the tropes of Wellington's omnipresence and repeated near misses, and in the 'triumphant' narration of an emissary (Burney, p.168). Unlike Eaton, Burney had the opportunity

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[10] Eaton may be drawing upon a set of tropes prevalent in contemporary periodicals and novels, in which 'the hero is wise, cautious, a deliberate politician, with no pejorative meaning attached; the villain is rash, hasty, imprudent, a gambler'. See Toni Wein, *British Identities, Heroic Nationalisms, and the Gothic Novel, 1764-1824* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.16.

to observe the British Marshall in detail at a ball held by the Italian soprano, Madame Angelica Catalani, in Brussels, and was 'charmed' by his 'noble and singular physiognomy and his eagle eye' (Burney, p.138).[11] Engaging with the guests, he is a true gentleman and, identifying with his 'sagacious reserve' (Burney, p.158), portrays the Duke as a representative of her imagined British identity. An episode in which he curiously quells a rendition of Rule Britannia by their foreign hosts, with a 'commanding air of disapprobation' serves, for Burney, as an example of how Wellington may 'quit his convivial familiarity for imperious dominion when occasion might call for the transformation' (Burney, p.158).

Yet Wellington co-exists with Napoleon as the heroic mythical representative of Burney's imagined nation. At the beginning of her Narrative, she states that 'by narrations the most authentic, and by documents the most indisputable, I knew the character of Bonaparte' (Burney, p.66); her knowledge of Napoleon is mediated by narrative constructions which, in turn, are woven together into her own national narrative. Burney's description of her period of detention in Paris prior to the first abdication locates Napoleon as a resistless figure in her national imagining:

> [i]n those ten years, so eventful, so fearful, so astonishing, the idea of Bonaparte was blended with all our thoughts, our projects, our actions. The greatness of his power, the intrepidity of his ambition, the vastness of his conceptions, and the restlessness of his spirit, kept suspense always breathless, and conjecture always at work (Burney, p.67).

As a vast hyperbolic presence, sometimes malign but always dominant, Napoleon wrestles with Wellington for a position of centrality in Burney's national consciousness and, as such, could not be represented as the simplistic figure of evil that Eaton employs. Thus, Burney suggests that it was Napoleon's 'inordinate ambition' that 'held him as arbitrarily under control as he himself held under his control every other passion' (Burney, p.127). Although he shares Wellington's composure, it is a lack of control over his ambition that results in Napoleon's downfall.[12] Burney explains the Emperor's ultimate defeat through an acknowledgement of the superiority of the British forces:

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[11] Kate Chisholm, *Fanny Burney: Her Life* (London: Vintage, 1998), p.243.

[12] In referring to Napoleon's ambition as an arbitrary power, Burney does not associate the power of unrestrained emotion with the arbitrary power of the British aristocracy. Although Kate Chisholm suggests that Burney was somewhat reluctant to take up her position, in 1786, as Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, throughout the 'Waterloo Narrative' there are repeated examples of the affectionate regard in which she held the Princesses and of her loyalty to King George III.

> The efforts made by Bonaparte were stupendous, and his Imperial Guards fought with a *dévouement*, an enthusiasm, that showed they thought victory and their leader must be one (Burney, p.178).

Napoleon and his guards fought well but Wellington and the British were better; indeed, Wellington's omnipresence on the battlefield renders him superhuman. Unlike Eaton's construction of a cowardly Napoleon, Burney draws upon the myth of the worthy adversary defeated by military tactics, thereby leaving the possibility of her French – and British – national identities intact. While Eaton and Burney portrayed Napoleon and Wellington as either their national hero or villain – simultaneously drawing upon and contributing to the myths of Waterloo – their narratives also contain accounts of female heroism, an analysis of which, as will be demonstrated, questions the usefulness of a separate gendered spheres paradigm.

4:2 Bringing Waterloo Home?: The Domestic and the National in Battle Narratives

Burney's 'Narrative' offers an evocative description of the atmosphere in Brussels in the days immediately before the battle:

> [s]uspense, during all this period, was frightfully mistress of the mind; nothing was known, everything was imagined. The two great interests that were at war, the Bourbonists and the Bonapartists, were divided and sub-divided into factions, or rather fractions, without end, and all that was kept invariably and on both sides alive was expectation. Wanderers, deserters, or captives, from France, arrived daily at Brussels, all with varying news of the state of that empire, and of the designs of Bonaparte amongst them (Burney, p.145).

A resident of the town since the end of March 1815 – where she had anxiously awaited news of her husband who, as a member of Louis XVIII's bodyguard, was guarding his King in a secret location – Burney encapsulated the "fractional" nature of national identities whilst communicating the sense of uncertainty which pervaded Brussels. More important, this passage succinctly emphasises that during this period the boundaries between the national and the domestic were blurred to the extent that the two categories sometimes became indistinguishable, thereby questioning the validity of the initial and continued application of a distinction implicitly founded upon separate gendered spheres. For Burney, her home became politicised; each

individual whom she encountered daily in Brussels had a stake in the events unfolding in the nearby villages of Mont St. Jean and Waterloo. Her description could, arguably, be interpreted as evidence of the war 'coming home' to Brussels; however, an examination of the representation of female heroism in the battle narratives of Burney and Eaton reveals a convergence of the national and the domestic in the period leading up to, and during the Battle of Waterloo.

In her article, 'Coming Home: The Public Spaces of Romantic War', Mary Favret mounts an argument for 'how war "comes home" to English romanticism' that is based upon three propositions.[13] First, Favret suggests that the public experience of the Napoleonic wars was 'mediated ... through institutions and verbal conventions that filtered and altered its content' and, second, that this content became focused upon 'traditionally "private" images of women', evoking the 'realm of affective relations and feminine care'.[14] Thus, Favret's third and most important point is that the 'first major European war in the era of the public sphere ... remained invisible, or at least mediated, because in several senses the war could not enter the public sphere'.[15] The 'actuality of violence' could not be assimilated into an arena predicated upon 'non-violent forms for conflict and opposition'; thus, in recasting the war as the 'defense of women ... not the killing of other men', England became 'a home to protect, a figure of both state and private property that displaces the public house'.[16] Yet, there remained a disjuncture between representations of the immortal citizen-soldier of the public sphere and the injured body of the private soldier, which Favret argues was resolved through the emergence of a 'counter-public sphere, a space which recognises the violence that the public sphere alone cannot, constitutively, accommodate'.[17] In focusing upon images of women – mothers, wives, and widows – authors were able to draw upon the private tropes of the sentimental, thereby exploiting the ambivalence of these images. As a result,

> the public could support the war on sentimental grounds even if it opposed the war policies of the Pitt Ministry. But it also means that violence could not be fully erased from nor contained within the domestic front.[18]

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[13] Mary A. Favret, 'Coming Home: The Public Spaces of Romantic War', *Studies in Romanticism*, 33:4 (Winter 1994), pp.539-548 (p.540).
[14] Favret, p.539.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Favret, p.541, p.543.
[17] Favret, p.543.
[18] Favret, p.547.

Unable to locate the violence of war solely within the private or the public sphere, therefore, Favret argues that the war comes home to English romanticism in the form of a counter-public sphere which is private and, by association, female.

In the course of her analysis of romantic narratives, Favret expresses interest in the juxtaposition of the 'two distinct sites' of the public and the private through images such as 'home and trench, soldier's body and domestic bodies', commenting that '[i]f we suspend them there together long enough, they end up looking like the same thing'.[19] Yet the similarities exist precisely because the two categories describe the same thing; the public and private, the national and the domestic, converge. The enduring power of Habermas' conception of the public and private spheres can, in part, be attributed to the seductive nature of the paradigm; once contemplated, evidence of separate spheres is easily identified, mainly due to their association with an inescapable gender binary. Thus, Burney and Eaton's narratives may be interpreted as locating the authors in a domestic sphere, receiving a filtered account of the battle. Waterloo was witnessed primarily from a distance; they narrate their experiences in Brussels as hostages to the battle, and the subsequent factual accounts of the martial action are mediated by disparate sources of intelligence. Information was avidly gleaned from returning soldiers, Belgian and British, as well as from newspapers and official dispatches. Yet Burney and Eaton were not impartial actors in the process of mediation; besides contributing to the myths of Waterloo, the account of the battle that they constructed in their narratives colluded in the shaping of interpretations of the historical events unfolding in the field. In *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination*, Philip Shaw explores the ways in which literary and artistic tours of the battlefield – of which Eaton's *Battle* is an example – sought to direct the reader's interpretation of Waterloo, usually from a state-sanctioned perspective, while Stuart Semmel argues that artistic representations of Waterloo, and in particular the guide-book, 'offered a neat textual lens through which the tourist could perceive the battlefield' and, as such, posed a threat to 'unmediated communion with palpable history'.[20] While shaping the readers' interpretation of Waterloo, both narratives also demonstrate that the national and the domestic were indistinguishable.

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[19] Favret, p.541.

[20] Stuart Semmel, 'Reading the Tangible Past: British Tourism, Collecting, and Memory After Waterloo', *Representations*, 69 (Winter 2000), pp.9-37 (p. 27).

Although commonly referred to as the 'Waterloo Narrative', the full title of Burney's prose account of the events – 'Narrative of Bonaparte's return from Elba – Flight from Paris – Residence at Brussels – Battle of Waterloo' (Burney, p.65) – locates the female, domestic experience within the larger historical, public account of the events of 1815, while Eaton's title situates the '*circumstantial details*' of a female, non-combatant '*near observer*' between authoritative accounts and official documents. Furthermore, in constructing an account of their imagined nations, each of these narratives offers an insight into the authors' perceptions of female heroism and female patriotic roles. For Eaton, the patriotic female Briton maintains her composure when confronted with the chaos and unreliability of Brussels and its inhabitants. Once the troops had departed, the atmosphere was one of constant anxiety: '[e]very countenance was marked with anxiety or melancholy – every heart was filled with anxious expectation' (Eaton, p.5). Constantly bombarded with false intelligence, the Belgians are represented as prone to extreme reaction to the incessant false alarms, which were exacerbated as the proximity of the battle to Brussels drew closer and evidence of the battle came to their front door-steps. As Eaton comments,

> [i]t was impossible for the people of Brussels, who were wholly ignorant of the event of the battle, and acquainted only with the disadvantageous circumstances under which it had been fought, not to fear that the Enemy might at last have succeeded in breaking through the British, or at least the Prussian lines, or that Buonaparté, ever fertile in expedients, might have contrived to elude their vigilance, and to send a detachment under cover of night, by a circuitous route, to seize the unguarded city, the possession of which to him was of the highest importance (Eaton, p.10).

While encapsulating the atmosphere of paranoia prevalent in Brussels, Eaton distances herself from the subsequent confusion; her description of the ignorant inhabitants implies that she does not include herself in this rubric. She habitually questions the trustworthiness of the 'dastardly Belgians' (Eaton, p.11), condescendingly stating that the retreating Belgian cavalry – who had been mistaken, again, for the French – were covered 'not with glory, but with mud' (Eaton, p.9). Eaton's own reaction to these events is rather matter-of-fact; while the Belgians are running around the town in their nightwear, fearing the imminent arrival of the French, Eaton awaits the arrival of the confirmation of the 'false alarm' (Eaton, p.11) from a reliable British source, thereby sharing the same characteristic of composure which she attributes to Wellington.

It is a pragmatic stoicism which Eaton lauds in her heroic account of a farmer's wife who was discovered in a farmhouse in the village of Mont St. Jean at the heart of the fighting:

> all the inhabitants had fled from this village previous to the action, and even Waterloo was deserted; but in a farm-house, fig.41, Plate 2, at the end of the village nearest the field, one solitary woman remained, during the whole of the day, shut up in a garret, from which she could see nothing, and without any means of gaining information of what was passing, while they were fighting man to man, and sword to sword, at the very doors; while shells were bursting in at the windows, and while the canon-balls were breaking through the wooden gates into the farm-yard, and striking against the walls of the house. This woman was the farmer's wife: and when asked her motives for this extraordinary conduct, she replied with great simplicity, that she had many cows and calves, and poultry, and pigs – that all she had in the world was there; and that she thought, if she did not stay to take care of them, they would all be destroyed or carried off (Eaton, p.22-23).

Stressing the woman's straightforwardness – thereby evading the disorder and untrustworthiness attributed to Belgians elsewhere in the narrative – Eaton portrays her experience in both recognisably domestic and national terms. Trapped in her farmhouse by the momentous conflict, the woman is defending her private possessions and property; the war has 'come home' for the farmer's wife, to draw on Mary Favret's phrase, heightening the tension and disjuncture between domestic and public events. Yet interpreting this woman's actions within a private, domestic framework overlooks the extent to which her composed response is evidence, for Eaton, of a laudable female patriotism. Eaton does not refer to this woman in domestic terms; rather, she emphatically situates the farmer's wife as a member of the Allied nations within a national context, within her 'official' public account of Waterloo. The reference to figures and plate numbers in this passage imply that Eaton intends the reader to stand before the field of battle, with Jane Waldie's panoramic sketch in hand, and view the actual location where the farmer's wife hid.[21] In doing so, Eaton directs the reader's interpretation of the events, representing her perception of a pragmatic female patriotism which, rather than appearing in a domestic setting, is situated within a public historical account of Waterloo and, more important, within Eaton's national narrative.

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[21] *The Battle of Waterloo* contains a fold-out panoramic sketch of the battlefield, drawn by Eaton's sister, Jane Waldie.

Whereas Eaton's vision of a female patriotic role is portrayed against the backdrop of national events – the farmer's wife is at the heart of the battle - for Burney female heroism is located within the personal, in particular, the ability to bear a protracted separation from her husband. From the outset, Burney states her intention to record her personal experiences, writing in the prelude to the battle:

> I pass by all now except personal detail, as I write but for my nearest friends; and all that was then known of public occurrence had long been stale (Burney, p.146).

Perhaps conscious that the literary arena had been saturated with accounts of the battle, Burney wanted to avoid engaging with this well-rehearsed corpus; indeed, as the battle draws nearer, she resists the impulse to employ retrospectively grand, exultant, elegiac prose, stating 'I will simply write the narrative of my own history at that awful period' (Burney, p.147). A focus upon the personal means that the coalescence of the national and the domestic is not quite so obvious; nonetheless, evidence can still be found in Burney's narrative.

Burney often drew upon her female acquaintances for information, both for guidance regarding flight from Paris and, later, when trying to determine the whereabouts of her husband. Her decision to flee was constantly tempered by her desire to stay near to Alexandre d'Arblay:

> [f]light, however, was intolerable to my thoughts. I weighed it not as saving me from Bonaparte; I could consider it only as separating me from all to which my heart most dearly clung (Burney, p.73).

Deeply devoted to each other, the d'Arblays shared a mutual respect which was reflected in the roles that they undertook while the French King prepared to leave Paris. Although it was obvious to Burney that Alexandre's departure was imminent, she maintained her composure, never betraying that she did not want him to leave:

> I knew [taking to the field] to be his earnest wish, as the only chance of saving the King and the throne; but he well knew that it was my greatest dread, though I was always silent upon the subject, well aware that while his honour was dearer to him than his life, my own sense of duty was dearer to me also than mine (Burney, p.75).

While Alexandre adheres to a notion of masculine patriotism founded in honour, Burney has a clear sense of a female patriotic role in which she masks her emotional responses thereby facilitating her husband's principled actions. The d'Arblays were aware of the heart-rending pain of separation but, in not speaking of it, sought to

contain it, thereby enabling them both to perform their duty. Burney emphasises the importance of her role in the poignant scene of Alexandre's departure:

> [h]e then came to me, with an air of assumed serenity, and again, in the most kindly, soothing terms, called upon me to *give him an example of courage*. I obeyed his injunction with my best ability – yet how dreadful was our parting! We knelt together, in short but fervent prayer to heaven for each other's preservation, and then separated. At the door he turned back, and with a smile which, though forced, has inexpressible sweetness, he half-gaily exclaimed, "Vive le Roi!" I instantly caught his wise wish that we should part with an apparent cheerfulness, and re-echoed his words – and then he darted from my sight (Burney, p.80).

With her husband's exit marking the successful fulfilment of her patriotic role, Burney immediately collapsed, 'inert, helpless, motionless' (Burney, p.82).

As a primarily supportive role, Burney's perception of female patriotism could be interpreted as adhering to the separate spheres paradigm; in the 'Narrative' women support their male relations from a domestic setting. Yet, like Eaton's farmer's wife, such an assessment is limiting and conceals the extent to which Burney's patriotism functions on a national, public level. In the same manner that the war is part of the homes of the farmer's wife and of the inhabitants of Brussels in Eaton's account, in Burney's 'Narrative' the domestic and the martial are inextricable. Although Burney occupies her own demarcated space within the house while Alexandre is preparing for battle, her comment that she 'tried to appear as if [she] had no suspicion of his proceedings, remaining almost wholly in [her] own room, to avoid any accidental surprise, and to avoid paining him with the sight of [her] anguish' (Burney, p.75), highlights the histrionic nature of this arrangement. Although Burney repeatedly stresses that female heroism resides in the ability to bear a separation from one's husband – '[s]he bore the term of that suspense with an heroism that I greatly admired, for I well knew she adored her husband (Burney, p.127) – solely focusing upon a marital supportive role overlooks the opportunities for heroism that separation provided. For example, Burney and her travelling companions became 'accustomed' to the repeated difficulties they encountered with their passports, growing 'both adroit and courageous in surmounting them' (Burney, p.125), while Burney discovers a courageous independence which enables her to undertake a dangerous journey alone to join her injured husband at Trèves, after the victory at Waterloo.

While the focus of Burney's narrative predominately centres upon the heroism of her husband, quietly courageous women are to be found in the background. In

Paris, Burney encountered the Comtesse d'Auch whose husband was also a member of the King's Bodyguard. Although the Comtesse and her children were in relative safety with her father in Paris, rumour had it that Napoleon was nearing Bordeaux and the Auch family estates; thus, she had to make a choice between fleeing with her father and returning to the family property in a bid to defend it. In contrast to her father's lover, Madame la Princesse d'Henin, who was in a constant state of 'perturbation' (Burney, p.87), the Comtesse made a measured, courageous decision:

> [q]uietly, and in total silence, she communed with herself, not mixing in the discourse, nor seeming to heed the disturbance around her; but, when at length applied to, her resolution, from her own concentrated meditations, was fixedly taken, to preserve, if possible, by her exertions and courage, the property of her absent and beloved husband, for his hoped return and for her children (Burney, p.90).

Without her husband to accompany her, the Comtesse and her children must undertake a long, dangerous journey, thereby exhibiting an intrepid independence which would be restricted if interpreted in terms of the private and the domestic. Although motivated by a duty to her husband and the preservation of their home, the weight of the Comtesse's decision to endeavour such a journey with such an aim, at a time when it was deemed inappropriate for women to travel alone, let alone on such a dangerous mission, should not be underestimated. Her heroism is located in her independence, which is facilitated by separation from her husband.

By virtue of the gendered nature of war, these Waterloo narratives do not contain first-hand accounts of the battle; as non-combatants, both Eaton and Burney's portrayal of the events were heavily mediated by anecdotal and published accounts. This does not mean that they should be read solely in the context of the private sphere. For Burney, the imagination is as powerful a threat as the weapons of war; as the battle drew closer to Brussels she wrote:

> [e]very shot tolled in our imaginations the death of myriads; and the conviction that the destruction and devastation were so near us, with the probability that if all attempt at escape should prove abortive, we might be personally involved in the carnage, gave us sensations too awful for verbal expression; we could only gaze and tremble, listen and shudder (Burney, p.161).

Although the residents of Brussels – both male and female – were not in the direct line of fire, for them, the deafening roar of the canons signalled that they were in an equally life-threatening situation. Burney alludes to the overwhelming, incapacitating

power of the imagination as, bereft of a reliable source of intelligence, she imagines her impending demise. Engendered by the politics of the public sphere, for Eaton and Burney, the battle in which national narratives were spawned intruded upon their personal lives which, as has been demonstrated, render any distinction between the public and the private obsolete. As the national and the domestic came to mean the same thing at Waterloo, so Burney and Eaton – in line with their unique imagined nations – negotiated the implications in very different ways.

4:3 'The dead could not be numbered': Charlotte Anne Eaton's Gothic Waterloo

In the immediate aftermath of Waterloo, and in the months and decades that followed, crowds of Britons flocked to the site of the battle, seeking some form of tangible experience of the historic victory. As Stuart Semmel argues, the end of the Napoleonic wars, precisely demarcated at Waterloo, 'ushered in the first hints of modern mass tourism.'[22] Sightseers came from all walks of life, and included authors such as Sir Walter Scott, the Wordsworths, and the Poet Laureate Robert Southey, each searching for inspiration for their contributions to the myths of Waterloo. As discussed above, 'current events were processed into myth with extraordinary rapidity; almost overnight, Waterloo was hailed as a momentous historical event.'[23]

In an article which explores the influx of British tourists to Waterloo, Semmel suggests that the main motivation for travelling to Belgium was that

> it seemed possible that [tourists] might apprehend recent history more *tangibly* – with greater apparent transparency, less obvious mediation – than when trapped in their wartime "island prison".[24]

Due to the nature of the landscape, their agenda was fraught with difficulties; although the detritus of battle could clearly be seen, with each passing day nature, looters, relatives, and officials erased the marks of martial action. Exploring the relationship between memory and landscape, Thomas Laqueur describes the tension which exists between the 'spatial' and the 'temporal':

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[22] Semmel, p.10.
[23] Semmel, p.16.
[24] Semmel, p.10.

> a place that at one moment was the venue for something – horrible, magnificent, world-historical – that cries out to be remembered, exists in time, which inexorably washes it of the marks it bore.[25]

Semmel argues that, while searching for evidence of a coherent national history, British battlefield tourists 'confronted the elusiveness of the past, the fragmented quality of history'.[26] Furthermore, the appearance of the field in the immediate aftermath of the battle, littered with the often incomplete corpses of soldiers and horses, directly contravened any attempts to glorify the victory. While sightseers sought communion with the past, therefore, 'the very *presentness* of Waterloo seemed an impediment to its artistic portrayal.'[27] For Semmel, the quest for tangibility was impossible from the outset; Waterloo became mediated through a plethora of artistic representations, including guide-books and panoramas, each of which directed the spectator's interpretation of the battle-field.

Exploring the relationship between battlefield tourism and 'ways of seeing' – 'modes of visual comprehension that condition the subject to regard the battle, and its outcome, as a sublime object of ideology' – Philip Shaw suggests that tourism is structured in a manner that is 'specifically geared towards the avoidance of permanent shock, whether this comes from the meeting with undesirable facets of class or from the repellent matter of the body'.[28] One of the aims of post-war tourism, therefore, was to transform the opacity of Waterloo into the 'clarity of national victory'.[29] Pseudo-factual primers and sketches, including Booth's *Battle of Waterloo*, ensured that there was no potential for 'dissident readings' of the battle, and that Waterloo became a 'site of individual and national resubstantiation'.[30] Although the first visitors to the field were confronted with the gory reality of warfare, it was possible to employ the victory in a representation of national regeneration, Shaw argues, as

> [b]y organising the contact with death into predictable, repetitive patterns the visitor to Waterloo and, by extension, the nation state, gains the illusion of mastery and control over a process that, as ultimate real, is beyond incorporation.[31]

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[25] Thomas Laqueur, 'Introduction', *Representations*, 69 (Winter 2000), pp.1-8 (p.1).
[26] Semmel, p.11.
[27] Semmel, p.19.
[28] Shaw, p.71.
[29] Shaw, p.73.
[30] Shaw, p.74. Shaw refers to Eaton's *Battle of Waterloo* in the manner in which it was received by the contemporary readership, as Booth's *Battle of Waterloo*, after the publisher.
[31] Shaw, p.78.

When Eaton describes her confrontation with the bodies of the dead in her subsequent publication, *Waterloo Days*, Shaw argues that she negotiated the sight as a 'gothic intrusion' in her narrative, before resorting to the picturesque as a means to direct the interpretation of the reader:

> Eaton's sublime inarticulacy at the dehumanising effects of mass graves and ash piles has been transformed into sublime appreciation for the individual's contribution to the greater good.[32]

Shaw correctly identifies Eaton's impulse to mythologise, but the influence of the gothic upon her national narrative bears further analysis. As will be demonstrated, Eaton's sustained use of the genre in *The Battle of Waterloo* operates as a means for her to attempt to incorporate the horrific within the ordinary, thereby paving the way for her regenerative myth of the British nation.

Critics have found the concept of the gothic – like national identity – difficult to define, usually resorting to a list of sub-genres and thematic characteristics. So, for example, Cannon Schmitt refers to 'multiple subcategories' such as 'horror-Gothics', 'terror-Gothics', and 'oriental-Gothics', while Fred Botting – in his influential account of the Gothic – refers to themes of excess, transgression, and diffusion.[33] However, as David Punter argues,

> Gothic fiction has, above all, to do with terror; and where we find terror in the literature of the last two centuries ... we almost always find traces of the Gothic.[34]

Despite – or perhaps precisely because of – its resistance to definition, the gothic was an extremely influential 'widespread cultural ideal', which dominated the novel market in the 1790s and 'influenced most of the greatest writers of its time'.[35] One reason for its pervasive appeal may lie in its ability to deliver 'the world in an inverted form':

> precisely ... because of its historical and geographical distancing [the gothic] does not appear to represent a 'real' world ... [enabling it to represent] those areas of the world and of consciousness which are, for

[32] Shaw, p.75, p.76.
[33] Cannon Schmitt, *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p.5, Fred Botting, *Gothic* (London: Routledge, 1996).
[34] David Punter, *The Literature of Terror, Volume One: The Gothic Tradition*, 2nd Edition (London: Longman, 1996), p.13.
[35] Wein, p. 8, Punter, p.7, p.11.

> one reason or another, not available to the normal processes of representation.[36]

For those authors who sought to translate the battlefield at Waterloo, the abstract supernatural nature of the gothic lent itself to an assimilation of the incomprehensible and the potentially dissident in their accounts of their imagined nations. Indeed, during the last decade, critical interest has focused upon explorations of the relationship between the gothic and the nation.

In *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality*, Cannon Schmitt suggests that gothic literature provides the 'generic space and narrative patterns in which nationality and gender constitute one another'.[37] Thus, for Schmitt, a 'notion of Englishness' is constructed in gothic narratives, which 'initially functions by means of threatened female figures who ostensibly embody a peculiarly English subjectivity'.[38] In making this argument, Schmitt draws upon what critics have sought to define as a female gothic, habitually associated with the domestic sphere. Schmitt paraphrases the debate in terms of the ways in which the female gothic relates to women's lives in 'compensatory' or 'symptomatic' ways. The former critical perspective suggests that the enjoyment derived from reading gothic novels served as compensation for the increasing restrictions placed upon female behaviour, while the latter – and more influential – perspective portrays the horror of the gothic as a symptom of the bleak reality of women's lives.[39] From this debate, Schmitt draws the conclusion that the 'threat of violence against women' is a recurring theme in gothic genre, arguing that

> [t]hreatened femininity is central to the Gothic precisely for its function as a crucial but contested site in discourses of identity, chief among them the discourse of the nation. In the context of the Gothic's characteristic oppositions, victimised womanhood embodies a nationalist narrative in miniature.[40]

As the familiar 'privileged reservoir for supposedly English national characteristics', any threat posed to the figure of the Englishwoman was, by extension, a threat to the

[36] Devendra Varma, *The Gothic Flame* (1957), paraphrased by Punter, p.15.
[37] Schmitt, p.2.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Schmitt, p.10.
[40] Schmitt, p.11.

nation that she represents; a nation which Schmitt characterises as subject to 'wide-ranging paranoia'.[41]

The air of anxiety prevalent in Brussels leading up to and during the battle lends itself to the gothic predilection for suspense fuelled by paranoia. Subject to repeated reports of an impending French invasion, Eaton's staccato narrative builds up the reader's suspense:

> What then was the general consternation, when about three o' clock, a furious cannonading began! – It was certainly in the direction our army had taken – it came from Waterloo! – Had our troops then encountered the French before they had joined the Prussians? – Were they separately engaged? – Where? – When? – How? – In vain, did every one ask questions which none could answer – numbers of people in carriages and on horseback set off towards Waterloo, and returned no wiser than they went, each bringing back a different story – a thousand absurd reports, totally devoid of foundation, were circulated – what you were told one minute was contradicted the next (Eaton, p.5).

Broken narrative conveys the atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety and leaves the reader breathless, while the use of typically gothic phrases such as 'terror and suspense' (Eaton, p.11) add to the sense of impending doom. The unnameable threatening presence typically found in the pages of the gothic novel presses in upon Eaton and the inhabitants of Brussels, the defenceless male and female non-combatants. However, in the same manner that she confronts untrustworthy Belgian accounts with the calm composure of a patriotic Briton, Eaton pragmatically undermines the irrational fear of the gothic. While out for a walk one evening, for example, her anxious comment that the continuing cannonading 'apparently approached nearer' (Eaton, p.7) is immediately undermined by a footnote that rationally states '[p]robably because in the stillness of the evening, it was heard more distinctly. There was no real change of position' (Eaton, p.7). Rather than employing the conventional gothic trope of using terror to highlight the grotesque in the quotidian, Eaton emphasises the ordinariness of the horrific, thereby sanitising the sanguinary reality of Waterloo and facilitating her appropriation of the Battle in her regenerative national vision. Thus, the climactic gothic moment comes with the news of the victory:

> It was then, when fear almost amounted to certainty, when suspense had ended in despair, after a night of misery – that the great, the glorious news burst upon us – that the Allies had gained a complete victory – that the

[41] Schmitt, p.11, p.24.

> French – defeated – routed – dispersed – had fled from the field of battle – pursued by our conquering troops. No words can describe the feelings of that moment – no eloquence can paint the transport which filled every breast and brought tears into every eye (Eaton, p.18).

At the moment when terror and suspense had reached its peak, news arrived of the ultimate reassurance of safety, allied victory at Waterloo; furthermore, this is a moment where the domestic – the fear of the threatened female author – and the national – the martial conflict – converge, rendering Schmitt's analysis of a threatened female subject, located within a female gothic founded upon separate gendered spheres, unsatisfactory.

Echoing *Don Juan*'s famous opening line, Toni Wein identifies a national need for a hero peculiar to the literature and the periodical press of the period, in *British Identities, Heroic Nationalisms, and the Gothic Novel, 1764-1824*, and argues that 'the Gothic participates in the construction of a British national identity through its imagining of a hero'.[42] Unlike Schmitt's reliance upon distinct gendered characteristics, however, Wein argues that gothic heroes have traits that 'cross gender barriers':

> they open up a cross-gender identification and suggest that masculinity is as much a subject position to be occupied for men as femininity is for women.[43]

Masculinity and femininity are a 'subject position' rather than an essentialised category; therefore, Wein suggests, the figure of the 'feminised' hero 'maintains an agency that theorists of the feminised hero deny'.[44] Thus, Wein's argument negates the existence of a specifically female gothic as

> [t]he cross-gender attributes of heroes and heroines militate against recent interpretations of the Gothic and romance as bifurcating into male and female forms ... the Gothic hero and heroine share attributes without being feminised or masculinised.[45]

Thus, when Eaton describes the Duke of Wellington, the representative of her imagined national identity, upon the battlefield following the victory, he occupies a masculine subject position:

> [a]s he crossed this fatal scene, on which the silence of death had now

[42] Wein, p.16.
[43] Wein, p.19.
[44] Wein, p.19, p.11.
[45] Wein, p.11.

> succeeded to the storm of battle, the moon breaking from dark clouds shed an uncertain light upon this wide field of carnage, covered with mangled thousands of that gallant army, whose heroic valour had won for him the brightest wreath of victory, and left to future times an imperishable monument of their country's fame. He saw himself surrounded by the bloody corpses of his veteran soldiers, who had followed him through distant lands – of his friends – his associates in arms – his companions through many an eventful year of danger and of glory: in that awful pause which follows the mortal conflict of man with man, emotions unknown or stifled in the heat of battle forced their way, the feelings of the man triumphed over those of the general, and in the very hour of victory, Lord Wellington burst into tears (Eaton, p.38).

The shocking, inassimilable sight of the mangled dead has now been incorporated into a glorious victory, in a narrative typical of a historical romance novel. The impulse to memorialise and mythologise Waterloo is encapsulated in the image of the weeping Wellington, which also re-humanises the dead. No longer mangled corpses, they are veterans, friends, companions who, remaining nameless, could be someone that the contemporary reader knew. The emotions that Wellington repressed in order to function as an efficient leader are now allowed release, as the representative of the British nation mourns for the nation's dead. More important, in the context of Wein's analysis of the gothic hero, Wellington is not feminised by his tears; rather, his masculine subject position is repeatedly stressed, rendering Waterloo a victory for an 'organic society, and ... its analysis of human nature'.[46] Wellington's tears could also be perceived as a manifestation of his fallible humanity, through which the reader may empathise with the otherwise laconic leader. Wellington was heavily criticised for the brief nature of his Waterloo despatch which, in comparison to Marshall Blücher's flowery description, did not contain any hint of glorifying prose. Thus, Eaton's empathetic portrayal of the British leader seeks to rehabilitate Wellington, as the architect of a victory which became a 'touchstone of English patriotism', as the ideal representative of her imagined national identity.[47]

Eaton remained unable, however, to erase the mangled bodies of the dead from her account of the victory and, by extension, from her regenerative vision of her imagined nation. Their insistent physical presence was a reminder of the high price the nation had paid for the abstract ideal of liberty and, as a disruption of Eaton's national narrative, constantly frustrate her attempt to portray a coherent nation by

[46] Wein, p.12.
[47] Semmel, p.17.

implicitly acknowledging the existence of other interpretations of the field and, thus, of other identities. The presence of the dead in her narrative calls attention to the irresolvable contradiction in her account of a victorious nation; the disjunction between glorifying prose and the grisly remains of battle. For Eaton, the initial sight of the field resisted assimilation into a familiar frame of reference:

> [t]he dead could not be numbered; and by those who visited this dreadful field of glory, and of death, the day after the battle, the spectacle of horror that it exhibited can never be forgotten.
> The mangled and lifeless bodies were even then stripped of every covering – every thing of the smallest value was already carried off (Eaton, p.40).

The 'dreadful' glorious victory was dearly won by the sacrifice of the dead soldiers, whose mangled bodies remain in unnatural poses where they fell, as a shocking, unassimilable reminder of the price of war. Yet, Eaton overcomes the presence of the dead through recourse to the gothic, thereby facilitating her myth of a British national identity.

As Robert Miles argues in his analysis of the relationship between abjection, nationalism, and the gothic, the ambiguity of the genre facilitated the narration of a 'nationalist myth of seamless origin'.[48] Focusing upon the presence of contradiction in national narratives, Miles argues that the 'nationalist effort to construct a usable past is haunted, in the Gothic, by what has been abjected in the process'.[49] Miles identifies a contradictory relationship between gothic anti-catholic tropes and the anxiety surrounding the presence of Catholics in Britain, and suggests that the juxtaposition of Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection alongside Slavoj Zizek's analysis of nationalism reveals both the desire and the inability to achieve a resolution. Theorising abjection as a literary form, Miles suggests that Kristeva's analysis 'affords us an insight into how the Gothic represents a nationalist sense of the impure'.[50] Thus, the abject embodies the internal Other, that which must – but cannot – be 'expelled from the national body to allow its hygienic imagining', in this case, the contradictory presence of British Catholics.[51] Furthermore, drawing upon Zizek's theory that national coherence depends upon a 'nondiscursive kernel of enjoyment', Miles argues that

[48] Robert Miles, 'Abjection, Nationalism, and the Gothic', in *Essays and Studies 2001: The Gothic*, ed. by Fred Botting (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), pp. 47-70 (p.64).
[49] Miles, p.67.
[50] Miles, p.50.
[51] Miles, p.61.

Catholics were feared 'as an abject Other who [sought] to steal our 'Thing', our enjoyment', thereby posing a threat to Protestant British national identities.[52] For Miles, therefore, Kristeva's abjection and Zizek's projection are 'different sides of a single ambiguity'.[53]

The bodies of the dead at Waterloo – like the British Catholics in anti-catholic accounts of the nation – represent a contradiction in Eaton's national narrative and reading *The Battle* in the context of Miles' theory of the relationship between the abject, the gothic, and nationalism reveals the manner in which she negotiated this dilemma. Referring to her sister's panoramic sketch, Eaton directs the gaze of the battlefield tourist, allowing them a glimpse of the dead:

> Fig. 36, 37, 38, Plate 2. A hedge completely trodden down, where the fighting was particularly severe, and the carnage was dreadful; in front of it, and between it and the hedge, behind fig. 12, 13, Plate 2, huge graves or rather pits are filled with hundreds of dead, where victors and the vanquished are promiscuously laid; so lightly had the clay been thrown over them, that from one a hand had forced its way above the ground, and in another, a human face was distinctly visible. Indescribable was the horror of these objects. Three weeks after the battle, the very gales of heaven were tainted with the effluvia arising from them: besides these tremendous graves, of which several hundreds might be counted, immense heaps of the dead were burnt in different places, and their ashes, mingled with the dust, are scattered over the field (Eaton, p.36).

Despite repeatedly stressing the indescribable nature of the mass graves, Eaton draws upon the hyperbolic horror of the gothic to portray, in an almost gratuitous manner, the dead. She is haunted by the disembodied nature of the corpses and, rather than dehumanising the dead as Shaw suggests, Eaton disembodies the deceased, rendering the hand and face as manifestations of romantic ruin and decay and the gothic supernatural. The dead are the abject Others of Eaton's imagined nation; as the corporeal casualties of warfare, they are a stark reminder of the inherent contradiction that exists within an ostensibly peaceful nation – that peace is only derived through defensive warfare. As such, the dead need to be expelled from the national body in order that Eaton may portray a pure coherent identity, yet their expulsion is impossible due to their constitutive role – as the preservers of the peace – in her national imagining. While they remain, their presence threatens to steal the national

[52] Miles, p.47, p.61.

[53] Miles, p.64, p.68.

enjoyment of Eaton and her readers, in other words, celebration of the victory at Waterloo.

Portrayal of a regenerative national identity depends, therefore, upon the incorporation of the dead within the narrative. Thus, after allowing the tourist to experience the imagined horror of this part of the field – and as the years passed, it was part of a field that was viewed – Eaton immediately directs their gaze to another location:

> Fig. 39, 40, in the back ground, is a part of the ground where the British bivouacked on the night of the 17th, beneath a heavy and incessant torrent of rain. In the morning of the 18th, they were just preparing breakfast, and dressing their beef-steaks, when Lord Wellington's Aides-de-Camp riding up, called to them, "Stand to your arms; the French are advancing:" instantly breakfasts and refreshments were abandoned; wet, cold, and hungry, but bold and undaunted, our brave soldiers ranged themselves to face their foes, and during nearly twelve hours, without any other aid, maintained the unequal, and the glorious contest. Let it never be forgotten, that the united British and Belgic army on that day amounted to little more than half the Enemy (Eaton, p.36).

Drawing upon the myth of British stamina and fortitude, Eaton implies that the British soldiers were prepared to sacrifice their lives for their nation, thereby incorporating the gothic image of the dead within her Waterloo myth, a glorified account of national regeneration. As various critics have suggested, the gothic functions as a means to expel that which is feared, while simultaneously redefining the boundaries of the socially acceptable.[54]Yet, while Eaton clearly employs the gothic as a strategy to control her deepest fears, the dead remain within her narrative – as the national abject Other – a constant reminder of the multivalent nature of national identity. Like the national narratives of Jane Penrose and Melesina Trench, Eaton drew upon a familiar frame of reference – the gothic – in order to represent the incomprehensible; a narrative strategy which reveals that, for the individual, the national and the domestic converged at Waterloo. For each individual, the events of June 1815 had a profound impact upon their sense of national belonging, and the various identities necessary for its perpetuation, perhaps no where more so than in the case of those who had married across the national divide.

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[54] For example, see Schmitt, p.8, Botting (1996), p.7, David Punter & Elisabeth Bronfen, 'Gothic: Violence, Trauma and the Ethical', in *Essays and Studies 2001: The Gothic*, ed. by Fred Botting (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), pp. 7-21 (p.7).

4:4 'Upon public events my very private destiny is entirely hanging!': Fanny Burney d'Arblay's Anglo-French Identities

For the many thousands of individuals caught up in the Napoleonic wars, the outcome of the battle at Waterloo would have a profound impact upon their lives and identities. As an Englishwoman married to a Frenchman, the conflict between the opposing nations brought constant tension between Fanny Burney d'Arblay's natal and marital national identities, the resolution of which affected the most intimate of her relationships, both with her husband and with her sense of self. On 3rd April 1814, just before Napoleon's first abdication on the 6th, Burney wrote:

> no one is so unsettled in her prospects, so uncertain in her fate, as I am at this period. Upon public events my very private destiny is entirely hanging! When, where will the conflict end? and how? (Burney, p.20).

As Kate Chisholm, Burney's biographer comments, 'Fanny knew that her own future was irrevocably bound up with the fate of Napoleon at Waterloo'; indeed, it could be argued that the conflict between her national identities could only be resolved at Waterloo. [55] However, whatever the outcome, Burney would still be married to a Frenchman, and her attempts to construct a unified national narrative would still be subject to the plurality of identity. Thus, the outcome of the battle would remove external societal pressures alone. As her assessment of her future prospects indicates, for Burney, the national and the domestic are indistinguishable, and her narrative repeatedly demonstrates that the battle and her marriage were inextricably linked to her sense of national belonging.

Although Napoleon and Wellington are cast in a heroic light in her 'Waterloo Narrative', it is her husband, Alexandre, who is portrayed as her true hero, implying that her imagined nation – represented by her hero – and the domestic – her marriage to that hero – are inextricably linked. That Burney does not differentiate between her identity and that of her husband is acknowledged in the reference to herself 'as one, in fact, whose honour was the honour of her spotless husband, and therefore invulnerable' (Burney, p.66). Burney's moral character is defined in relation to Alexandre's, therefore his heroic representation also reflects upon her. Despite the occasional reference to a fear of capture by Napoleon's army, throughout the entire

[55] Chisholm, p.244.

narrative Burney's main preoccupation and motivation is remaining near her 'first earthly tie' (Burney, p.71), either in as close a proximity as possible, or where he could find her when he returned from his unknown whereabouts. Burney portrays Alexandre d'Arblay as a highly principled, loyal subject, a man of honour not unlike constructions of British heroes such as Wellington. Although Alexandre shared in the generally slow response to Napoleon's advance towards Paris, Burney suggests that he was one of the first individuals to see what would happen:

> [f]rom this moment disguise, if any there had been, was over with the most open and frank of human beings, who never even transitorily practised it but to keep off evil, or its apprehension, from others. He communicated to me now his strong view of danger; not alone that measures might be taken to secure my safety, but to spare me any sudden agitation. Alas! none was spared to himself! More clearly than any one he anticipated the impending tempest, and foreboded its devastating effects. He spoke aloud and strenuously, with prophetic energy, to all whom he was then officially associated; but the greater part either despaired of resisting the torrent, or disbelieved its approach. What deeply interesting scenes crowd upon my remembrance, of his noble, his daring, but successless exertions! (Burney, p.68)

Alexandre is portrayed as a man of sincerity and compassion, as an individual who is prepared to take personal political risks in the name of truth and damage limitation; thus, Burney describes his strenuous protestations, his noble and daring actions, as heroic.

The extent to which this is a construction is suggested by her reference to his loyalty to his monarch, Louis XVIII; while stressing how 'invariably steady was M. d'Arblay never to serve against his liege sovereign' (Burney, p.62), Burney overlooks the period during the Peace of Amiens when her husband served in Napoleon's army. Chisholm suggests that, due to the d'Arblays straitened financial situation, Alexandre was motivated by the lure of a French military pension, while Burney's protestations are evidence of her desire not to fall out of favour with her employer, Queen Charlotte, and therefore lose her own pension.[56] Alexandre did refuse to fight the British; however, Burney's emphasis upon her husband's monarchical loyalty was a fundamental part of the construction of his heroic adherence to duty. Thus, at sixty-one years of age and suffering from ill health, Alexandre imposed 'upon himself a severity of service for which he had no longer health or strength, and imposing it only the more rigidly from the fear that his then beginning weakness and infirmities should

[56] Chisholm, pp.200-201.

seem to plead for indulgence' (Burney, p.70). Burney suggested that he should ask for respite from the two military roles that he had undertaken, one in the day and one at night, but 'he would not hear [her] upon such a proposition; he would sooner, far, have died at his post' (Burney, p.70).

The heroic tropes which Burney employs in her portrayal of Alexandre – nobility, courage, daring, loyalty, and duty – appear to be universal, applicable to British or French individuals alike. Indeed, portraying Alexandre as her national hero appears to efface the existence of difference between their natal national identities in her quest for a seamless narrative. Yet, as her reference to the 'factions' and 'fractions' (Burney, p.145) into which the Bourbonists and the Buonapartists were divided implies, any attempts at coherence are frustrated by the multiple nature of national identities; indeed, Burney did not ignore her husband's French identities altogether, commenting upon his 'native noblesse of air' (Burney, p.136) and his 'natively martial spirit' (Burney, p.134). For an Englishwoman who marries a Frenchman – at a time when marriage constituted the legal transference of inheritable property and estates from one man to another through the chattel of the bride – the conflict that arises between her natal and marital national identities would appear inevitable.

As the argument of this thesis has demonstrated, when an author attempts to portray a coherent account of their imagined nation they, often unconsciously, take part in a global process in which the illusionary sense of national belonging is constructed and narrated. For some individuals, including Burney, this process takes the form of a conscious collusion. As the preface to *The Wanderer*, published in 1814, reveals, Burney was aware of the conflict between her French and British identities. While making an argument for the apolitical nature of the subsequent narrative – itself a convention of the female-authored preface – Burney suggests that she should leave

> discussions of national rights, and modes, or acts of government, to those whose wishes have no opposing calls; whose duties are undivided; and whose opinions are unbiassed [sic] by individual bosom feelings; which, where strongly impelled by dependent happiness, insidiously, unconsciously direct our views, colour our ideas, and entangle our partiality in our interests.[57]

[57] Frances Burney, *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.5.

Suggesting that her duties were divided and that her opinions were biased, Burney reveals the tension that existed between her opposing national identities, and tacitly acknowledges that she was subject to an internal disunity founded upon two distinctly antagonistic identities. From the beginning of the Napoleonic wars, the d'Arblays trod a precarious political path, evident in Burney's concerned addresses to the Queen's confidante, Miss Planta, about Alexandre's military service. Burney also had to contend with an internal crisis of identity evident in her prevarication over where to live; her exasperation is clear in a letter written to Marianne Waddington on 3rd June 1814, in which she exclaimed that she was

> wholly ignorant even of where I shall fix my residence! Whether in Paris, or London – at Montpellier, or at Bath – or upon the banks of the Loire, - or at the foot of a Welsh mountain![58]

The inextricable link between the d'Arblays' national identities manifests in Burney's contemplative musings when she was presented – on 22nd April 1814 at London's Grillion's Hotel – to the recently-crowned Louis XVIII, the 'King of my honoured husband' (Burney, p.33). Commenting that 'John Bull has seldom appeared to me to greater advantage' (Burney, p.25), Burney describes the scene as

> replete with motives to grand reflections; and to me, the devoted subject of another monarch, whose melancholy alienation of mind was a constant source to me of sorrow, it was a scene for conflicting feelings and profound meditation (Burney, p.34).

Admiration for Louis brought to mind the ill health of the British king, George III, prompting Burney to again acknowledge her conflicting identities.

The protracted conflict between their respective nations did not appear to cause conflict within the d'Arblays' intimate relationship, except with regard to their only son, Alexander. As Chisholm recounts, Burney was concerned that Alex took to life in Paris (during the Peace of Amiens) rather too easily and, conscious of her husband's desire for his son to serve in the French military, was apprehensive that her child would 'grow up to become more French than English'.[59] When Alexandre was offered a post in Louis XVIII Garde du Corps in November 1814, he wished his wife and son to travel to France with him. He could not understand Alex's passion for science, and believed that a military career would be far more lucrative. Aware of the internal conflict to which her son was subject, Burney knew that the outcome of the

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[58] Cited in Chisholm, p.238.
[59] Chisholm, p.208.

decision of whether Alex could remain at Cambridge – where, unbeknown to the d'Arblays, his studies were not faring well – would decide her son's place of residence:

> It is NOW that to know the *whole truth* may be useful; for now, just NOW the conflict is at the height which must subside by our fixing to which of his two native Countries – that of his Birth, or that of his Ancestors – he will finally belong.[60]

Alex did not travel to Paris with his parents, and Burney later wrote that her 'sole personal joy was that my younger Alexander was far away, and safely lodged in the only country of safety' (Burney, p.72).

Burney's national narrative portrays the complex relationship between her husband, her son, and her sense of national belonging, while also revealing that the national and the domestic had merged to represent the same interests, as the characterisation of her husband as her national hero evinces. With Alexandre as her protagonist, Burney attempted to narrate her imagined coherent identity, yet her collusion in the construction of an artificially seamless narrative becomes more evident as her sense of internal disunity – the tension between her marital and natal identities – disrupts her narrative. Throughout the Napoleonic wars, association with certain identities could prove fatal, a danger which increased during the immediate aftermath of the battle. Napoleon's defeat signalled a change of government in France and, as the uncertain news of the outcome at Waterloo spread, the French bureaucrats – unsure of the chain of command – were increasingly unable to carry out their roles efficiently. While allegiances could change in a matter of minutes, affiliation with Bourbonist, Buonapartist, and British national identities became increasingly dangerous and unstable. Bereft of the contingent frames of reference with which to identify other nationals, individuals became reliant upon their passports as a means of proving their correct allegiance.

As a paper identity, a passport claims to define an individual or, more precisely, it represents the identity with which others have defined its possessor. It is questionable whether it is possible to construct an external representation of an individual's identity, due its fluidity; thus, the idea of a passport is deeply problematic. In the build-up to Waterloo, and during the battle, the instability of nation was at its most visible; alternative identities were available and individuals,

[60] Letter to Marianne Waddington, 3.6.1814, cited in Chisholm, p.239.

including Burney, were able consciously to manipulate their national self-definition. Consequently the need for passports, and the concrete definition which they allegedly imparted, became more insistent as individuals grew increasingly unsure of the allegiances of those around them. A parallel could be drawn with the twenty-first century debate regarding identity cards as a response to the perception that the British nation has been infiltrated by terrorists, yet, as the argument against their introduction insists, external forms of identification are subject to manipulation and are therefore untrustworthy. While individuals continue to invest in the belief that a passport defines one's identity, the passport itself – and the manner in which it is employed – reveals much about the process of identification.

From her flight to Paris up until the d'Arblays quit France for England after Waterloo, Burney was covered by three different passports – four if one modification is included – moving between them and their different identities to suit the situation in which she discovered herself. Her French identities, as the wife of an officer of the King, appeared to be of paramount importance; on the sole occasion that she was asked whether she was French by a policeman, Burney mused 'French by marriage, though English by birth, I hardly knew which to call myself; I said, however, *"Oui."*' (Burney, p.217). With her flight from Paris imminent, Alexandre secured Burney a passport from a friend in the Bourbonist ministry:

> M. de Jaucourt gave this passport *"pour Madame d'Arblay, née Burney,"* avoiding to speak of me as the wife of a general officer of the King, lest that might eventually impede my progress, should I be reduced to escape from Paris; while on the other hand, to facilitate my travelling with any friends or companions, he inserted, *et les personnes de sa suite* (Burney, p.71).

Jaucourt's decision reflects the assumption that Burney's national identity is defined by that of her husband yet, with a stroke of the pen, she is able to move between Bourbonist and Bonapartist French identities. Furthermore, as the reference to travelling companions implies, an individual may extend their identity to another which, as Burney discovered, facilitates the fluid movement between identities.

When Burney finally fled Paris, it was as a member of the entourage of her friend, Madame la Princesse d'Henin, under whose passport she was included as a member of '*sa famille*' (Burney, p.93). Keeping her own passport 'in reserve, in case of accidents or separation' (Burney, p.93), Burney's inclusion on Madame d'Henin's passport effaces her French Bourbonist and her English identities, each of which were

dangerous at this unpredictable time.[61] As Burney recounts the particular difficulty that the party encountered with the passport at Amiens, the malleable fluidity of national identity and the extent to which it was manipulated becomes clear. Describing the political situation as 'a kind of suspended government', Burney comments that the police officers who are the first officials to detain the party 'were evidently at a loss whether to regard [their passports] as valid or not' (Burney, p.98); the parameters by which assessments of an individual's identity are made were absent. Burney continued to withhold her own passport, but along with Madame d'Henin and M. Lameth, Louis XVIII's prefect at Amiens, proceeded to take part in a charade which upheld her identity as 'one of *la famille* of la Princesse' (Burney, p.99), while tacitly acknowledging her Bourbonist identity. M. Lameth feared the consequences for a prefect of being entertained by the 'wife of an officer so immediately in the service of the King [...] if that prefect meant to yield to the tide of a new government' (Burney, p.99). Rather than allowing them to continue with papers 'from the ministers of Louis XVIII. at Paris', Lameth, who 'could not [...] answer for retaining his powers', issued the party with a new passport and pressed them to 'get on as fast as possible with his passports while certain they were efficient' (Burney, p.101), thereby highlighting both his own precarious position and the instability of the passport, while political allegiances were rapidly changing without warning. In fact, Burney comments that the subsequent safe entrance of the party to Tournay would not have been possible without the passport 'so recently renewed at Amiens' (Burney, p.113). Once the party reached the comparative safety of Brussels, Burney finally applied to Colonel Jones, the Allied military commander at Brussels, for an English passport, which was met with the curt rebuff that it was 'not for [the English] to spread alarm' (Burney, p.152). Her success in persuading him to sign her old passport reaped dividends on her dangerous journey to meet her injured husband at Trèves after the battle, enabling her to pass through Liège.

While the Allied victory at Waterloo resolved the conflict between the English and the French, in the immediate aftermath of the battle, the tension between Burney's natal and marital identities was heightened. The deeply proud 'patriot-heart' of Alexandre was dejected not only by his inability to serve his country, due to a debilitating injury, but by his reduced status in his own nation:

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[61] Madame d'Henin occupied a peculiar position in that her rank was recognised by both the Bourbon and the Napoleonic regimes, allowing her to move with ease between these identities.

> [w]e re-entered France by the permission of foreigners, and could only re-enter at all by passports of All the Allies! It seemed as if all Europe had freer egress to that country than its natives! (Burney, p.226)

Whereas Burney had silently acquiesced to the necessity of changing her passports, perhaps due to her awareness of the fluid nature of national identity, Alexandre's 'indignation' and 'representation' at the French border apparently suggests that his sense of his national identity is, for him, fixed and immoveable. Yet, in the immediate aftermath of the battle – before the Allied commanders had restored the Bourbon king to his throne – the frames of reference with which Alexandre's identity was defined were in flux, placing greater emphasis upon the defining role of his passport. In order to maintain his sense of Frenchness, he has to draw upon a new, although temporary, Anglo-French identity; thus, he 'condescended to search his portefeuille for a passport of All the Allies' (Burney, p.227).

Although Burney does not directly criticise her husband's actions, her comment that 'the Prussian was not to blame, save for his uncourteous [sic] manners: the King of France was only such, at that moment, through Blücher and Wellington' (Burney, p.227), implies that she does not share Alexandre's position. This difference is at its starkest in Burney's account of the couple's return to Paris:

> [a] new change of military control soon followed, at which I grieved for my beloved companion. I almost felt ashamed to look at him, though my heart involuntarily, irresistibly palpitated with emotions which had little, indeed, in unison with either grief or shame; for the sentinels, the guards, the camps, became English.
>
> All converse between us now stopped involuntarily, and as if by tacit agreement. M. d'Arblay was too sincere a loyalist to be sorry, yet too high-spirited a freeman to be satisfied. I could devise nothing to say that might not cause some painful discussion or afflicting retrospection, and we travelled many miles in pensive silence – each nevertheless intensely observant of the astonishing new scene presented to our view, on re-entering the capital of France, to see the vision of Henry V. revived, and Paris in the hands of the English! (Burney, p.229-230)

At the moment when each of the d'Arblay's wholeheartedly embrace their natal national identities, communication ceases between them, implying that the success of their relationship depends upon the fluidity of national identity. Thus, the outcome of the battle of Waterloo prompts the d'Arblays to return to Britain. Chisholm suggests that Alexandre 'agreed reluctantly with Fanny' to return to Britain because he realised

that there were no prospects for their family in France.[62] Perhaps Burney was being generous then, when she concluded her 'Waterloo Narrative' with the sentiment that Alexandre had made the decision to quit France in response to his son's 'earnest wish' to 'establish himself in the land of his birth' and to indulge his wife's wishes (Burney, p.232). Despite a half-hearted assurance that the family would make an annual journey to France, Burney was 'never again to cross the Channel'.[63] Therefore, in portraying Alexandre as the 'most tender and generous of fathers' and as the 'most disinterested and most indulgent of husbands' (Burney, p.232) at the end of her 'Narrative', Burney rehabilitates the hero of her coherent imagined national identity, implying that the tension between her natal and her marital identities has been resolved now that the conflict which exacerbated the distance between them had ended.

Charlotte Anne Eaton's *Battle of Waterloo* and Frances Burney d'Arblay's 'Waterloo Narrative' each took part in the construction and dissemination of the Myth or, more precisely, Myths of Waterloo. Marking the end of a conflict with the French, which had lasted for nearly a quarter of a century, Waterloo also signalled a shift in British national identification. With the French ostensibly retiring from their role as the national Other in the popular imagination, Britons were forced to seek alternative ways in which to define themselves. Individuals could embrace the new identities born out of the resolution of the conflict, succumb to the fear of degeneration prompted by introspection, or find alternative means of ensuring the perpetuation of their sense of national belonging. While attempting to portray their imagined nations, Eaton and Burney's narratives reveal that national identity was both a source of anxiety and potentially liberating, for women, as the national and the domestic converged. More important, their narratives reveal that which the myths of Waterloo obscure: the profound impact which the battle had upon the individual's sense of national belonging. As Eaton employed the gothic to contain her fear of the contradiction lying at the heart of her imagined nation, Burney depended upon the outcome of the battle for some form of resolution of the tension between her natal British and marital French identities. Yet, as the analysis of each of the narratives examined in this thesis has demonstrated, any attempts on the part of the author to

[62] Chisholm, p.253.
[63] Ibid.

portray coherence in their national narrative are constantly frustrated by the inherent plurality of national identity.

Conclusion

Britannia looks out from the Lloyd's Certificate – the starting point of this discussion – with a gaze of serene confidence; a confidence that echoes in the national narratives of the women studied in this thesis, and which can be traced through the Age of Empire, the global conflicts of the twentieth century, and can still be detected in the renditions of 'Rule Britannia' at the Last Night of the Proms. It is a confidence based upon a belief in the prowess of the British nation, in its illustrious origins, and in its providential future. Thus, early nineteenth-century historical narratives, which constructed linear accounts that connected the mythical national heroes of the past – such as William Wallace – to contemporary Britain, demonstrated a faith in the nation which resonated in the wider literature of the period. For example, Jane Porter's account of the assimilative potential of an Anglo-British identity exhibits the same self-assured tone as Jane Penrose's pride in the British navy, and as Charlotte Anne Eaton's valorisation of the nation's military achievements. That these women shared in the conviction that Britain was great is a measure of the success of their national narratives – Stuart Hall's comforting narratives of the self – and of the strength of their imagination, in which their nations and national identities were constructed.[1]

The success of these national narratives is also evidence of the realization of the fundamental illusion upon which nation is based, that national identity is a monolithic, homogenous concept. In fact, as has been demonstrated, each individual draws upon a range of identities – limited by the frames of reference defined by their social position – in order to maintain a continuous sense of national belonging, of their Britishness. As an analysis of the conglomeration of identities in the Lloyd's Britannia – and, indeed, all of the narratives examined in this thesis – evinces, the nation is a multivalent sign, constituted through a theoretically infinite number of national identities. Yet, as has been demonstrated, these multiple identities repeatedly surface as moments of narrative contradiction, undermining any attempt at homogeneity.

Whether the authors studied in this thesis were conscious of the heterogeneity of their Britishness or not, their narratives arguably constituted a defensive response to a far-reaching profound national anxiety regarding identity, which can be traced

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[1] Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in *Modernity and Its Futures*, ed. by S. Hall, D. Held, & T. McGrew (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), pp.273-316 (p.277).

alongside national confidence through the ages. For the early nineteenth-century Britons – whose nation was a relatively recent creation – their nascent national identity was perceived as vulnerable and unstable, open to corruption from malevolent forces within, or from the external national nemesis, the French. Thus, the apprehension that manifests in their national narratives focuses upon two concerns: the notion that the individual's identity was under threat, and the nervous need to be able to define the identity of others.

Both Jane Porter and Eliza S. Francis perceived a threat to their imagined nations from the Other within – respectively, from immigrants and British Catholics – which they sought to contain. Thus, Porter imagines a nation formed of many layers, through which an immigrant who engages with the appropriate British identities may travel, fixing those who do not engage with recognisable tropes of Britishness at the national periphery, while Francis counters the perceived Catholic threat by suggesting that the Protestant Hanoverian Succession strengthens the British nation. Some of the more recent members of the nation – the Scots, for example – perceived Britain, the new layer of national allegiance, as a threat to their regional identities; thus, Anne Grant argued that the inclusion of the characteristic traits of the Highlander strengthened a degenerative British national identity. For those authors who appeared to be aware of the plurality of national identity, the conscious manipulation of that identity within their narratives was accompanied with a tacit acknowledgement that their sense of national belonging, or, more precisely, their location within their imagined nation, was inherently unstable. As Melesina Trench's account of her encounter with Lady Emma Hamilton demonstrates, an attempt was made to contain the disquiet elicited by this realisation through a recourse to familiar, apparently certain – though, in fact, equally mutable – discourses of identity.

Although each of these attempts to contain a perceived threat appear to have a basis in the certitude of the strength of the nation, in fact, they all collude in the illusion of national identification that is at its most obvious, as has been demonstrated, in the anxious need of the individual to identify the national identity of those around them. Appearing to be impelled by a fear of a threat of violence to the national body, the anxiety prompted by the unidentifiable individual is actually prompted by a fear of personal attack, or potential violence perpetrated upon those close to the individual. As Benedict Anderson argues, the nation is imagined in its primary state as a parochial identification, which is subsequently extended to the national, therefore any

threat to the nation is primarily experienced as a threat to the individual. In response, we create tangible tools with which to identify and contain potential threats; however, the plurality of identity renders an individual's nationality indefinable. So, for example, in the early twenty-first century the figure of the terrorist has increasingly become allied with the figure of the immigrant in the popular imagination, investing the latter with the potential to wreak acts of violence upon individual Britons, with identity cards suggested as a means to identify and contain this threat. For the early nineteenth-century Britons, dress was employed as a visual indicator of national identity. Thus, Jane Penrose assesses the moral character of the residents of Palermo with reference to their apparel, while in Jane Porter's *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, Lady Tinemouth and Maria Egerton attempt to contain their inability to define the protagonist's religious denomination by dressing him in recognisably British clothes. Yet, as the discussion regarding passports in the narratives of Melesina Trench and Frances Burney d'Arblay demonstrates, while an individual's sense of identity is in a state of constant flux, it is impossible for that identity to be pinned to a stable, monolithic definition; indeed, any attempt to do so is futile.

That authors remain impelled to write stories of their coherent imagined nations, despite the constant disruptive multiple nature of identity, implies that their construction fulfils a basic human need, the need to belong and the need to contain any threat to that sense of belonging. In focusing upon women writers and their accounts of active female patriotic roles, this thesis has identified a fundamental contradiction in their national narratives. While their attempts to portray unity are constantly frustrated by the presence of disparity, manipulation of the very multiplicity which they seek to efface enables them to portray acts of female heroism. The potential exists, alongside the presence of many British identities, for apparently prescriptively marginalised groups to locate themselves within the nation, and conceive of actively patriotic roles. Of course, if the argument for individual multiplicity is taken to its logical conclusion, then concepts such as national margins and centres are defunct, or rather simply do not exist; however, it is clear from the narratives studied in this thesis that a sense of national inclusion and exclusion often translates into some form of tiered system in their imagined nation. In offering alternative identities for those who are perceived by themselves and others to occupy a marginal position within the British nation, the multiplicity of identity is potentially liberating.

If we argue that the early nineteenth-century British national centre was located at the seat of political and legislative power, then it follows that the woman writer was prescriptively marginalised by the tropes with which that centre framed British womanhood. Not only were women denied access to the governing process through a lack of legal or political voice, but the employment of female allegory in representations of the nation – such as Britannia – and the prevalent trope that situated women as both the guardian of the nation's moral welfare and as a marker of the nation's level of civilisation repeatedly marginalised the female experience of the British nation. Furthermore, their everyday lives were subject to prescriptive models of female behaviour which, some critics have argued, restricted women to a domestic, private sphere. Yet, arguably, this apparent tightening of societal codes of conduct was in response to the tacit acknowledgement of the contemporary liberating potential for constant negotiation of identity, which renders the separate gendered spheres paradigm obsolete.

As this thesis has argued, the new, unstable British nation intersected with the nation-forming potential of conflict during the Napoleonic wars, and women writers exploited – unconsciously rather than consciously – the opportunity to evade prescription in order to portray alternative models of female patriotism. For some authors, these alternatives were constituted upon a negotiation between the symbolic and corporeal roles of the female Briton; thus, while Eliza S. Francis acknowledges the dominant model of virtuous femininity in *The Rival Roses*, in her portrayal of Queen Margaret upon the field of battle, she offers an alternative to the trope of the woman who inspires British men to defend the nation from a domestic setting. Likewise, Jane Porter portrays her heroine embracing her symbolic role as the representative of Scotland, thereby locating British women as active agents at the political heart of the nation. For other authors, the plurality of identity created the potential for imagining a nation devoid of gendered distinctions – for example, in Anne Grant's portrayal of Flora MacDonald and her account of traditional Highland life – while, as the argument of the final chapter of this thesis demonstrated, at the Battle of Waterloo, the domestic and the national converged.

In focusing upon the Napoleonic wars, this thesis has adhered to a roughly chronological structure; although the first three chapters refer to texts that span the years 1803 to 1815, in arguing that during June 1815 the British national psyche experienced a catharsis in which the instability of identity was particularly visible, it

seems logical to end the discussion at that point. Yet, although the focus of the present research has identified this period as a moment in which the plurality of national identity was particularly apparent, it is also possible to argue that Britons – and, indeed, any individual residing in the developed world – continue to dwell in the same nationalist problematic, albeit subject to new and different pressures such as multi-culturalism and globalisation. Individuals continue to attempt to narrate their coherent imagined nations, responding to the basic human need to maintain a sense of belonging to a communal concept, while also containing any perceived threats to their national identity. The persistent presence of multiplicity simultaneously frustrates their attempts at unity, while also alluding to the theoretically boundless assimilative power of the British nation and national identities.

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