Shows of strength: war and the military in British visual culture, circa 1775-1803

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by

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This thesis examines the ways in which war, empire and the image of the military were mediated to the civilian, domestic population of late eighteenth-century Britain through visual forms. The focus of the thesis is on the years between circa 1775 and 1803; that is, from the beginnings of the American War to the end of the short-lived Peace of Amiens. It examines the impact of conflict upon the production of visual culture and the instrumental role of images in the debates that accompanied the country’s near continual state of war during this period.

Following an introduction establishing the motivations, methods and scope of the thesis, the chapters take the form of a series of thematic studies, arranged chronologically and chosen to address a range of key issues and images. Chapter one examines the representation of the common soldier in popular and satirical prints of the 1770s and ‘80s, and locates these images in the context of contemporary responses to the American War. Chapter two takes as its theme the relationship between the military and London’s social elite during that conflict. It looks closely at the visual and textual representation of two sites of fashionable assembly - the military camp and the Royal Academy – and examines the fusion of social and political commentary in responses to these areas. Chapters three and four are concerned with the pictorial celebration of notable British military successes critical to the reconstitution of the army following the defeat in America. The third chapter considers John Singleton Copley’s epic contemporary history painting *The Siege of Gibraltar* (1791), examining this image of national consolidation and triumph in terms of the aftermath of the American War. The fourth chapter focuses on the visual representation of the Third Mysore War in the early 1790s from initial failure to eventual British victory. In the fifth chapter the shifts in the language and rhetoric of patriotism during war with revolutionary France and the ways in which this was in part worked through in visual representation of the military are examined. The concluding chapter focuses upon the image of military service in the early years of the nineteenth century, and its centrality to constructions of national identity.

It is a broader aim of this thesis to suggest that visual images had an instrumental role in constituting conflicting prescriptions of patriotic identity and nationhood in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Examining the representation of, and cultural discourse on, war and the military in the final quarter of the eighteenth century allows a fuller understanding of the crucial role of visual culture in the emergent iconography of the nation and its empire in late eighteenth-century Britain, and in which the image of the army was a fundamental element.
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Beginning in 1802, William Henry Pyne published a subscription series of illustrative plates aimed principally at the professional and amateur artist. Issued monthly and later collected together as a two-volume set entitled *Microcosm: or A Picturesque Delineation of the Arts*, these images of rural activity were intended to facilitate a wider knowledge of useful arts but primarily were meant to provide a repertoire of stock figures for the staffing of landscape. Publishing this series during the years of the Napoleonic blockade of Britain, Pyne presented these images very much as a response to the current climate. Whilst the introductory remarks to the bound edition published some four years later stressed that the plates were 'expressly intended to be useful to the student', it was also suggested that they were 'calculated [. . .] to gratify the patriot'.

It is perhaps then unsurprising that the first plate was entitled 'Army', and that the volume was interspersed with a number of scenes depicting the soldier’s life (figs.1 and 121-123). Pyne’s image of the rear of a winding column of troops, with which he began his series, offered a picturesque vision of a then common sight across the English countryside. In this first plate, the engraver’s broken line, tracing the soldiers peripatetic movement through the nation’s landscape, suggests a massed force at one with the country it defends. Pyne’s

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jagged, irregular forms echo the rises and falls then widely seen as characterising English picturesque scenery, and establishes these troops as a securely ‘natural’ feature of that landscape. This is reinforced by the apparently chaotic jumble of figures, combining ranks, ages and sexes, depicted in the vignette below the march. Their relaxed intermingling places them in a well-established pictorial tradition, created by William Hogarth, that graphically summarised the liberties enjoyed by a free, democratic people in terms of such a rough mix. These troops then represented the protective force that complemented the commercial and agricultural efforts of the nation in its war against France; the boatmen, harvesters and gleaners pictured amongst the Microcosm’s countless other figures.

Pyne’s inclusion of these images of ordinary troops traversing the landscape, making camp and engaged in action was then clearly shaped by war with the nation’s:

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2 For an invaluable summary of such views, pertinent to this discussion, see Stephen Daniels, ‘The political iconography of woodland in later Georgian Britain’, in Denis Cosgrove & Stephen Daniels (eds.), The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments (Cambridge, 1988), pp.43-82. For a discussion of the ‘picturesque’ as an aesthetic category and a fuller range of bibliographic references, see chapter four below. To write of ‘English picturesque scenery’ as I do here in the context of a discussion of the ‘blockade of Britain’ is to raise an always problematic question of terminology. It is important to stress the specific historical and cultural differences between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. However, it is also worth pointing out that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers frequently used ‘English’ and ‘British’ as if they were synonymous. In this thesis, for the sake of coherence, I shall use the terms ‘Britain’ and ‘British’, unless a specific instance or context demands otherwise.

enemy. However, whilst Pyne represents the army as stalwart defenders of the English landscape, and so of the values of peace, liberty and community connoted by it, images of soldiers did not always 'gratify the patriot'. Indeed, throughout the eighteenth century, and well into the nineteenth, the soldier's status in society was far from secure. Traditionally, the country was deeply suspicious of its military, and for much of the period the army was insistently represented as a tyrannical, threatening tool of government. This was a point made pictorially by such prints as *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power; or the Bloody Massacre of 1770*, which focused on the use of troops in the brutal suppression of the civilian population (fig.2). This fear and distrust of the military was so deeply embedded in British society that William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* had argued that 'In a land of liberty it is extremely dangerous to make a distinct order of the profession of arms'.  

Yet, as we have seen, in a little over thirty years - or the time span between the respective publication dates of *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power* and Pyne's *Microcosm* - the image of the soldier had come to occupy a central position in a demonstrably patriotic iconography.

Obviously, there are important distinctions to be drawn between the circumstances of production of a political print and a drawing manual produced some three decades apart. However, I would suggest that the differences apparent in the depiction of the soldier in the two images also imply something of the changed perception of the place of the military in British culture and society over the intervening years. This thesis will trace this significant shift in attitudes towards the nation's soldiers.

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Throughout this thesis, I shall use the term 'military' to designate the army. For a discussion of the
as they were articulated in visual culture. In the following chapters I shall examine the visual representation of the British military, at home and abroad, from the beginnings of the American War through to the end of the short-lived Peace of Amiens (circa 1775-1803); an area of study that cannot be separated from the representation of the soldier’s primary arena of activity, that is war itself. An examination of the visualisation of the military and war itself during this period suggests that these were issues of deep concern to the nation and to emergent characterisations of ‘Britishness’. Indeed, the objectives, motivations and nature of conflict together with the role, status and identity of the country’s military were subjects of highly contested, often acrimonious, debates, frequently centred on the constitution of what it meant to be ‘British’. This is a topic of some considerable scope and complexity and requires I set out the principal concerns, methods and limits of this thesis.

Throughout the period surveyed by this thesis, attitudes to and appraisals of war were markedly ambivalent. Pyne’s *Microcosm*, for instance, despite its ‘patriotic’ intentions, was markedly uneasy regarding the subject. In its expanded second edition of 1806, *Microcosm’s* images were supplemented by a textual commentary written by C. Gray. In the main, this comprised a listing of the activities picturesquely delineated by the engravings. However, departing from the descriptive, informative character of the majority of Gray’s letterpress, the prose-essay accompanying plates of ‘Camp Scenes’ took the form of an expansive disquisition on the nature of human conflict:

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complex, disparate make up of this force in the eighteenth century, see chapter one below.
War, in itself, to a humane well-thinking mind, seems a combination of all that is hateful, horrible and repulsive. Its causes are pride, ambition, fury and revenge: its effects, scenes of cruelty, devastation and misery. There are, however, unfortunately for mankind too many qualities in the concomitant circumstances, calculated to dazzle, and to render the naturally hateful even pleasing, the naturally horrible, grand and sublime, and the naturally repulsive, interesting and attractive.

Among these qualities, which give so splendid and fascinating an appearance to what is in itself dark and odious, may be reckoned the greatness and interestingness of its objects, as well as of its effects, the examples of heroic virtues, which it so frequently presents, and the magnificence, animation and picturesqueness of its preparations and its movements. We have all of us, old as well as young, and whatever be our situation in life, a deep stake in it. Every fear is alarmed, every passion is roused. We are kept in a state of constant anxiety for the result to our country. Defeat spreads terror and distress over the whole nation: victory inspires a universal hope and joy. But we feel, not only for our country, but for individuals, with whom we are connected... 

Read alongside Pyne’s avowedly ‘patriotic’ images, the alternating senses of fascination and repulsion Gray admits to here might be held to stand for that general cultural ambiguity towards warfare I have just signalled. Whilst Gray acknowledges the ‘horror’ of war, he also recognises its attraction. Nevertheless, regardless of such reactions, Gray recognises that the individuals that comprised the nation are all irrevocably ‘connected’ by war.

Britain, as Linda Colley has suggested, was ‘an invention forged above all by war’. Armed conflict, in particular as conceived of against the ‘effeminate’ collective other of Catholic, absolutist, then revolutionary and Napoleonic France, was a crucial
point of unification for the emergent nation. During the course of the 'long eighteenth century' Britain's rivalry with France manifested itself in a near seamless series of armed disputes. Between the opening of the Nine Years' War in 1689 and the end of the war with Napoleonic France in 1815, the two countries were at war for some sixty-eight years in total. Even the brief periods of relative peace and stability with the Britain's principal military rival were punctuated by colonial conflicts, naval skirmishes, mobilisations, and war scares with either France or another enemy. Future hostilities were considered inevitable - either as part of the inexorable cycle of human affairs or as divine, providential scourge - and the country was in near constant state of preparation for war. Fought as Britain itself began to forge for itself a coherent sense of national identity, these hostilities were critical to the emergence of communal affiliation. War provided a means of understanding who and what Britain was as a nation, and where this sense of collective self-identity had come from. War, and what was being fought for, provided a series of myths about the status of the islands and their occupants, and the individual and


8 These comprised the Nine Years' War (1689-97), the War of Spanish Succession (1702-13), the War of Jenkin's Ear and Austrian Succession (1739-48), the Seven Years' War (1756-63), the War of American Independence (1775-83), and the wars with revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1801 and 1803-15). For a recent overview of the various campaigns and actions of this long period, see Jeremy Black, Britain as a Military Power, 1688-1815 (London, 1999).

shared virtues which would bring victory. Conflict thus had a critical role in obscuring the many political, regional, class, racial and gender differences subsumed by the construction of the nation as essentially insular, and thereby unified or ‘connected’. It is one of the contentions of this thesis that the cultural representation of war was instrumental in fashioning these fictions of nationhood, and was therefore crucial to the perpetuation of the country’s military action on the global stage.

For British military operations had a world-wide reach. Indeed, Britain’s unprecedented colonial and commercial expansion, following the successes of the Seven Years’ War, saw the nation’s troops fighting in a range of foreign theatres. As this suggests, every war during this period was in essence a commercial war, and - as Paul Langford has argued - ‘to a marked extent a colonial war, whether the enemy was a rival power or one’s own insubordinate colonists’.10 War was invariably a fight for empire and so again inextricably bound up with Britain’s sense of itself. Britain’s imperial and colonial possessions were critical components of the national self-image and the fight to

10 Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1989), p.3. It is worth noting here something of the ways in which war and commerce were conjoined for contemporaries. Adam Ferguson, for instance, argued:

The characters of the warlike and the commercial are variously combined: they are formed in different degrees by the influence of circumstances that more or less frequently give rise to war, and excite the desire of conquest; of circumstances that leave a people in quiet to improve their domestic resources, or to purchase, by the fruits of their industry, from foreigners, what their own soil and their climate deny. (Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* [1767], Duncan Forbes (ed.) (Edinburgh, 1966), p.136).
protect, maintain or extend them of avid interest to the nation’s ‘publics’. However, responses to war and empire were, as I have already intimated, by no means clear-cut and far from homogenous. Whilst so far I have stressed the unifying effects of conflict this is not to say that aggressive overseas actions went entirely uncontested on the domestic front. Rather, reactions to the wars that frame this particular study – the American conflict and the fight with revolutionary France – were markedly divided and complex.

The foundations of late eighteenth-century Britain’s ‘new imperial age’ lay in overseas trade and commercial activities conducted by an increasingly strong merchant class. By the last quarter of the century, however, the tenacious libertarianism and mercantilism upon which this empire was founded was under increasing attack. The Seven Years’ War and the American Revolution were pivotal points in the shifting perceptions of Britain and its empire. If the victories of the Seven Years’ War represented

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1. The scare quotes around the word ‘publics’ here are meant to register something of the problematic nature of the term in such a late eighteenth-century context. By using it, as I do here, in discussion of the cultural struggles over the meanings of imperialism I mean to suggest that the formation of a ‘public sphere’ was more conflicted and anxiety ridden than Jurgen Habermas’s now classic study, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* [1962], Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (trans.) (Cambridge, Mass. 1989), makes it seem. On the themes and limits of Habermas’s work, see Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).


3. For an important and authoritative account of the image of empire in the early part of the century, see Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1725-1785* (Cambridge, 1995).
a rallying point for a cross-section of loosely affiliated imperial interests, then the American War did much to undo that sense of unity. As John Erskine anticipated in his 1769 pamphlet *Shall I Go to War with My American Brethren?*, the conflict was for most a 'calamitous civil war'. As the familial imagery of Erskine's title indicates, the war was profoundly damaging to customary patterns of sociability and engendered intensely emotive and polarized sympathies amongst the British people. Its disruptive effects upon established tradition, and feelings of anxiety such dislocation occasioned, were noted by numerous contemporary commentators, as the remarks of the editors of the *Annual Register* for 1782 illustrate:

> We were led into the history of a war of such a magnitude, as would have afforded a full scope to the genius of the first writers. A war, by far the most dangerous in which the British nation was ever involved; of the first rank in point of action and event; but of still wider importance, when considered with a view to its actual or probable consequences. It has already overturned those favourite systems of policy and commerce, both in the old and in the new world, which the wisdom of ages, and the power of the greater nations, had in vain endeavoured to render permanent; and it seems to have laid the seeds of still greater revolutions in the history and mutual relations of mankind.

The sense of great consequence, flux and foreboding registered by this retrospective analysis of the conflict was widely felt. That the American crisis had caused irrevocable and irreversible change was a commonplace, and enforced urgent domestic reassessment of 'the nature of authority and liberty, the meaning of patriotism and the role of the

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15 *The Annual Register, Or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1782* (London, 1783), p.iii.
people in the political process. War with the colonists enforced a radical rethinking of
the benefits, dangers and ethics of empire. Former pro-imperialists, like Richard Price,
retreated into a kind of anti-imperialist internationalism, or found the corruption of
empire confirmed in a host of scandals and repudiated imperialism entirely. For alongside
the collapse of British control in the American colonies the 1770s witnessed a number of
other fissures in the image of empire, in the form of legal challenges to the
 commodification of Africans in England and disclosures of East India Company
maladministration in Bengal. The empire and colonies, the knowledge, possession and
processes of which were so integral to the constitution of the nation, were then also the
sources of considerable unease. Shoring-up these ruptures would require a reformulation
of the nation's imperial image, and involve a transferal of imperial aspirations eastward
towards India and the foundation of a more authoritarian brand of empire. Following the
loss of America, the patriotism integral to imperialist identities began to lose the
associations with liberal, oppositionist politics which had been fostered from at least the
early decades of the eighteenth century. Instead it began to appear an apparently 'natural'
obligation transcending class and party allegiances, and found popular focus in the figure

16 Wilson, The Sense of the People, pp.237-8. Wilson's discussion of the impact of the American War on
domestic sensibilities had until recently represented one of the few serious scholarly treatments of the
subject. Other notable contributions to a largely neglected area of study include John Brewer, 'English
radicalism in the age of George III', in J.G.A. Pocock (ed.), Three British Revolutions: 1641, 1688, 1776
Revolutionary America (Kingston, Ont., 1987); Colley, Britons, pp.132-46. However, Stephen Conway's
recent volume The British Isles and the War of American Independence (Oxford, 2000) has done much to
further understanding of domestic responses to the conflict.
of the monarch as well as a number of most frequently military embodiments of the national ideal. This was an image of military service informed to a large extent by the experience of war with revolutionary France.

In February 1793, when the French National Convention declared war on Britain, it was evident that the nature of the enemy had changed. As one loyalist pamphleteer phrased it, this bore 'no resemblance to ordinary wars'. Rather than confronting the absolutist armies of the French monarchy, British soldiers now met the revolutionary patrie. The Convention's decree of the levée en masse mobilized the nation as a whole. This citizen army fought not for the king, but for the Revolution and for revolutionary principles. War against such a force compelled the British themselves to fundamentally

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19 Dangers which Threaten Europe (London, n.d.), p.3.

20 On the formation and character of this nation at arms, see Alan I. Forrest, Conscripts and Deserters: The Army and French Society during the Revolution and Empire (New York, 1989).
re-examine the nature of patriotic allegiances in the ways I have signalled above. However, having stressed the profound ideological shift in the nature of the conflicts of the 1790s and early 1800s, this is not to say that all aspects of earlier confrontations were transformed. The same commercial and colonial rivalries that had dominated Anglo-French relations throughout the preceding century still motivated the foreign policies of the two powers after 1789. War against revolutionary and Napoleonic France was on a global scale, with theatres of war extending beyond Europe into the Mediterranean, the West Indies and North Africa. War remained essentially imperial in motivation.

The capacity to wage regular war and on an increasingly large scale necessitated a highly organised, efficient means of coping with the obvious logistical strains of such a situation. To this end, John Brewer has argued that the period from 1688 to 1783 saw the development of a ‘fiscal-military state’. While domestic economic and social regulation within the British state was characterised by ‘a uniquely decentralised political system’ of local and landed power, it was highly effective, centralised, and - at least in part - bureaucratised in terms of its capacity to raise taxes and to fight wars. These were financed by taxing a buoyant and increasingly integrated, if essentially preindustrial,

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Such relatively sophisticated state apparatuses became evermore necessary as the century wore on and Britain extended still further its imperial ambitions. Such was the pervasiveness of these interventions into society the effects of war impacted upon all strata of society, from the aristocratic and landed to the middling and labouring classes. As Gray’s musings on the nature of war in Pyne’s *Microcosm*, cited above, had it: ‘We have all of us, old as well as young, and whatever our station in life, a deep stake in it’. Whether that ‘stake’ took the direct form of actual service or the indirect form of speculative involvement in a financial enterprise dependent on the outcome of a conflict the nation’s investment in war was heavy.

Whilst the civilian population did encounter the material effects of conflict in various financial and emotional ways, they were largely removed from the actuality of battle. The extension of military action into far distant territories meant that for the majority of the domestic population war was essentially a mediated experience. With no significant instances of armed conflict on native soil since the Jacobite uprising of ’45, war for most Britons was experienced vicariously through the myriad cultural forms increasingly central to late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century society. Endlessly

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25 The kinds of cultural growth I allude to here have been the subject of numerous recent critical studies, notably John Brewer’s *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1997) which offers a succinct synthesis of recent scholarship.
reported on, aggrandised and debated, the events and incidents of Britain's numerous foreign conflicts were, for instance, the stock in trade of the contemporary graphic and literary print trade. The entrepreneurs of this market were quick to recognise both the commercial potentials of the jingoism and bellicosity war stimulated and the fierce debates it could occasion. Responding to contemporary events, but also shaping them, these were products eagerly consumed by an inquisitive public. In this, Pyne's series of prints might again be taken as exemplary.

As I have already begun to suggest, Pyne's images, together with Gray's commentary, tie into a whole series of interrelated discourses concerned with what it was to be British, to be 'patriotic', to be a world power, and what form they should take. Yet these are issues being addressed not in some prime national site but in the apparently mundane context of a drawing manual. Pyne's *Microcosm* demonstrates the extent to which war permeated Georgian social and cultural life, appearing in a variety of diverse contexts and at a number of levels. Whilst the imagery of war did occupy prominent public spaces and take monumental form (for instance in the government-sponsored monuments placed in St. Paul's Cathedral) it could also be found in a volume intended to further polite artistic practice. It was one of the intentions of Pyne's volume to provide the artist with accurate, detailed information, and so enable the convincing depiction of the industry that is its principal subject. It might be suggested that the incorporation of the scenes of army life actually acknowledge the centrality of war to artistic practice in the

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early years of the nineteenth century. War's visualization then takes us to the heart of a national identity essentially forged in conflict, shaped by what might be termed a 'culture of war'.

Despite the centrality of war and militarism to eighteenth-century experience, their social and cultural ramifications have been largely neglected by recent critical studies of the period. In part, this is a situation informed, as Mary Favret has noted, by 'the displacement of fighting onto foreign lands', by the sense that war takes place elsewhere. It has meant that the study of war has been largely the preserve of military and diplomatic historians, with the result that the wider cultural, social or economic

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27 However, despite the obvious prominence of these images in Pyne's *Microcosm*, discussions of the work as a whole have singularly failed to consider these plates and instead focused exclusively on its depiction of agricultural work and workers. Whilst it might be pointed out that this latter group comprise the much larger body of images, I would also suggest that the previous neglect of the plates discussed here is in line with a more general tendency within art history as a discipline that fails to acknowledge such images. This is a situation discussed below. On Pyne's work, see John Barrell, 'Visualizing the division of labour: William Pyne's *Microcosm*', in *The Birth of Pandora and the Division of Knowledge* (London, 1992), pp.89-118; Christiana Payne, "Calculated to gratify the patriot": rustic figure studies in early-nineteenth-century Britain', in Michael Rosenthal, Christiana Payne & Scott Wilcox (eds), *Prospects for the Nation: Recent Essays in British Landscape, 1750-1880* (New Haven & London, 1997), pp.61-78.


effects of conflict beyond the battlefield have gone unexplored.\textsuperscript{30} In the development of
historical narratives of war and culture along discrete paths, war has been marginalized as
a constitutive arena of culture and in turn the impact of conflict upon cultural production
has been largely neglected. Yet, this splitting of cultural and military history represents a
division that would not have been recognized in the eighteenth century. For
contemporary chroniclers of the nation’s history, such as David Hume in his \textit{The History
of England} (1754–62), the nation’s past was integrally wrapped up with Britain’s fortunes
in war. Significant military victories were rapidly inserted into accounts of the country’s
past.\textsuperscript{31} War was also inseparable from other branches of experience. Extended accounts
of campaigns – comprising reports, opinion, letters, verse, maps, plans and relevant
engravings – for example, filled the pages of the contemporary periodical press. In the
monthly magazine such material was brought together with several types of discourse.
Published alongside the latest information from the battle zone were political opinion,
news, gossip and scandal about the fashionable world, together with reviews of literature,
the stage and the arts. It will be a contention of this thesis that these apparently discrete
discourses informed one another in a variety of ways. As Peter de Bolla has argued, any
number of different discourses are present at any one cultural moment, but how they
relate to each other is variable and there is considerable ‘difficulty in describing the
precise distances or connections discrete discourses have to one another’.\textsuperscript{32} De Bolla'

\textsuperscript{30} The situation is well summarized in H.V. Bowen, \textit{War and British Society, 1688-1815} (Cambridge,

\textsuperscript{31} For a fuller discussion of this point, see chapter three below.

\textsuperscript{32} Peter de Bolla, \textit{The Discourse of the Sublime: Readings in History, Aesthetics and the Subject} (Oxford,
1989), pp.4-27, 8.
describes such a situation as comprising an open-ended ‘network’. Such a model of analysis makes it possible to see how a focus on eighteenth-century accounts of war and the military can highlight the appearance of its concerns within a variety of apparently divergent or merely coincidental areas.

Whilst social historians in their accounts of the lived experience of war have begun to explore something of the domestic response to war and empire the ways in which what was invariably a distant, foreign-based conflict was actually mediated to that public requires further investigation. Nevertheless, recent studies, notably that of Kathleen Wilson in her *The Sense of the People*, examining the relationships between national identity, imperialism and culture in this period have suggested ways in which the domestic experience of war might be examined profitably. What is instructive about Wilson’s account of eighteenth-century imperialism and political subjectivity is the way in which it foregrounds the instrumental role of culture in the events and practices it describes. Wilson’s study engages with a variety of cultural documents — personal correspondence, newspapers, broadsheets, ephemera — through which individual subjects negotiated social change as well as their own relationships to different sources of power. As Fredric Jameson has suggested, cultural artefacts function as socially symbolic acts that simultaneously reflect and shape social, economic and political practices. The cultural ‘work’ done by the social, literary or visual text enables a society to create, organise and reproduce itself. What I want to argue here is that the history of the British experience of war in the late eighteenth century is a narrative of representations, exchanges and performances as much as it is a story of dates, statistics and ministries.

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However, these are narratives that have only come under full consideration comparatively recently.34

Recent works by Robert Jones and Gillian Russell on the literary representation of the military and the culture of war in late eighteenth-century Britain have begun the process of addressing this lacuna in recent critical scholarship. Both Jones’s and Russell’s work has been highly suggestive in beginning to unravel the complexities of the period’s cultural responses to war.35 Indeed Russell’s exploration of the Georgian theatre’s

34 Amongst the recent publications that have addressed the cultural representation of war Colley’s Britons and Wilson’s Sense of the People have been particularly important to my own thinking about the subject. In terms of the visual culture of war and revolution in the late eighteenth century David Bindman’s The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution, exh. cat., British Museum, London, 1989, provided a critical stimulus in this area. Bindman’s catalogue is particularly useful in terms of the wide variety of visual forms it examines and the kinds of connections it establishes between them. See also works cited below. There is now a growth of scholarship in this area. The range of papers delivered at the recent interdisciplinary conference ‘Conflicting visions: the culture of war in Europe, c.1700-1830’, University of Leicester, 31 March – 1 April 2000, organized by Geoff Quilley and myself, suggests that the cultural representation of war in this period is an area beginning to stimulate a great deal of research.

response to war with revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and in particular her
explosion of the 'theatricality' of military life in the period, has provided a crucial
stimulus to the present study. What Russell's examination of the performative nature of
the military's self-image and of armed conflict itself suggests, but leaves largely
unexplored, is the explicitly visual character of those perceptions and experiences.
Whether in the form of spectacular mock battles or public ceremony, the alehouse's
billeted troops or uniformed officers strutting London's pleasure gardens, the plays or
topical afterpieces of the city's theatres, the maps, satires, portraits and popular
reproductions of the metropolis's print-shop windows or paintings adorning the walls of
the Royal Academy's summer exhibitions, the military registered as a highly visible
presence in late eighteenth-century society. However, this prominent 'visuality'\textsuperscript{36} has
been largely neglected by art historians, and there has been no general critical study of
the representation of war or the military in the visual culture of the period.\textsuperscript{37} Whilst the

\textsuperscript{36} My use of this term is indebted to Peter de Bolla's discussion of the social and cultural domains or the
ground upon which vision is mapped. See 'The visibility of visuality', in Teresa Brennan & Martin Jay
pp.63-81.

\textsuperscript{37} British artists' engagement with war has, however, been the subject of more comprehensive surveys: for
example, The Martial Face: The Military Portrait in Britain, 1760-1900, exh. cat., Browns University,
Providence, R.I., 1991 and Peter Harrington, British Artists and War: The Face of Battle in Paintings and
Prints, 1700-1914 (London, 1993) both offer brief perspectives on images from the latter half of the
eighteenth century. See also Matthew Lalumia, Realism and Politics in the Art of the Crimean War (Ann
key innovative contemporary history pieces of Benjamin West and John Singleton Copley, amongst others, have long been an established part of eighteenth-century British art history, the mass of less securely canonical works that took the nation's myriad military engagements as their theme have received considerably less attention. Further, paintings such as West's *The Death of General Wolfe* (1770), whilst being the frequent focus of much innovative critical art history, have seldom been examined in terms of their relationship to the centrality of the military to Georgian life or the wider visual culture of war in the period (fig.3). Examinations of these works, stretching back to Edgar Wind's seminal writings, have tended to concern themselves with the novelty of their aesthetic programmes or commercial viability to an expanding art audience.38

Whilst not denying the importance of these aspects of the works, I would argue that these:

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exception to this neglected area of study is Yarrington's *Commemoration of the Hero*. A model study of interrelationships between war, art and society in the post-Waterloo period is Joan Hichberger's *Images of the Army: The Military in British Art, 1815-1914* (Manchester, 1988). With a more established tradition of battle painting late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century French art has been far better served by recent art history. Paintings from the Napoleonic era in particular have been the focus of a number of important studies influential on my own thinking about the representation of war in the early Romantic period. See, for example, Norman Bryson, 'Representing the real: Gros' paintings of Napoleon', *History of the Human Sciences*, vol.1, no.1 (May 1988), pp.75-104; Michael Marrinan, 'Literal, Literary, “Lexie”: history, text, and authority in Napoleonic painting', *Word and Image*, vol.7, no.3 (July-September 1991), pp.177-200; Susan Locke Siegfried, 'Naked history: the rhetoric of military painting in postrevolutionary France', *Art Bulletin*, vol.lxxv, no.2 (June 1993), pp.235-58; Christopher Prendergast, *Napoleon and History Painting: Antoine-Jean Gros's La Bataille d'Eylau* (Cambridge, 1997).
are developments which are inextricable from a wider cultural discourse on and fascination with the mechanics of war and imperial acquisition.

Art historians have of late been much greater exercised by the workings of European colonialism, its cultural foundations and rationales, in this period, and the following account is very much conceived of as a further contribution to this growing critical discourse. A number of short, but highly suggestive studies, examining the relationships between visual representation and the complexities of colonial relations and imperial ideology in eighteenth-century Britain have appeared in recent years. Drawing on a range of postcolonial theoretical perspectives, art historians have begun to explore the significance of visual culture in the generation and maintenance of imperialism. What is of particular concern to me here, is the ways in which the military conquest of distant, exotic peoples and lands were mediated to a domestic, metropolitan audience. As I have already signalled, through a range of visual and literary publications the British publics eagerly consumed the events and news of the country’s colonial ventures. I am concerned, therefore, in line with other recent critical accounts of art and consumer culture in eighteenth-century Britain, to suggest something of the ways in which the polite:

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consumption of luxury goods, such as the products of visual culture, was securely imbricated in the country’s imperialist expansionism.40

However, I should also say that whilst I see what follows as in some way augmenting current debates over the nature of the relationships forged between art and commercial culture in Georgian Britain this is not my central concern. There is to be no systematic account here of the increasingly fractured, hybrid nature of artistic practice in the last few decades of the eighteenth century, nor will I address in any detail the intricate machinations of the ever more competitive art market or London’s expanding exhibition culture.41 This is not to say, however, that what follows will not consider the impact of these developments; rather I see them as integral to many of the issues I seek to address.

The consistent engagement with an imagery drawn from the country’s military ventures abroad is testament both to the seemingly insatiable appetite of metropolitan culture for

40 Solkin’s *Painting for Money*, in its suggestive discussion of Francis Hayman’s Vauxhall canvasses on themes from the Seven Years War, explores something of these relationships, pp.190-9. The implications of Solkin’s account of these works, the ways in which the pleasure garden can be seen as remade as imperial space, has been developed further in Miles Ogborn’s recent analysis of Vauxhall. See his *Spaces of Modernity: London’s Geographies 1680-1780* (New York, 1998), pp.116-57.

41 On the growth of the London art market during the early part of the century, which lay the groundwork for this period’s rapid expansion and diversification, see Iain Pears, *The Discovery of Painting: The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England 1680-1768* (New Haven & London, 1988). Solkin’s *Painting for Money* is also invaluable in outlining the emergence of a ‘public’ for art, but limits its discussion to the period prior to the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768. For the period immediately following this critical development, see David H. Solkin (ed.), *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836* (New Haven & London, 2001). This work appeared as this thesis reached completion.
knowledge of its colonial interests and to the capacity of artists to respond to the commercial possibilities that fascination opened up. The commercial viability of themes drawn from the nation’s imperial activities is indicated, for instance, by their centrality to the emergence of an exhibition culture in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Francis Hayman’s paintings of themes from the Seven Years’ War for Jonathan Tyers’ Vauxhall Gardens established an important precedent for the public exhibition of works on a military theme, which was then echoed in numerous further ventures. John Singleton Copley’s speculative exhibition of The Death of Major Pierson (1782-4), William Hodges’s controversial War and Peace, and John Opie’s ill-fated plans for a Temple of Naval Virtue, in different ways, all followed the example of Vauxhall and were all of course as much commercial enterprises as ‘patriotic’ ones.

Perhaps, the most obvious manifestation of commercial concern with the imagery of military life, war and empire were the dynamic, mobile forms of print culture that were

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43 On Hayman’s paintings at Vauxhall, see note 40 above. For a discussion of the exhibition of Copley’s painting, see chapter three below. Hodges’s show is discussed in Isabel Combs Stuebe, The Life and Work of William Hodges (New York, 1979), pp.69-77, 350-54. On Opie’s project as well as several other similarly unrealised contemporary schemes, see Yarrington, The Commemoration of the Hero, pp.338-45.
such a ubiquitous feature of late Georgian urban life. The printed image was both a
universal and intimate means of communication; its wide distribution situating it in many
diverse public and domestic spaces. Through the print market’s highly developed
networks of production, display and dissemination, exhaustively explored by Timothy
Clayton, works exhibited at the Royal Academy say were ensured a far wider audience.44 A Reynolds’s or a West’s image of the country’s military heroes or endeavours could
easily find themselves, for instance, reproduced on a tin tea tray or piece of creamware
(fig.4).45 The appearance of such imagery in everyday contexts remade the most
quotidian acts as displays of patriotic allegiance or political identification.46

should be stressed that there are considerable difficulties in assessing how deep and wide the audience for
printed imagery actually was and how effective the print shop window, say, was in ‘popularising’ images.
For a salient reminder of the difficulties in quantifying the consumption of political prints, see Eirwen
Nicholson, ‘Consumers and spectators: the public of the political print in eighteenth-century England’,
History, vol.81, no.261 (1996), pp.5-21. See also the suggestive comments on the diversity of the class base
for print consumption in Donald, The Age of Caricature, pp.2-9. Donald’s argument that the elitism of the
market for prints has been exaggerated is a convincing one, and certainly pertinent to my project. However,
it might be pointed out that this is a position somewhat at odds with the conscious divide between polite
and popular culture she sees as increasingly characteristic of the period. As I argue above, part of my
concern is to suggest that the relationship between the ‘high’ and the ‘low’ remained far more complex than
is usually allowed.

45 On the representation of the soldier and of war more generally in printed ceramics of the period, see
David Drakard, English Printed Pottery: History and Humour in the Reign of George III 1760-1820

46 What I mean here is that the imagery of war and military spectacle constituted just the kind of popular
‘text’ described by Ronald Paulson as ‘read and seen by almost everybody . . . [one] part of the
Whilst art historians have largely neglected the impact of near continuous periods of conflict and obsessive public fascination with the military in their accounts of eighteenth-century art, military historians have all too frequently exploited visual images as transparent, essentially illustrative forms. According images little individual treatment, writers of military history have been mainly concerned with the ways in which they provide evidence of the minutiæ of uniform details or the extent to which they (obviously) fail to conform to received knowledge of the actuality of battle. My concern is to engage with the imagery of warfare in late eighteenth-century Britain in a way that is attendant to the complex manipulations of pictorial conventions apparent in the visual culture of the period. However, I am equally concerned to recognise the ways in which it mediated the manifold conflicting desires and anxieties exhibited towards armed conflict consciousness of the learned and educated as well as the uneducated. This also stands as a working definition of what I take as signified by the 'popular' in this study. See Paulson's *Popular and Polite Art in the Age of Hogarth and Fielding* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1979), p. x.

47 For an example of such a use of images, particularly pertinent to the present study, see W.Y Carman, 'Banastre Tarleton and the British Legion', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, vol. 62 (1984), pp. 127-31. In this article Carman makes extensive use of Reynolds's portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton as a form of 'pictorial evidence' for the uniforms worn by the British Legion during the American War and for the trophies taken by them. However, Carman does not consider such questions as the specific historical circumstances of the paintings production or the artist's manipulations of pictorial conventions. Unsurprisingly, the author appears perplexed that the 'evidence' of the painting does not conform to that gleaned from other sources. For my own analysis of this painting, see chapter two below.

48 For a discussion of the documentary use of paintings in military history, see Olle Cederlöf, 'The battle painting as a historical source: an inquiry into the principles', *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1967), pp. 119-44.
during these decades. My contention throughout will be that examination of the visual imaging of war in this period offers a particularly illuminating means of exploring these fiercely debated concerns over Britain's military and its fight for empire.

What follows is not intended as any kind of lexicon or comprehensive survey of the imagery of war, the picturing of empire, or visual representation of the military during the final quarter of the eighteenth century. Rather, it takes the form of a series of explorations into the far from systematic attempt to forge an iconography of war and empire in that period. Indeed, I want to argue that to confine the history of that ad hoc endeavour to one narrative would be to obscure its nature and to deny its multiple intersections with the cultural fabric of the period. As I have already begun to suggest, there were a number of conflicting representations, interpretations and perceptions of the military and the culture of war in circulation in Georgian Britain, taking a variety of discursive forms. I want to suggest therefore that these complexities, these multivalent arguments, only become explicit through examination of specific contextual detail. Only through close readings of local particularities, individual incidents or specific images will a fuller, more nuanced understanding of the place of war and the military in Georgian society emerge. The limitations of such an approach are, of course, that the different processes by which these images came to be formed may come to be seen as somehow separate from each other. However, such an approach has the benefit that each process can be grounded in a particular history that situates those images in context, discussing them without denying their specificity of time and place. It will therefore be necessary to locate the details of individual incidents or images within the broader context of the late...
eighteenth-century culture of war, and occasionally move from the localised to the
general in my observations.

This thematic approach to the picturing of war and the military in the reign of
George III will inevitably leave a number of histories unexplored. For example, there is
not the kind of extended treatment the imagery of the American War warrants, or a
thorough exploration of the role of uniform, military spectacle and ceremony in the
culture and society of the period. It has also meant that major works discussed
extensively elsewhere, such as West’s *The Death of Wolfe* or Copley’s *The Death of
Major Peirson*, are not dealt with in any specific detail, except in as much as such key
paintings inevitably informed the production of other images. Therefore, my comments
on these works are necessarily limited. This study therefore is, at least in part, concerned
to stimulate further research in the eighteenth-century’s cultural discourse on war, and to
suggest some ways in which approaches to military imagery might be methodologically
revised. Nevertheless, the chosen themes of the following studies do address the central
issues raised by the apparently endless conflicts Britain fought in the latter part of the
century. Whilst not mapping out the cultural response to all of those episodes, the
subjects do engage with the key representational strategies, codes and conventions
developed to respond to the situation generally.

Characterizing the emergent and amorphous nature of the late eighteenth-century
British nation and empire saw the formation of an iconography in which the waging of
war and representation of the country’s armed forces was a fundamental element.
Exploiting the rich visual spectacle of the military, and ambiguous status of the army in
British society, commentators of various political shadings made the country’s armed
forces the focus of numerous cultural attempts to construct, disseminate and challenge what it was to be British. During the politically turbulent decades that followed the loss of the American colonies, these were tense, emotive and fiercely debated issues. This study will have occasion to consider the imagery produced in response to earlier conflicts, notably the Seven Years' War. Similarly, it may range into the opening years of the nineteenth century. However, I am essentially concerned with the picturing of war and the military from the beginnings of the American War until the end of the Peace of Amiens, a period when war and its principal agents assumed a great deal of significance to the ways in which the nation and its empire were imaged following the internal divisions that racked the country during the American conflict. The aim therefore is to examine the ways in which war and the role and status of the army became crucial testing grounds for debates over the nature of empire and 'true' patriotism in the wake of the colonial struggles of the 1770s and early '80s. In order to understand these issues fully, it is necessary to turn back to the ambiguous status of the military in British society in the years immediately preceding the American War.

49 It is somewhat beyond the scope of this thesis to do much more than touch on the wealth of imagery produced in the years that followed the resumption of hostilities with France in 1803 (see the conclusion to this thesis). Although the picturing of the army and its involvement in the nation's imperial wars obviously assumes a strikingly different character in the nineteenth century, I would however argue that the imagery of the period addressed by this study presaged many of the representational strategies adopted in the following century. On the representation of war and empire in the nineteenth century, see Hichberger, *Images of the Army*.
In a pamphlet published in 1761, Samuel Johnson, addressing the subject of the forthcoming coronation of George III, concluded:

> It would add much to the gratification of the people, if the Horse-Guards, by which all our processions have been of late encumbered, and rendered dangerous to the multitude, were to be left behind at the coronation; and if, contrary to the desires of the people, the procession must pass on the old track, that the number of foot soldiers be diminished; since it cannot but offend every Englishman to see troops of soldiers placed between him and his sovereign, as if they were the most honourable of his people, or the King required guards to secure his person from his subjects. As their station makes them think themselves important, their insolence is always such as may be expected from servile authority, and the impatience of the people, under such immediate oppression, always produces quarrels, tumults, and mischief.\(^1\)

Johnson’s fears for the celebration were informed by British society’s long-held antipathy towards a monarch’s maintenance of a standing army. The threat to civil liberties that such a force represented, the ‘quarrels, tumults, and mischief’ that such insolent displays of military pageantry could provoke, had been common coinage of political debate since

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the dynastic and political upheavals of the preceding century. Yet only the previous year
the same writer, in the inaugural issue of Tobias Smollett's patriotically-titled *British
Magazine*, had commended the 'Bravery of the English Common Soldiers', equating
'insolence' instead with a particularly British form of libertarianism. The apparent
contradictions of such statements begin to suggest something of the ambivalence
commonly exhibited by eighteenth-century British society towards the country's military.
As Johnson's reflections illustrate, the soldier might be alternately reviled as an
instrument of oppression, as a tool of tyrannical government, and yet still celebrated as
the very embodiment of national independence. However, he was also a figure to be
pitied as the exploited prop of monarchical and ministerial privilege. Oliver Goldsmith,
for instance, writing a few months later in the *British Magazine*, lamented the conditions
of service for these 'noble sufferers' in a piece entitled 'The Distresses of a Common
Soldier'.

In comparison with the navy, the traditional defenders of the Isles, the political
and social status of the army was far less assured. Johnson's concern for the role troops

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2 On this issue, see J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the

3 Samuel Johnson, 'The Bravery of the English Common Soldiers', *The British Magazine; or Monthly
Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies* [Jan. 1760], in Greene (ed.), *Political Writings*, X, 281-4, esp. 281.

4 Oliver Goldsmith, 'The Distresses of a Common Soldier', *The British Magazine* [June 1760], in Arthur

5 Whilst the role and maintenance of the navy did remain a political constant throughout the period
addressed by this study, this is not to suggest that as a force its men were entirely socially unproblematic.
Rather, as Geoff Quilley has argued with regard to the visual representation of the tar, the relationship
between the maritime community and polite society was frequently complex, fraught and troublesome. See
might play in the coronation proceedings indicates that the place of the army in British society was an intensely emotive issue. Arguments against a standing force, usually couched in the discourse of civic humanism, represented the army as a parasite upon civil society during peacetime, prone to idleness and debauchery. Apparently mercenary and motivated by personal gain, a standing army was invariably opposed to the ideal of a public-spirited militia. The significance of the auxiliary forces of the militia was of almost mythic proportions, and was a central plank of British liberty guaranteeing a citizen's freedom from corruption and tyranny. What some commentators saw as new modes of corruption initiated by rapid commercial expansion gave the willingness to bear arms and risk life and limb in the country's defence a particular meaning. From a republican viewpoint commercial prosperity could have potentially debilitating effects for the protection of the nation, as John Millar's Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society made clear. 'The improvement of arts and manufactures' Millar argued, 'by introducing luxury, contributes yet more to enervate the minds of men, who, according as they enjoy more ease and pleasures at home, are inspired with greater aversion to the hardships and dangers of a military life'.

For Whigs like Millar the
militia was a crucial corrective measure against luxurious dissipation, as well as the impolicy of a standing force.  

Both Johnson's and Millar's reflections upon the state and status of Britain's armed forces were framed by the fluctuating fortunes of the country's military in its fight for empire across the Atlantic. In the wake of the dramatic victories of the Seven Years' War bold confidence was inexorably coupled with considerable collective insecurity regarding the nation's accomplishments. Johnson's cautionary warning regarding the deployment of troops at George III's coronation, but also his heartfelt tribute to their bravery, were written as that conflict entered its final stages. In their differing ways, both can be seen as attempts to come to terms with the massive territorial and commercial expansion signaled by eventual British victory. Anxieties over the effects of the power and prosperity won by the peace treaty inevitably shaped responses to the imperial problems of the 1770s. Millar's commentary, first published in 1771, was written as war

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8 This is not to deny the existence of an alternative, putatively positive view of war and its attendant vices, which saw them as a stimulus to economic growth. Earlier in the century Bernard Mandeville's notorious defence of commercial competition singled out 'Soldiers' for their vices and defended luxury for creating military employment. See *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* [1723; 1729], 2 vols., F.B. Kaye (ed.) (Oxford, 1924), II, 17-18, 21, 22, 32, 118-23. On the relationship between war and the economy, and the growth of what John Brewer has termed a 'fiscal-military state', see my introduction.

9 On the ambivalence demonstrated by contemporaries towards empire in the decade or so following the end of the Seven Years War, see Nancy F. Koehn, *The Power of Commerce: Economy and Governance in the First British Empire* (Cornell, N.Y., 1994), pp.149-84.
with the American colonies appeared imminent, and the faith in empire fostered by the earlier conflict began to founder. Once the tensions of the early 1770s escalated into full-blown conflict the anxieties and concerns of these two writers became ever more pressing. In the ambivalent image of the soldier, anti-war commentators found a particularly potent means of addressing the misgivings wrought by, what was for many, a 'civil war'.

This chapter will examine images of the soldier produced during the course of the American War and in its immediate aftermath. This was a period in which those issues of patriotism, loyalty and liberty, which were traditionally pivotal to the image of the nation's military, were being radically rethought and challenged. My principal focus here is on the representation of the common trooper or non-commissioned officer, as it is through these figures, and the alternating displays of fascination and moral distancing that characterize their depiction, that the troubled relationship of the country's military to civil society is perhaps most forcefully revealed and articulated. This discussion is therefore concerned with the depiction of higher-ranking officers only in as much as it impacts upon perceptions of the rank and file or the general status of the country's military.10 Here, I examine a range of graphic and textual representations of the soldier, and consider them in relation to contemporary political arguments regarding the status of the military. Although the material conditions of military service are referred to here, this is not with the intention of uncovering the actuality of the soldier's social experience.11

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10 For a discussion of the representation of the country's military leadership in the context of the failures of the American War, see chapter two below.

11 For an account of conditions of service, see J.A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1815* (Oxford, 1981): a work that ranges far more widely than its title suggests. During this
Instead, I will focus upon the representation of the military offered by images, exploring and analyzing the narrative devices and tropes most frequently employed. Always troubling and often provoking widespread enmity, members of the nation’s military were difficult, problematic figures to depict.

Images of the soldier:

People from all levels of society frequently took offence at the sight of the military, demonstrating a good deal of hostility towards uniformed men. As Johnson and Millar’s remarks illustrate, this animosity was essentially politically informed, residing in long-held antipathies towards a standing army and to professional soldiers. Culturally, it manifested itself within polite society in terms of behaviour. Members of the country’s armed forces existed within but distinct from society as a whole. The military community comprised a ‘subculture’ whose rituals, styles and rules of conduct defined its collective identity as, at once, separate from, but also a response to, those of the wider social world.

Dress, language and lifestyle were critical in consolidating the military community’s sense of itself as a unified, fighting whole, but also marked it as distinct, as ‘other’, from...
polite and plebeian society alike. Whilst their violent, rough or dissolute conduct was insistently represented as offensive to polite codes of behaviour and sensibility, equally it pitched them against the lower ranks of society against whom their actions were usually directed. However, whilst the military had a marginal relationship to society it was at the same time central to its constituency. Domestic order, and the prosperity resulting from the fight for empire, was also dependent upon the actions and ultimately the lives of those marginalised and feared by civil society. An allegorical image celebrating the place of commerce and liberty in the nation’s prosperity, published by Edward Langley in 1780, demonstrates this paradox (fig.4). In this decorative print, a redcoat and tar stand armed guard before London’s Custom House below a theatrical backdrop depicting the seated figures of Britannia, Commerce and Justice. Although politically and socially reviled in other contexts, the soldier here represents the military might that both won, ensured and protected the international trade upon which the nation’s wealth was founded.

Whilst there was considerable concern regarding the social and political role and status of the military, it was also recognized that its functions were crucial to the continued stability and vitality of the country. In the wealth of visual and literary images of the military found in Georgian culture, fear and distrust were tempered by degrees of circumscribed approbation and attraction. As Francis Wheatley’s 1782 painting, Lord Aldborough on Pomposo, A Review at Belan Park, Country Kildare, and the events it commemorates illustrates, fashionable society was readily seduced by the spectacle military activities afforded (fig.5). Wheatley’s conversation piece depicts members of

12 On the circumstances surrounding the commission of this painting, see Mary Webster, Francis Wheatley (New Haven & London, 1970), pp.40-41, cat. no.35, p.129 and James Kelly, ‘Francis Wheatley: his Irish
Aldborough's family and circle gathered to watch a parade by the local Volunteers. It is an image of a polite fashionable assembly before a scene of staged conflict that has a number of echoes in the visual culture of the period (see figs.34, 35 and 62). As these scenes demonstrate, war and its principal participants could be the objects of pleasurable fascination when safely distanced, controlled or choreographed. However, this does not mean that the potential threat the sight or presence of troops invariably signaled for contemporaries was entirely recuperated. In Wheatley's painting, for instance, the representation of loyalist support in the context of a dependent, 'colonial' territory like Ireland could be seen as provocative and inherently confrontational. Indeed the latent potential for violence, for threat, might be seen as central to the pleasure that military spectacle afforded, whether in the staged context of a review or in its visual or textual depiction. The wealth of pictorial, theatrical and literary images of the nation's armed forces available to late eighteenth-century 'publics' suggest that they were a group whose way of life, not to say relationships with comrades, civilians and society, were of deep, if also potentially disturbing, fascination.


From the late seventeenth century onwards, concurrent with an increased emphasis in political discourse on the status and value of a professional soldiery, military figures became staple figures of contemporary fiction and drama. By the second half of the eighteenth century, staged and literary responses to current debates over the role of the country's armed forces were increasingly supplemented by an ever-burgeoning visual culture. Pictorial, theatrical and written images of the military were very much compatible and complementary forms of cultural practice, exhibiting similar anxieties and employing a shared imagery. One form of representation clearly mediated another and was in turn itself informed by that practice, with the urban audiences for these images able to move between them and respond to these cross currents. Early eighteenth-century comedies like George Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) or Charles Shadwell's *The Humours of the Army; or, The Female Officer* (1713), for instance, established a repertory of stock characters and types subsequently drawn upon by dramatists, novelists and artists alike. The regular revival of such plays during periods of national emergency, such as the invasion scares of the late 1770s and early '80s, gave their protagonists and

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13 On the theatrical image of the redcoat as it developed over the course of the eighteenth century, see Terence M. Freeman, *Dramatic Representations of British Soldiers and Sailors on the London Stage, 1660-1800: Britons, Strike Home* (Lewiston, NY, 1995). Aspects of the representation of the military in the contemporary novel are addressed in David McNeil, *The Grotesque Depiction of War and the Military in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (Newark, NJ, 1990). Whilst both of these texts offer invaluable insights into the dramatic and literary representation of the military, I would argue that the soldier's image was far more unstable and ambiguous than either of these authors suggest. Further, I would maintain that the cultural and political imperatives informing the depictions they outline warrant fuller consideration.
themes a renewed relevance particular to that moment of crisis. During the American War, audiences, as we shall see, saturated with graphic and textual images of the army’s perceived venality would have recognized the contemporary resonance of Farquhar’s satire of corrupt military practices. The myriad products of visual, dramatic and literary culture that took the nation’s military as its subject matter were central to the ways in which late eighteenth-century British society negotiated its troubled, conflicted status. The deep-rooted social ambivalence towards the soldier and his lifestyle was reflected and in part worked through in his visual and literary representation. Whilst the ordinary soldier was frequently condemned as a tool of tyranny and ostracized from society, he was as likely to be championed as the very bulwark of national libertarianism. In these debates, however, the soldier’s own thought and opinion on the question of the military’s status was noticeably and perhaps inevitably absent.

In the analysis of the depiction of the figure of the soldier here the concern is with the soldier’s representation by and for others. The ordinary trooper had no voice of his own and remained an essentially anonymous figure outside of polite society. Like other members of the underclass consigned to anonymity by public life and its power structures the common soldier was seldom individualized and hardly surprisingly portraits are:

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14 Farquhar’s The Recruiting Officer, for example, was performed regularly at both London theatres throughout these years. See Charles Beecher Hogan (ed.), The London Stage 1660-1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces Together with Casts, Box-Receipts and Contemporary Comment Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period, Part 5: 1776-1800. (Carbondale, Ill., 1968), pp. 12, 16, 18, 28, 85, 108, 115, 133, 197, 208, 363, 371, 415, 422.
invariably of officers.\textsuperscript{15} The officer, whilst distinctive within polite society by dress, was at the same time much more securely part of polite culture. In fact, to a large extent military service appeared to offer an opportunity for the cultivation of social position. Commissioned portraiture had a central role in this process, and the foundation of the Royal Academy firmly situated such images in the public sphere with portraits of officers regularly appearing at its annual exhibition. Portraits of serving officers are not to be considered a separate, discrete sub-genre, but as essentially fulfilling the same functions and as of a part with society portraits.\textsuperscript{16} What is commemorated in Sir Joshua Reynolds’s 1782 painting of Colonel George Coussmaker of the Grenadier Guards, for example, is both the sitter’s military and social status (fig.6). Coussmaker is a solitary, inviolate figure, significantly detached from any obvious, overt signs of direct leadership. Rather, it is precisely his self-command, visually encoded in Reynolds’s self-enclosed, near sculpturesque grouping of horse and rider, that legitimates his military command.\textsuperscript{17} His


\textsuperscript{16} In this way the subtitle of \textit{The Martial Face: The Military Portrait in Britain, 1760-1900}, exh. cat., Browns University, Providence, RI, 1991, is somewhat misleading. They do not compose an identifiably distinct genre like the theatrical portrait, for instance.

\textsuperscript{17} My reading of this painting is indebted to the suggestive remarks on it offered in Ronald Paulson, \textit{Emblem and Expression: Meaning in English Art of the Eighteenth Century} (London, 1975), p.91. See also.
self-assured elegance, repose and detachment guarantee his capability to exercise control over others, and is further ‘naturalized’ by the landscape setting. The military distinctions of rank are here, as in actuality, also social distinctions.

Even in the context of multi-figure, group works where the command of men is explicitly a part of the composition - elaborate conversation pieces like Wheatley’s \textit{Review} or the epic contemporary history paintings of Copley, Trumbull or West - the distinct identities of the ordinary troops are largely effaced and ultimately reinforce social distinctions between the ranks. Wheatley’s \textit{Review}, for instance, relegates the main body of troops to a subordinate role on the horizon, obscured by clouds of smoke; safely distanced from the fashionable figures who occupy the foreground. In contrast to the identifiable portraits of the central group in Copley’s \textit{The Death of Major Pierson}, named in the key that accompanied its exhibition, the ordinary Grenadiers of the 95th Regiment fall into rigid, regular undifferentiated lines (figs. 7 and 8). Paradoxically, in conforming to academic doctrine advocating the generalized treatment of features, Copley’s painting could be seen as distinguishing the ordinary redcoats.\footnote{I am thinking here of the kinds of uniformity or generalized treatment of forms advocated most influentially by Reynolds in his Royal Academy Discourses. See for example Joshua Reynolds, \textit{Discourses on Art}, Robert Wark (ed.) (New Haven & London, 1975), esp. Discourses III [1770] and IV [1771], pp.39-54 and 55-74 respectively.}

In comparison with the idealized, ennobled and refined features of the central protagonists, the soldiers to the left of the picture plane are characterized by distinctive physical traits. However, the individuality that these features might be seen as conferring is of course undercut in the context of the

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painting's pretensions to the status of history, and actually only serve to differentiate them as of another social, military and 'historical' rank. It is clear for instance that their role in this 'history' is ultimately a subordinate one, or one that lacks a universal, timeless significance. Such images do then admit the representation of the common soldier, but are careful to contain them within a specific context: that is to say on duty or in action, and so apart from society.

It seems then that the imposing quality of large bodies of men was greater than the sum of its parts. Only when distanced by allegory, as in the view of the Custom House discussed above, or undifferentiated or generic as in Copley's painting, could the ordinary soldier be held to represent part of a larger, but controlled, force. Such individualized images of the common soldier as did appear inevitably focused on the exceptional. Pseudo-portraits like those of the female soldier Hannah Snell, for instance, held a curiosity value that obviously had little to do with her military career (fig.9). Rather, such images, along with the extraordinary narratives that invariably provoked or accompanied them, constituted a site where popular enthusiasm and sympathy for the military might be legitimized.\(^{19}\)

Further, the popular account of her life, *The Female Soldier or; The Surprising Adventures of Hannah Snell*, originally published in 1750, is essentially fictional; its narrative of peripatetic wandering, heroic deeds and romance

\(^{19}\) In this, such narratives might be likened to the numerous contemporary narratives in ballad, pamphlet and broadside form focussing on the lives of notable criminals, and the staple of many publishing houses. On the form and functions of these narratives, and in particular their visual elements, see Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, pp.85-94. See also Lincoln B. Faller, *Turned to Account: The Forms and Functions of Criminal Biography in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1987).
conforming closely to the conventions of the contemporary picaresque novel. Snell’s individualization was an anomaly driven essentially by her aberrant status and limited to the popular end of the print market.

Society’s fascination with the military persona and lifestyle, and in particular its rougher, more threatening aspects, did then find some degree of articulation. Whilst far from being the ubiquitous presence in popular and satirical prints that the ordinary tar was, the soldier nevertheless occupied a critical position in contemporary print culture. Unsurprisingly, during periods of conflict like the American War the print trade made a number of images of the soldier available to the consumer: images that allowed

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22 Whilst there have been several studies of the reaction of the graphic print trade to the war, in the main these have focused on the symbolic languages employed, or the principal political events, incidents and
immediate, pressing anxieties to be aired. Concerns, largely closed off by the elevated abstractions of 'high' art, were articulated in the popular print's contingent, anecdotal forms of expression. In the print culture of the American War, the ambiguous, conflicted image of the soldier provided a figure that could be appropriated by various shades of political opinion, loyalist or oppositionist. Variously represented as himself victim of the government's oppressive measures or the ministry's own instrument of despotism, the image of the soldier proved a particularly telling vehicle for working through the complexities of a 'civil' conflict.

Arguably this reflects the relatively small number of images that directly depict the theme, in comparison, say with allegorical representations of events in the colonies. Nevertheless, what is of particular note is the presence of the military in such widely known, widely disseminated images as The Fruits of Arbitrary Power or The Scotch Butchery, which ensured their high profile in the popular visual depiction of the conflict. On the war in prints of the period, see T.H. Halsey, 'Impolitical prints: the American Revolution as pictured by contemporary English caricaturists', Bulletin of the New York Library, no.43 (1939), pp.795-829; Mary Dorothy George, 'America in English satirical prints', William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, no.10 (1953), pp.511-37; Peter D.G. Thomas, The American Revolution, The English Satirical Print 1600-1832 (Cambridge, 1986); Lester C. Olson, Emblems of American Community in the Revolutionary Era: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology (Washington, 1991); Amelia Rauser, 'Death or liberty: British political prints and the struggle for symbols in the American Revolution', Oxford Art Journal, vol.21, no.2 (1998), pp.151-.
Instruments of tyranny

Central to the arguments of writers in the republican tradition, who railed against the maintenance of a permanent force, was its perceived function as an inevitable precursor to the establishment of despotic government. This was a contention made most forcefully during the 1760s and '70s, in the years immediately prior to the commencement of hostilities in the American colonies, in the work of social theorists like Ferguson and Millar. For these writers, the histories of imperial Rome and the English Commonwealth demonstrated the capacity of the standing army to become - in Millar’s words - a ‘great instrument of tyranny and oppression’. It also seemed that such a political system arose from the capacity of states to wage war, for - as the decline of the Roman Empire demonstrated - over-reaching imperial ambition led inextricably to domestic enslavement. Imperial conquest was a threat to civil liberties, a cause of despotism, because the military forces necessary to subdue distant provinces might then be used domestically. As a consequence of empire, Millar argued that ‘enervated by the luxury wrought by the ‘improvements of arts and manufactures’, the ‘bulk of a people become at length unable or unwilling to serve in war’. Such a situation enabled the sovereign ‘to hire soldiers among those who have no better employment, or who contracted a liking to that particular occupation’. Continued imperial success only served to encourage

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24 Ibid., p.232.
25 Ibid.
powers 'to enter upon more difficult enterprizes, and to meditate more distant schemes of ambition'. The consequences of this for the nation were dire, as:

the business of a soldier becomes a distinct profession, which is appropriated to a separate order of men, while the rest of the inhabitants, being devoted to their several employments, and the preservation of their lives and fortunes is totally devolved upon those whom they are at the charge of maintaining for that purpose.

Victories abroad would only bring the suppression of liberties at home:

as the army is immediately under the conduct of the monarch; as the individuals of which it is composed depend entirely upon him for preferment; as by forming a separate order of men they are apt to become indifferent about the rights of their fellow-citizens; it may be expected that, in most cases, they will be disposed to pay an implicit obedience to his commands; and that the same force which is maintained to suppress insurrections, and to repel invasions, may often be employed to subvert and destroy the liberties of the people.

Written as tensions between Britain and her American colonies were becoming ever more apparent, Millar's anxious fears seemed confirmed by subsequent events.

If, as Kathleen Wilson has contended, the American War consolidated and expanded the audience for radical diagnosis of the ills of the body politic, it was largely as a result of domestic indignation at the horrors and vicissitudes of the British military.

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26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., pp.232-3.
effort against what were essentially fellow British subjects. This was an outrage evident from the initial stirrings of the conflict and visualized in the well-known popular print *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power; or the Bloody Massacre* (fig.2). A crudely powerful representation of British soldiers’ suppression of a rioting Boston mob on March 5, 1770, the image activated in its domestic audience British society’s long-held antipathy towards a standing army and the threat it posed to civil liberties. The print distills the confrontation between civil society and the forces of oppressive authority – and all the complex, ambiguous aspects of that relationship – into an immediate, legible image. Compositionally, the print hinges upon the formal contrast of the anonymous, regular line formed by the soldiers on the right - echoing the perspectival diagonal of the surrounding architecture – and the confused tangle of lines and shapes that characterize the apparently defenseless civilians. The simplicity of form apparent in these elements might be attributed to the low level of the engraver’s artistic ability, but might also be seen as endowing the image with an ‘eye witness’-like immediacy. This is reinforced by the care to locate the ‘massacre’ in a far more precisely delineated, indeed specific, topographical and temporal setting. Under a crescent moon, the rather awkward foreground groups are seen against a box-like, claustrophobic urban environment that is accurately and crisply

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30 On the complex provenance of this print, see Frederick Stephens & Mary Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 11 vols. (London, 1870-1954), cat. no. BM 4839. Prints hereafter cited with prefix BM refer to entries in this catalogue. For a similar image of the state’s brutal handling of proletarian protest, which also utilizes a similar formal vocabulary, see the Wilkite print *The Pillars of State* (BM 4235).
drawn. I would suggest that the discontinuous stylistic elements of this image helps to convey both a sense of the incongruity and arbitrary nature of the act depicted, and its status as an authoritative, independent account of events. Similarly, the engraving’s textual elements also contribute a sense of veracity, or apparent ‘truthfulness’, to its version of the incident. The lengthy, precise details given by the title inscription, which includes a list of the dead and wounded, endows the print with dual status of news report and commemorative token. Indeed, if the caption and the image below convey the ‘factual detail’ demanded of reportage, then the emblematic roundels, accompanying verse and scriptural quotations of the print’s lower register give it a memorializing solemnity. With considerable economy the print censures the tyrannical use of the military against the ordinary citizen and deifies the murdered as martyrs to liberty. The medley of visual and verbal styles and conventions apparent in *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power* coalesce to form a direct, immediate indictment of government measures in the colonies. As events in the colonies escalated, such images proved a particularly telling vehicle for oppositionist criticism. British military coercion in the American colonies, as prints such as *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power* pictorially argued, confirmed the tyranny of centralized authority, the venality of government and the bankruptcy of a ruling élite that monopolized the nation’s institutions of dominion.

These issues became ever more pressing as the divisions and bi-partisanship wrought by the American conflict began to be felt domestically. Richard Price, following the arguments of the Scottish social theorists Ferguson and Millar, also saw the American War as the tyrannical result of over-reaching imperial ambition. In his pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, first published in February 1776, the
Dissenting minister warned that 'despotism, wearing the from of government and being armed with its force, is an evil not to be conquered without dreadful struggles'.

In the 'dreadful struggles' for liberty over the following few years, the so-called Gordon riots of June 1780 proved a particularly ill-fated focus for debates concerned with events in the colonies and for expression of the political discontent wrought by war with America.

Ministerial measures to suppress these disturbances through the deployment of troops seemed to echo the government’s brutal handling of proletarian protest in the colonies, raising the specter of domestic despotism.

The seeds of the disturbances of June 1780 lay in the opposition to the limited concessions of the first Catholic Relief Act, passed by Parliament in the summer of 1778. They culminated two years later in a week of sustained violent disruption in the capital. Six days of rioting followed an initially peaceful gathering in St. George’s Fields and a

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31 Richard Price, 'Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty', in D.O. Thomas (ed.), Political Writings (Cambridge, 1991), pp.14-100, 28. Originally published independently, Price’s Observations and a further Additional Observations were later republished as Two Tracts on Civil Liberty, the War with America, and the Debts and Finances of the Kingdom in 1778.

March upon the House of Commons to present a petition of protest against the Act to Parliament. Co-ordinated by the Protestant Association, under the presidency of Lord George Gordon, this semi-'official' protest was soon hi-jacked by an uncontrollable mob.\(^3\) Enraged by the numerous handbills, broadsheets, and pamphlets like *England in Blood* circulating in the capital, as well as the many meetings of the debating societies championing the slogan 'No Popery', the incensed mob were led to riot. For Gordon's Protestant Association, and its many supporters like John Wesley, the Act was objectionable on several levels. With Britain's war effort in America crumbling, the entry of France into the conflict also in the summer of 1778, followed the following year by Spain, aroused old fears of a Catholic conspiracy against the kingdom. It therefore seemed an inopportune moment to aid the co-religionists of the nation's enemies, with colonists and numerous Protestants at home believing the measures had been introduced solely to swell the ranks of the armed forces in the war against America.\(^3\)\(^4\)

Amongst the wealth of inflammatory visual and written prints being hastily circulated in June 1780 was an anonymous graphic satire, published by Hannah Humphrey, entitled *Ass Upon Ass* (fig.11).\(^3\)\(^5\) Parodying the established conventions of equestrian portraiture of military officers, the print depicts Lord Amherst riding:

\(^{33}\) To write of 'the mob' or 'the crowd' is to use shorthand: they are terms that embrace a range of professional, trading, gendered and racial identities, and whose affiliations might be of the loosest kind. For a useful summary of this issue, see E. P. Thompson, 'The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century', in *Customs in Common* (Harmondsworth, 1991), pp.185-258.


\(^{35}\) BM 5683.
roughshod over the ‘Protestant Petition’ astride an ass symbolizing the king. In
dehumanizing the monarch in this way, the image refers back to an established satirical
tradition that mocked the doctrine of the king’s two bodies.\textsuperscript{36} Besides being a stock
feature of graphic satire of George III, the identification of royalty with the basest of the
animal kingdom was also an image found in radical political commentary. Thomas
Paine’s \textit{Common Sense} of 1776, for instance, had argued that ‘One of the strongest:
natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it,
otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an \textit{Ass for a
Lion}’.\textsuperscript{37} Wrapped around the foreleg of the animal-king writhes a fanged serpent
inscribed ‘Gordon’. If the print seems to suggest that the riots were simply a pretext to
damage Protestantism and establish military power, then its imagery also clearly links
such ministerial despotism with the fight for liberty in America. In representing Gordon
as a snake the print establishes something of the Protestant Association’s force but also
identifies the Member of Parliament with the American colonists who were frequently
graphically represented by a serpent (fig.12).\textsuperscript{38} Similarly, there is a dual resonance to the
inscription of the word ‘Rebellion’ on Amherst’s sword that links the recent protests and
their bloody suppression by the commander in chief of the British forces with the
revolution across the Atlantic. Soldiers on horseback always represented an alarming
presence and raised the potential for violent confrontation, and the blood from the spurred

\textsuperscript{36} On this issue, see Vincent Carretta, \textit{George III and the Satirists from Hogarth to Byron} (Athens, GA.,


\textsuperscript{38} For a discussion of this imagery and a representative sample of such prints, see Olson, \textit{Emblems of
American Community in the Revolutionary Era}, esp. pp.21-124. For the print illustrated, see BM 5973.
ass that spatters the ‘Protestant Petition’ in Ass Upon Ass makes explicit reference to the tragic consequences of the civil disorder of June 1780. As the rioting had escalated, the military - which could draw on a reserve of some 12,000 men - were used in a determined fashion. As a result of clashes between the mob and the military, some two hundred and eighty-five rioters were killed, a hundred and seventy-three injured and another twenty-five subsequently hanged.

Amongst the clutch of graphic satires provoked by the riots Ass Upon Ass was unusual in addressing the military’s involvement. Printmakers focused in the main upon the mob, and demonstrated little in the way of sympathy for its actions. However, the confrontation between rioters and the armed forces did provide the subject for a slightly later pictorial commemoration of the events in the form of Wheatley’s The Riot in Broad Street (fig. 13). Commissioned from the artist by the print seller John Boydell some eighteen months after the events, the resultant painting was a virtually unique depiction of mob violence in a ‘high’ art context. It is an image, however, clearly dependent for

40 Rude, “The Gordon riots”.
42 On the commission of Wheatley’s painting, see the brief remarks in Webster, Wheatley, pp.53-5, cat. no.69, p.169. For discussions of the work’s depiction of plebian protest, see William L. Pressly, The French Revolution as Blasphemy: Johann Zoffany’s Paintings of the Massacre of Paris, August 10, 1792...
its composition and resonances upon the ‘low’ art of a popular print like *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power*. In the contrast between the anonymous, regular line of troops and the unordered mob, seen against a compressed urban space, Wheatley’s painting seems to enter into a pictorial dialogue with the earlier print. However, Wheatley’s painting seeks to commemorate what the Boston print sought to denigrate. The engraving after the artist’s canvas was inscribed ‘To the Gentlemen of the London Light Horse Volunteers, and Military Foot Association, this memorial of their Patriotic Conduct’. Such a dedication would seem to suggest that the artist has simply inverted the terms of his model. However, I would also suggest that whilst Wheatley’s painting certainly pays homage to its military subject, it also seeks to acknowledge and accommodate what might be termed the ‘affirmative’ aspects of the mob.

E.P. Thompson has claimed that the middling sort and the gentry tolerated the excesses of the mob as preferable to the alternative, the constant threat of civil repression by a large standing army. Often, it was when members of the ruling élite violated the standards that they had long held in common with the lower orders that trouble began. Indeed, it is possible to see the motivations of the Gordon riots as actually ‘conservative’, that is ‘non-radical’, in nature. Attacks on Papists could be justified by virtue of their supposed links with the nation’s enemies. Thus, rioters did not see their behaviour as antagonistic to the existing order, but as in conformity with it, as helping to maintain it.

(California, 1999), pp.105-7 and David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution*, exh. cat., British Museum, London, 1989, cat. no. 4, p.82. Published as a print by Boydell on 29 September 1790, the picture now exists only in its engraved form.

According to this argument it was the actions of the governing élite that were ‘unpatriotic’. In granting the Relief Act, the king had reneged on the constitutional compact between king and people and disturbed the equilibrium that existed, checking royal prerogative against the liberties of the subject. For many protestors against the Act, it indicated the king’s desire to establish a more authoritarian form of monarchy and, as always, Popery and tyranny were seen to go hand in hand. The monarchy’s Popishly inclined, tyrannous designs were indicated by the attempts to use soldiers drawn from the Catholic population in order to crush the friends of liberty and Protestantism in the American colonies. Amongst numerous printed identifications of the monarch with Catholicism, The Thunderer for 8 June, 1780, declared it ‘has long been the design both of the court and ministry to establish arbitrary power, and the Roman Catholic religion in England, and to overturn the laws and constitution of the British empire’. Prophecies made by writers like Millar a decade earlier, regarding the inevitable state of despotism that would arise from over-ambitious imperial designs, seemed here fulfilled.

However, the army’s policing role in the suppression of violence, insurrection or the ‘rioting mob’, was far from clear. soldiers, for instance, could of course also sympathize with the rioters, who were usually of the same impoverished background. Such identification with the cause of those being suppressed is the central motif of the widely circulated print The Scotch Butchery of 1775 which – as the accompanying key explains – depicts ‘English Soldiers struck with Horror, & dropping their Arms’ at

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45 On the policing functions of the army generally, see Hayter, The Army and the Crowd.
ministerial tyranny in the colonies (fig. 14). During the Gordon riots, one soldier, John Bridport, declared, as he watched the destruction of Popish property, ‘I love my King and my Country, but a Roman Catholic I hate’. Indeed, it seems that soldiers were reluctant to fire on the mob, because it was felt that soldiers could not aid Catholics without breaking the oath they had taken on enlisting. The crowd’s conviction was that it was upholding long-established standards of the British state, and that moral authority – forfeited by the élite – was on its side.

To return to Wheatley’s The Riot in Broad Street, I would suggest that whilst the painting ostensibly commemorates the military action the artist was also sensitive to the role of the crowd in his work. For example, the blue cockades sported by several of the rioters in the painting clearly identify the crowd with the cause of liberty. However, this is not to say that Wheatley is not attendant to the destructive appetites and drunken excesses of the mob. This is most clear in the figure of the gin-soaked mother neglecting her child that makes obvious reference to a significant predecessor in the pictorial representation of contemporary urban collapse, William Hogarth’s Gin Street of 1751.

In these two aspects of the crowd, the artist demonstrates a certain sympathy with the motivations for its actions whilst also managing to justify the use of military force against it. It is also noticeable that the artist has been careful to limit the troopers actions against the crowd to the discharge of a single shot, thus emphasizing their show of restraint.

46 BM 5287.
48 Ibid., p. 233.
49 For the most recent and thorough analysis of this image, see Mark Hallett, The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth (New Haven & London, 1999), pp. 197-234.
Wheatley's concern to strike a balance between the actions of the opposing parties in the scene is most clearly apparent in the painting's central vignette of a soldier offering assistance to a fallen foe, and the way in which this conciliatory action is echoed amongst the crowd by one rioter preventing another from striking the trooper. If then Wheatley's painting sought to dispel anxieties about the breakdown of social control, it also sought to dissipate any sense of the military being an intimidatory presence. Even for those disturbed by the violence of the mob and anxious to see order return to the streets, the sight of the military could provoke much consternation:

No sooner were the distressed citizens relieved in part from one fear, than they were invaded by another. They beheld... the Royal Exchange, the Bank, the Inns of Court, every place in the possession of an armed force... They saw soldiers, without the least ceremony, stop whoever they pleased, and no one durst resist: they were sensible of the necessity and propriety of such measures, yet sighed at that necessity, and trembled for their freedom. Those virtuous citizens, who held their country and their laws superior to every thing, who reflected on and rejoiced at the blessings of liberty, and groaned at the appearance only of despotism, had their terrors greatly increased at a report, which everywhere prevailed, that Martial Law was proclaimed.

As the paradoxical fears of this author suggest, throughout the eighteenth century the underlying ambivalence towards the country's armed forces became markedly pronounced during periods of emergency. Textual and visual responses to moments of crisis, such as this or Wheatley's *The Riot on Broad Street*, are correspondingly marked

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by unresolved inconsistencies. They exhibit an irreconcilable, contradictory confusion seemingly inscribed upon any representational attempt to handle the nation’s soldiery. For instance, it seems that anxieties regarding the tyrannous presence of troops that invariably accompanied their policing activities were only compounded once calm was restored. It is a commonplace of commentaries upon the deployment of the military that whilst it was established to quell civic disorder, the army was also to be feared for its own propensity for unruly behaviour.

‘A separate order of men’

For Price, in his *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, ‘licentiousness and despotism are more nearly allied than is commonly imagined. They are both alike inconsistent with liberty’.51 Price’s republican sentiments echo arguments commonly made against the maintenance of a standing army. If during periods of crisis the necessary mobilization of troops raised the spectre of their subsequently becoming the instruments of autocratic designs, then during periods of peace the army became a parasite on civil society liable to profligate, unruly conduct. The assumed connection between tyranny and dissoluteness also pointed to a further paradox in the imaging of the army in society: that a standing force maintained for fear of civil disorder was ironically largely composed of dangerous threatening bullies, rowdies and rakes. Commentators frequently pointed to the imagined and real proximity of the army subculture to

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criminality. The subject of sometimes near hysterical concern, this connection was by no means entirely illusory nor without its benefits to those most anxious. In fact, the army functioned as a way for society to cleanse itself of its undesirables. Douglas Hay has argued that there was a considerable increase in crime levels during peacetime, not only because of soldiers and sailors returning to society, but also because war as a means of social regulation was no longer available. Nevertheless, members of the armed forces were still considered dangerously aberrant. Millar's 'separate order of men' was widely represented as a threat to polite society. The disbanding of regiments at the conclusion of war, for instance, represented a significant social problem. Suddenly released from strict occupation and without prospects of labour or trade, they were seen as naturally falling into vices especially associated with the military: drunkenness, womanizing, rowdiness, gaming and riot. However, tensions between the civilian population and military personnel were equally apparent during periods of war. During states of emergency, the unease that characterized military-civilian relationships was exacerbated by the practice of quartering troops by law in private homes and inns.

William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* argued that a free state required soldiers 'to live intermixed with the people; no separate camp, no barracks, no island fortresses should be allowed'. For Blackstone, a concentrated military force, apart from the civilian population, smacked of despotism. However, on the other hand, the quartering of troops in public inns, for example, was a practice that inevitably


provoked unease.\textsuperscript{54} No doubt, however, the interaction resulting from public billeting and the friction that arose was assuaged to an extent by the rowdy or commercial designs of the respective parties: soldiers got their recreation and innkeepers their profits. This is a motif at the very centre of perhaps the canonical pictorial formulation of military unruliness, Hogarth’s \textit{The March to Finchley} first published as a print in December 1750 (fig.15).\textsuperscript{55} The perplexed, harassed soldier about to march upon the Jacobite rebels of the Forty-Five at the heart of Hogarth’s painting is torn between a pregnant girl and a brothel keeper on the right who, recently converted to Methodism, prays for the soldier’s return for the good of business. Amongst the melee the artist was careful to delineate a host of traditional military vices. Hogarth’s accumulated mass of obscene, comic detail creates a circuit of thievery, drunkenness and lechery traced around the central image of the departing soldier. The equations between riot and eroticism made in Hogarth’s painting locate it in a nexus of images and discourses in which the havoc wreaked by the soldier was frequently of an amorous kind.

In the numerous pictorial, dramatic and literary images of the soldier-lover, a recurrent concern was with his struggle to adapt to the conventions of polite courtship. The soldier’s frequently grotesque attempts at seduction were often represented as at once ludicrous and fearful, where love and courtship became akin to a battle. The seductive,

\textsuperscript{54} See, for example, \textit{Considerations on the Present Mode of Quartering Soldiers, in the Suburbs of Edinburgh, particularly in the Burgh of Canongate; containing some Observations on the Grievances Complained of by the Trading Part of the Inhabitants, on that Account} (Edinburgh, 1780).

yet also duplicitous, soldier-lover was a stock character of both the contemporary novel and play. They almost inevitably represented the standard military affair as essentially transient. In Farquhar’s *The Recruiting Officer*, for example, Captain Plume claims that it is maxim among recruiting officers ‘to leave as many recruits in the country as they carry out’.56

For Plume’s Falstaffian Sergeant Kite his corrupt practices are necessary to satisfy his physical appetites for drink, food and women. Kite, with his Jonsonian tag-name, conjures up a similarly apparently distasteful picture of the military character as that later pictorially summarized in Hogarth’s *Finchley* painting. ‘Canting, Lying, Impudence, Pimping, Bullying, Swearing, Whoring, Drinking, and a Halbard’ Kite brags, ‘you will find the Sum Total will amount to a Recruiting Serjeant.’57 Yet, whilst this is an image that seems to correlate with stereotypical views of army life, it is not the whole picture. Later in Farquhar’s play, Kite sings verses and a chorus from the lively, patriotic song ‘Over the hills and far away’. This oscillation between demonizing the soldier as base ‘other’ and dramatizing him as a bastion of British ideals was often repeated. Such doubled readings are for instance obviously apparent in Hogarth’s *March*. A 1768 commentary on the painting, for example, suggested that it represented ‘the licence allowed to the sons of liberty, on quitting their home’.58 There was a sense in which unruliness and disorder were inherently ‘patriotic’, that the independence of spirit demonstrated by the soldier could make him the very embodiment of British liberty.

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57 Ibid., p.33.

Whilst the soldier's immorality, unruliness and lack of discipline implied a threat, when applied to the soldier as a patriotic figure these same traits became affirmative, characteristically British virtues of self-sufficiency, individuality and fellow-feeling:

"A peasantry of heroes"

In 'The Bravery of the English Common Soldiers', cited at the beginning of this chapter, Johnson argued that the ordinary trooper's anti-authoritarianism could epitomize the national character, and thus underpin national liberty. For Johnson the bravery of the nation's 'peasantry of heroes' indeed proceeded from their native insolence. He proposed that 'The equality of English privileges, the impartiality of our laws, the freedom of our tenures, and the prosperity of our trade, dispose us very little to reverence of our superiours (sic)'. Ultimately, this made for the soldier's 'insolence in peace' to equate with 'bravery in war'. These were qualities Johnson was careful to oppose with the 'discipline and regularity' of Prussian troops and the enslavement of the French. For


60 It is worth noting in this context, that Hogarth's dedication of the engraved March to Finchley to the King of Prussia might be seen as an ironic aside on the Duke of Cumberland's proposals to introduce Prussian methods of discipline into the British forces. Contrary to this interpretation, however, David Bindman sees the dedication as 'undoubtedly a comment on the shambles presented by the British army gathering to defend London against the Jacobites' (Hogarth and His Times: Serious Comedy, exh. cat., British Museum, London, 1997, cat. no.72, p.128). I would suggest that the kinds of doubled readings the image undoubtedly permits, intentionally allows for both interpretations.
Johnson, boisterous soldiers were preferable to mechanical vassals, their behaviour licensed by the liberties granted by the country's constitution. During the conflicts of the 1770s, these were the very principles under threat.\textsuperscript{61} Echoing Montesquieu, Price argued that under the British constitution 'No one citizen being subject to another, each sets a greater value on his liberty than on the glory of any of his fellow-citizens. Being independent, they are proud for the pride of kings is founded on their independence'.\textsuperscript{62} Such individual spirit could be seen as manifesting itself in the inherently rebellious nature of the British army, and which found its most direct focus against the despotism of the Bourbon powers. American alliances with France and then Spain heralded a renewal of traditional rivalries, and provided the focus for much stirring, bellicose imagery and rhetoric.\textsuperscript{63}

In John Drinkwater's extended account of the lengthy Franco-Spanish blockade of the British garrison at Gibraltar, the British soldier's fearlessness and irreverence for authority are compounded and made manifest in a display of anti-Papist theatricality. During a bombardment of the garrison, Drinkwater recorded British troops at the commencement of firing 'were engaged in a succession of irregularities' with:

a party of them assembled in the Spanish church to carouse and be merry. In the midst of their jollity, the image of the Virgin Mary was observed in the ruins by one of the party, who instantly proposed, as

\textsuperscript{61} On the continued valency of Johnson's and Hogarth's images of the British soldier at least into the 1790s, see fig. 101 and discussion in chapter five below.

\textsuperscript{62} Price, 'Two Tracts', p. 95.

\textsuperscript{63} The implications of the intervention of the Bourbon powers for the war as a whole and how it can traced through some of the imagery of the period is dealt with at length in chapter two and chapter three below.
a piece of fun, to place her Ladyship in the whirligig, a machine erected at the bottom of the Grand parade, for the punishment of soldiering women, or others guilty of trifling misdemeanors. The scheme seemed to meet with general approbation, till one, wiser than the rest, stopped them with a remark, that it would ill become them, as military men, and particularly Englishmen, to punish any person without a trial. A court martial consequently sat; and her Ladyship was found guilty of drunkenness, debauchery, and other high crimes, and condemned to the whirligig, whither she was immediately carried in procession.64

Whilst the author was careful to subsequently censure this act of iconoclasm, the very inclusion of the incident, especially in such detail, within what actually amounted to an ‘official’ account of a significant British victory over the nation’s traditional enemies, paradoxically also clearly sanctions it. It might actually be suggested that such an expression of the freedom that characterized the British subject highlighted the values being fought for during the siege.

As these examples indicate, the soldier was then on the one hand incorrigible, and on the other a ‘freeborn’ British subject, inherently nobler and more courageous than continental troops. This demonization of other cultures and alien social systems had any number of pictorial corollaries in contemporary graphic culture.65 The paradigmatic image of the military manifestations of this ideological and cultural opposition was established by Hogarth’s Invasion Prints, first published in March 1756 (figs.16 and 17).

64 John Drinkwater, A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar, with a Description and Account of that Garrison, from the Earliest Periods (London, 1785), pp.179-80. For a graphic image of the whirligig, see fig.41.

65 For a representative sample of this imagery, see Michael Duffy, The Englishman and the Foreigner, The English Satirical Print 1600-1832 (Cambridge, 1986).
Plate one has the French soldier scratching by on meagre rations, and guided spiritually by the relics of Catholic superstition. Contrastingly, in the second plate, the British soldier’s assumed association with the alehouse, and with sexual and drunken carousing, identifies him with the national freedom and liberty textually described in David Garrick’s accompanying verse. Moderated by a reassuring degree of order and discipline, indicated by the drilling soldiers in the background, the principal target for the well-fed, stout troopers display of insolent irreverence is a crudely-drawn caricature of a tyrannical French king brandishing a gallows for a scepter on the pub wall.

Produced in response to the Seven Years’ War, Hogarth’s prints and the national military stereotypes they so forcefully articulated entered the contemporary vocabulary of patriotism at a variety of levels. Besides being employed as recruiting posters, they were influential models in the depiction of the country’s military and its foreign enemies for artists working across the range of genres. An untitled print of circa 1780, for instance, distills the opposition of values apparent in Hogarth’s images into a simple stand-off between a fearless, upright, stout grenadier and cowardly, kneeling, emaciated French and Spanish soldiers (fig. 18). The corporeal language of this image is a recurrent feature of the graphic satire of the period, as the anonymous Count De Rochambeau, French General of the Land Forces in America Reviewing the French Troops, published 25 November 1780, illustrates (fig. 19). Viewed independently this image of extravagantly attired, pencil-thin French troops depends for much of its force on the

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67 BM 5556.

68 BM 5706.
audience’s familiarity with images of British troops’ libertarian nature. Strictly regimented and disciplined, the mechanical automatons of such prints stood for a military and wider social system alien to the liberties granted by the British constitution and represented by the free, unlicensed behaviour of its military guardians. The efficiency of continental modes of martial discipline and organization, in particular that of the Prussian army, were frequently acknowledged as pinnacles of military excellence in contemporary officers’ training manuals. However, the suggestion that they be followed as exemplars – at least outside of specialist contexts - was ideologically problematic. Any suspicion that continental models of any sort were infiltrating the army was firmly rounded upon.

Whilst the trooper’s libertarianism was frequently held up in contradistinction to the servility expected of continental troops, the soldier’s rebellion might also be contrasted with a foreign influenced aristocratic officer class, infected by luxury and effeminacy. Prints like *Full and Half-Pay Officers* of 1786, contrasted the worthy, mutilated veteran with the affected, foppish officer to telling effect (fig.20). Published in the aftermath of the defeat of the American War, at a time when the reputation of the nation’s armed forces was at its lowest, this graphic satire aligns the injustices and failings of the country’s military with a frivolous, effete officer class. The print opposes:

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69 English language editions of Prussian military treatises, such as Frederick II’s *Instruction Militaire*, were widely available, and continental models held up for emulation in any number of contemporary training manuals. David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry, Illustrated by Manoeuvres of Prussian Troops, and by An Outline of the British Campaigns in Germany, During the War of 1757* (London, 1788) is a particularly important example of this. The general tenets of this text were made regulation in March 1792.

70 BM 7082. See also fig.44.
the physically disfigured and disabled soldiers on the left with the fashionably distorted figure of the officer at the right, whose sartorial extravagance clothes an emaciated body that clearly associates him with autocratic but also frivolous continental nations. If the print relies upon a familiar satiric exchange with a range of graphic depictions of the foreigner for much of its meaning, it also depends on a familiarity with other equally well-established cultural stereotypes. The fashionably attired, ambivalently-gendered officer was a frequent target of popular antagonism and ridicule. He was a stock character of any number of visual and verbal images of military culture stretching back through Smollett’s Captain Whiffle to Shadwell’s Sir Nicholas Dainty and Sir Timothy Kastril. However, the graphic and textual play of Full and Half-Pay Officers also makes telling references to other characters derived from the pages of contemporary literary culture. In its publication details the print advertises itself as ‘Drawn’ and ‘Edited’ by Sterne’s Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim respectively. Both figures were of course also wounded veterans but this fragmentary textual compliment to the pictorial image also infers something of the wider context from which the figures are drawn. Sterne’s enormously popular, widely read novels, Tristram Shandy and A Sentimental Journey, are saturated in references to military culture. Whilst space precludes a full consideration of the function of the military in these texts, or indeed the ways in which these were subsequently yoked to various pictorial and textual images of warfare and its participants, it is worth pointing to some of the more obvious aspects of this theme in these works.71 Yorick, the narrator of A Sentimental Journey, confesses to ‘a predilection for the whole corps of veterans’; a

71 This is a topic that warrants further research. For a suggestive beginning, see McNeil, Grotesque Depiction of War, pp.144-67.
sympathy for the former soldier visually echoed in the deprived, stricken figures of *Full and Half-Pay Officers*.72 In *Tristram Shandy*, the loquacious, quixotic figure of Uncle Toby and stoic, pithy Corporal Trim represent two alternate sentimental ideals of the military veteran, again summoned for the audience of the print. They are also paradoxical figures in that as soldiers their position was inherently problematic but they are also harmless, innocent and naive. Their bowling-green hobbyhorse, for example, represents war as a ludicrous game. These contradictions and inconsistencies are indicative of the wider ambiguities that marked the soldier’s place in representation. If the soldier was a feared, untrustworthy figure, whilst simultaneously the embodiment of British liberty, he was also a subject whose life of duress and hardship made him someone to be pitied.

‘The distresses of a common soldier’

References to the inadequacies and injustices of half pay abound throughout the century, being especially prevalent in the aftermath of the American War as the date of *Full and Half-Pay Officers* illustrates. One reformist argued, for instance, in a text published shortly after the end of hostilities, that ‘Tho’ peace be preferable to war, as far as light is preferable to darkness, yet it is only by war that the blessings of peace are ensured. Since, from this view, war would seem on certain occasions not only justifiable, but necessary,

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the Warrior should be enabled to live by his Profession. As the imagery of *Full and Half-Pay Officers* illustrates, such complaints against the insufficiency of the military pension were frequently conjoined with images of the mutilated veteran. Wounded ex-soldiers emblematized patriotism and selfless devotion to duty, but also served to remind the audience of the horrors of war. These bodies served as a tragic intimation of the fate that potentially awaited those seduced by the call to arms. But, if defending king and country might lead to the recruit's loss of limb or even life, he was also seen to lose his freedom. It is a further paradox in the image of the soldier, that as the defender of the country and embodiment of British liberty, the means by which he was recruited - and then the actual conditions of service he endured - actually served to deny him the very rights for which he fought and which he was held to represent. As the author of one lengthy petition against the injustices of recruitment protested:

> It would be difficult to persuade an honest Englishman, who adores the constitution of his country, who believes the law is equal and open to all, and who thinks that Christianity is really the Religion of England - it would be difficult, I say, to persuade a man of the force and deception which are daily practiced to engage our unhappy countrymen in the trammels of military law.

Recruitment was usually devolved to regimental officers, assisted during periods of war by civil officers, who under the aegis of temporary recruiting acts implemented

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73 An Essay to Prove the Insufficiency of a Subaltern Officer's Pay in the Army, Compared with the Necessary Expenes Attending his Station (London, 1784), p.5.

74 Reflections on the Pernicious Custom of Recruiting by Crimps; and on Various Other Modes Now Practiced in the British Army. In a Letter to a Friend (London, n.d.), p.5
limited conscription of the able-bodied poor.\textsuperscript{75} Apart from temporary impressment acts for debtors, vagrants and other marginal members of society, the regular army was not recruited by conscription but through voluntary enlistment. In actuality then, impressment or crimping was rarely employed. Rather, recruiting strategies frequently depended on appeals to the supposed glamour of the profession. A recruiting poster for the Sussex Light Dragoons produced in response to the invasion crisis of 1778 and '79, for example, couched its patriotic petition for men to join in the nation's defence in an alluring, if also disturbing, visual and verbal description of the military lifestyle (fig.21). The upper register of the poster is given over to a striking pictorial vignette, in which a mounted Dragoon is seen about to viciously cut down an unarmed French soldier who pleads for mercy. It is an image that draws on the pictorial stereotypes established by Hogarth amongst others in its depiction of emaciated, foreign troops, but which in its savage violence has few popular pictorial reference points. Outside of such a context, with its appeal to popular patriotic feeling directed at a relatively unsophisticated, probably rural audience, an image like this would resonate with the army's propensity to arbitrary, indiscriminate action. Others evidently perceived what might be clearly problematic for some as a potentially seductive means of escape from routine drudgery. Below this vignette the text of the poster suggests that enlistment offered a route out of 'servile means of Employ', and assured likely recruits they would be 'handsomely Cloathed, most completely Accoutred, mounted on noble Hunters, and treated with Kindness and Generosity'. Such promises were of course unlikely to be fulfilled, but they do suggest

the army's full awareness of the glamour accrued to the military uniform and spectacle in Georgian culture more generally.\textsuperscript{76}

Recruiting parties also put on limited displays of martial parade. In these parties, an officer and his sergeant were invariably accompanied by a drummer, with the idea of luring recruits by pageantry. Military reformers clearly recognized the superficial, yet seductive appeals of such show. However, they were also alert to its pitfalls. In one lengthy petition against then current recruitment practices the author demonstrated a full awareness of its limitations, especially during an unpopular war:

The present is a singular War; it is a War of English Subjects against English Subjects; and that War is to be conducted at three thousand miles distance from the native country; where, consequently, length of time and distance of place will be apt to weaken and obliterete the tie between the Soldier and his Country. Men inveigled into Recruits by the common arts of recruiting Serjeants \textit{sic}, will be bad Soldiers for such a War.\textsuperscript{77}

Unsurprisingly, given such anxieties, recruitment scenes are perhaps the most commonly represented aspect of military life in the period. Farquhar's Plume and Kite established the representative popular images of the recruiting party. If, as I have already suggested, the corrupt practices represented in Farquhar's play had a contemporary relevance for the audience during revivals in the 1770s it should also be pointed out that the satiric edge of the play had been blunted to an extent. It seems, for instance, that when

\textsuperscript{76} For a highly suggestive reading of the 'spectacle' presented by the armed forces in the years shortly after this period, see Scott Hughes Myerly, \textit{British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars Through the Crimea} (Cambridge, Mass., 1996).
performed popular actors invariably filled the lead roles, diminishing the likelihood of the characters being seen in anything less than a sympathetic light. Nevertheless, Farquhar’s central protagonists, as well as the play’s basic situations, formed the basis for a number of graphic representations of the theme, as William Bunbury’s *Recruits* of around 1780 illustrates (fig. 22). Indeed, the vaguely foppish officer, bluff sergeant, rude recruits, implied love interest in the country girl, and the rural hamlet setting of this image all echo the characters and scenarios established by Farquhar’s play. However, Bunbury introduces a more overtly satiric note to the scene of recruitment. Depicting the enlisted men as a motley selection of variously villainous, naïve or readily duped figures, he also subtly suggests something of the inevitable fate of these troops. If the sergeant’s crop intimates something of the discipline they are to expect, then the disparity between the men and the officer is suggestive of the rigid hierarchical system of rank they will also meet. Bunbury establishes the distance between the ranks through the patent visual contrast he draws between the ragged attire, exaggerated physiognomic distortions and corporeal deformities of the plebeian recruits and his immaculately uniformed, preternaturally youthful and rigidly upright recruiting officer. Bunbury plays here on the same appeals inscribed in the Light Dragoons’ recruitment poster - the apparent opportunity that service offered to escape the drudgery of menial work - and puts it to

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78 Not in BM. Collection of the National Army Museum, London. Bunbury also painted a watercolour on the same theme, also datable to this period (National Army Museum, London), and returned to the theme in a print of 1790 entitled *A Recruiting Party*. For other graphic depictions of the subject, see BMs 4766, 5774, 5796, 9128, 9316. With regard to the relationship of this imagery to Farquhar’s play, Plume’s opening speech in particular is worth considering (*Recruiting Officer*, p. 5).
comic effect. Whilst the predominant tone of Bunbury’s image, like Farquhar’s play, is
gently comedic, the print does also strike a somewhat darker note: the bleak prospects of
the recruits are summed up by the mutilated veteran of the pub sign which hangs over
them like the sword of Damocles.

Encouragements to enlist, however, could also couch their appeals in more solidly
virtuous kinds of language and imagery. A recruiting poster for the 88th Regiment of
Foot, again dating to the crisis year of 1779, solicited recruits in markedly different terms
to that of the Light Dragoons (fig.23). Whilst pressing a similar encouragement to take
arms against the nation’s traditional enemies, ‘the Perfidious French and Spaniards’,
instead of enlisting the appeal of military glamour the poster called on men to guard
constitutional and domestic national values. The placard’s text addressed itself to those
‘Whose Hearts are filled with Loyalty for the best of Kings, and Love of the Noblest of
Constitutions’, claiming that these would be the ones to defend the familial heart of the
nation, and ‘that ENGLISHMEN never wanted Courage to defend their Wives, their
Sweethearts, or their Firesides’. This appeal sets up an affiliation between domestic;
sentiment and civic duty, in which all England is a home to protect.79 This kind of
rhetoric, whilst apparently playing to firmly entrenched values rather than transient
appeals to glamour, nevertheless also lent itself readily to satirical appropriation. The
visual and verbal satire of The Recruiting Cuckold or the punningly titled Lady Gorget
Raising Recruits for Cox-Heath, for instance, effectively invert such values, turning the

79 For a highly suggestive reading of such connections in the context of the late eighteenth century, see
Mary A. Favret, ‘Coming home: the public spaces of romantic war’, Studies in Romanticism, vol. 33, no.4:
recruitment scene into another kind of military seduction (figs. 24 and 25). Part of the transgressive *frisson* of both of these images lies in the implied cross-class sexual liaison, playing on the disparity between the ranks and the military authorities.

As the bias of the representational sources also indicates, the soldier was an isolated figure, separated by rank from the officer class, in a division that mirrored the rift between the world of the military and that of polite society. For all the seductive promises of recruitment rhetoric, given the harsh conditions of military life, only the destitute tended to enlist and then often against their will. During the American War, the harsh conditions of the soldier's lifestyle proved a potent vehicle for commentary directed critically against the 'civil' conflict in the colonies. In a remarkable anti-recruiting satire published by the engraver and printseller William Humphrey in October of 1775, the common soldier's lot becomes emblematic of the wider injustices of the American War. The British Grenadier of *Six-Pence a Day* is beset by hardships professional, familial, political and economic (fig. 26). Emaciated, diseased and impoverished, his life and liberty is no longer in his own command but subject to the harsh hierarchical and disciplinary codes of military service: 'Exposed to the Horrors of War, Pestilence and Famine for a Farthing an Hour', as the heading has it. The soldier's coercion and near starvation are pitted against the liberty and plenty enjoyed by the mocking representatives of the 'servile mean Employ' recruitment posters suggested the military provided a way out of. As the inscription below the image makes clear, while a chairman, a wagoner and a sweep all 'enjoy the Comforts of Life' the 'Soldier and his Family endure on the bare

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80 BMs 5779 and 5933. For a fuller discussion of the numerous satirical images of the camp at Coxheath, see the following chapter.
Subsistence’. The trooper is subject to the miseries of military servitude that one commentator summarized as the ‘mere slavery of a Soldier’s life’, comprising ‘rigorous discipline, and *Turkish severities*. In other words, troopers were commodities to be recruited, drilled and exercised, managed as an investment and then discharged by a despotic leadership. Once enslaved they lacked control or autonomy over their own existence. This is a suggestion intimated at a formal level by the somatic metaphor of the Grenadier’s gaunt, emaciated appearance in *Six-Pence a Day*, which seems calculated to recall typical characterizations of continental troops and thus to evoke the threat of autocratic government. Ironically, the subjection of the soldier to the forces of tyranny, made explicit by his wasted physique, actually serves to align his position with those of his enemy, the rag-tag American guerillas fighting for ‘Death or Liberty’. Another of the compound ironies of the print’s imagery, both visual and verbal, lies in its subtle deployment of recruiting rhetoric. For instance, to the trooper’s left, above a beckoning, ragged, skeletal figure of Famine, a standard inscribed ‘COURAGE BOYS! / If you Gent: Soldiers should die & be damn’d / Your Wives & yr Infants may live and be cramm’d’ ironically appropriates the kinds of language and imagery we have seen in contemporary recruiting posters. In fact, the distress visited upon a soldier’s dependents was a common feature of anti-recruiting discourse. ‘Impressing men into the Service, whether for Land or Sea, must be held by every one of generous Feelings as highly improper’ argued one commentator, for ‘it has surely proved the source of much Misery to Families, as well as to Individuals’:

\[\text{81} \text{BM 5295.}\]
Many a poor Woman, with a large Family of helpless Infants has been to the Mercy of casual Charity, being thus deprived of the Hand that fed, and provided Raiment to defend them from the Inclemencies of the Weather. Grief, which has broken many a Heart, has on this Account, sent Numbers of them to the Grave, leaving a young and uneducated Offspring to Poverty and the Mercy of the Wold; while many more have rushed into Prostitution and other Vices.\(^{83}\)

In the years following the American War, the image of the soldier and his family, the pivotal point around which the imagery of *Six-Pence a Day* revolves, assumed an increasingly central role in the way in which the nation’s soldiers were depicted. Indeed, the language of sensibility the author of the just quoted anti-recruiting tract employed was an increasing feature of contemporary images of the armed forces in the decade or so after the conflict in the American colonies had ended, as the role of the military in the nation’s cultural life underwent subtle yet critical revision. As Britain’s forces fell into dereliction with the loss of America, and the military’s actual presence therefore lessened, a more sympathetic imagery of the nation’s military to began emerge.\(^{84}\)


\(^{83}\) *An Essay to Prove the Insufficiency of a Subaltern Officer’s Pay*, pp.149-50.

\(^{84}\) On the neglect of the army in these years, see Glenn A. Steppler, ‘The British Army on the Eve of War’, in Alan J. Guy (ed.), *The Road to Waterloo: The British Army and the Struggle Against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, 1793-1815* (London, 1990), pp.4-15.
During the course of the 1780s, soldiers featured prominently in a number of genre scenes exhibited at the Royal Academy or Society of Artists. Artists like Wheatley or George Morland, whose works were usually produced with the lucrative print market in mind, showed paintings featuring members of the nation’s armed forces that either echoed or were conflated with their depictions of the rural underclasses. If, as Wheatley’s Farquharesque Recruiting Officer demonstrated, images of the military produced in the 1780s did still conform to well established characterizations of the soldier as a licentious, unprincipled figure, paintings and prints also appeared that offered a far more sympathetic, indeed sentimental, view of the nation’s soldiers.85 These were images that if not entirely negating the social and political difficulty of their subject, did offer compassionate and humane depictions of the soldier. Like the paintings of rural life with which they might be aligned, these were canvases that effectively expelled the comic and bawdy elements of military scenes seen in earlier graphic depictions, rendering the soldier’s appearance and behaviour decorous and gallant.86 More genteel images of military life almost inevitably meant that the focus was restricted to the representation of those hierarchically placed above the ordinary redcoat. With one notable exception, considered shortly, these images tended to focus on lower-ranking officers, although of

85 Wheatley’s Recruiting Officer is reproduced in Webster, Wheatley, cat. no.E47, p.165.

largely indeterminate rank, yet nevertheless still demonstrate a notably more sympathetic portrayal of the nation’s soldiery than that seen previously.

Wheatley’s *Scene from a Camp with an Officer Buying Chickens*, painted in 1788, for instance, seems to lack the sense of confrontation or threat that might be expected in an image of the military in close quarters with the civilian population (fig. 27). Here, the alternative society or temporary town of the military camp — symbol of the soldier’s peripatetic lifestyle — enjoys the mutual support of the surrounding countryside and peoples. Provisioning an army could actually be a substantial drain on local resources, but Wheatley’s canvas represents military and civilian relations in terms of being a harmonious, shared, co-existence. Soldiers here represent a useful, valued part of the wider social community. Significantly, to the right of the central image of exchange sits the huddled figure of a nursing mother. As we shall see, this image of domestic protection, or at least variants on its theme, can be found in a number of works of the period that took the soldier as their principal theme.

In Wheatley’s *The Soldier’s Return* of 1786 - a popular visual and literary theme - the amorous licentiousness of the same artist’s *The Recruiting Officer* is transformed into

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87 A second, companion painting entitled *Scene from a Camp with an Officer Buying Ribbons*, is now part of the Paul Mellon Collection, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Conn. Both images were published as prints by Paul Colnaghi on 1 May 1796, when they were retitled *The Encampment at Brighton* and *The Departure from Brighton* respectively. A camp had been established at Brighton as part of the war effort against Revolutionary France. The retitling of Wheatley’s camp scenes, the siting of which I would take to be unspecific, was evidently an attempt to appeal to the ‘patriotism’ of that moment. For Wheatley’s paintings, see Webster, *Francis Wheatley*, cat. no.s 66–67, p.139, and for the prints, cat. no.s E124-125, p.182.
a respectful consideration for the opposite sex and family life (fig.28).\textsuperscript{88} Here, in a rustic interior surrounded by the trappings and symbols of domesticity and fidelity, the returning soldier is literally embraced into the family fold. He is one point in an intertwined circle, solidly constructed from the gendered forms of the protagonists - the male figures upright and sharp angled, the demure girl soft and curvilinear – that is suggestive of the soldier’s welcome into the social network the family symbolically stood for. This is further confirmed by the interplay of hands at the centre of the composition that seals his (re)union with the girl. Wheatley’s image is marked by the kind of verisimilitude expected in genre scenes, but paradoxically a degree of indeterminacy with regard to the scene’s social location is also apparent. It is also notable that the picture’s protagonists are all somewhat blandly expressionless. The figures all exhibit what Barrell has termed with regard to Wheatley’s work, ‘improbable refinement’.\textsuperscript{89} It is a blankness that allows the viewer the freedom to project into the picture their learned taste in literary sensibility. Indeed, Wheatley’s image corresponds to contemporary stage productions, theatrical representations, comic operas or melodramas in which, rather than being the social outsider familiar from contemporary commentaries, the returning soldier was

\textsuperscript{88} This work, together with its companion piece \textit{The Sailor’s Return}, was subsequently engraved by William Ward and issued as a mezzotint in 1787. For an eloquent discussion of these works, see Geoff Quilley, ‘Duty and mutiny’. Such images might be usefully contrasted with the images of licentious behaviour amongst the officer class then current, and discussed in the following chapter. For a further example of the theme in printed imagery of the period, see David Drakard, \textit{Printed English Pottery: History and Humour in the Reign of George III} (London, 1992), p.143.

warmly welcomed into domestic life. Familial bonds broken by war, as the husband or lover leaves for service or is killed in action, are in such images reconstituted in peace. Indeed, in such fictions, it is necessary to break these ties in order to ensure their continuity upon the cessation of hostilities.90

This sense of ambiguity is at the centre of an image like Joseph Wright of Derby's *Dead Soldier*, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1789 (fig.29).91 Under a suitably humble, makeshift mantle of a draped tree, shelters a nursing mother grieving for her fallen soldier-husband who lies lifeless at her feet. It is a tragic, pitiful scene that provides a thematic contrast to the glorious, masculine virtues of war. What Wright's painting of the cost of war shares with Wheatley's works is the prominence compositionally assigned to the role of women.92 In these paintings, women, who are also invariably mothers, represent the civilizing processes and social continuity within the male world of violence and social dissolution. They provide a counterpoint to male bravery; an image of what it

90 On the ways in which the culture of war was instrumental to the construction of an ideology of separate spheres, see Favret, 'Coming home'. This essay has been of particular importance to my thinking about the images discussed here. I am also indebted to Eric C. Walker, 'Marriage and the end of war', in Shaw (ed.), *Romantic Wars*, pp.208-26.


92 It was not uncommon for wives to accompany their soldier-husbands, and in fact women generally played a crucial, if largely unacknowledged, role in the waging of war, serving as cooks, laundresses, prostitutes and seamstresses. See Barton C. Hacker, 'Women and military institutions in early modern Europe: a reconnaissance', *Signs*, no.6 (1981), pp.643-71. On the impact of the American War on women in Britain, see Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence*, pp.86-93.
is that the bravery protects. They also allow the artist to extend the emotional range of such scenes, beyond that social propriety could sanction for an exclusively masculine compositional group. It enables, for instance with regard to Wright's image, a proper demonstration of sympathy for the soldier's ultimate sacrifice. Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* of 1759 had argued that sympathy for the dead provided the basis of social sympathy. According to Smith's influential arguments, individual sympathies might provide the basis for a public morality. Cultivation of sensibility, in which Smith's writings played a central role, was synonymous with the demonstration of religious and benevolent feelings. These were 'universal' emotions of sympathy and sensibility. They are evoked in Wright's *Dead Soldier* by its compositional references to religious iconography, to images of the Madonna and Child. In the aftermath of the American War, the representation of the military in such terms offered a potent means for reconstituting the image of the country's armed forces, for repairing the national and social fabric rent by the cataclysmic events of the conflict in the colonies. It is possible to see the vogue for sympathetic images of the nation's military in this decade as very much part of this:

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process. This is not to say, however, that sympathy for the nation's soldiery had entirely lost its critical edge.

In Wright's *Dead Soldier* the human cost of war and its consequences for those left behind might be seen as a distant visual echo of the kind of imagery we have seen characterized anti-recruitment rhetoric of the period. This was a theme also taken up by George Morland in his *Recruit Deserted* a work published as a mezzotint in 1791 by John Raphael Smith (fig. 30). This was the second of a series of four images following a conventional narrative in which an innocent rustic is first seduced by an unscrupulous recruiting party, then captured and returned to his regiment, and eventually freed to return to his family. In this second scene, Morland depicts the deserter as having returned to his family and simple home. His wife's modest but elegant dress, together with the spartan appearance of the cottage interior, all imply a virtuous if poor domestic life. The pitchfork that leans against the wall in the foreground, indicating his former honourable and worthy employ, further suggests the deserter's honest character. It is clear from these few intimations that it is not cowardice, immorality or indolence that has caused the recruit's desertion. However, his pleas for mercy go ignored, and he is being violently...

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94 For a provocative reading of Morland's work of this period relevant to discussion of this particular image at least, see John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting 1730-1840* (Cambridge, 1980), pp.89-129. The reading offered here is indebted to Barrell's interpretation of Morland's painting as being sympathetic to the plight of the rural poor. However, it is worth noting that the artist's work also included far less challenging works. For instance, in the context of works on a military theme, Morland's fancy picture *Children Playing at Being Soldiers* (1789) or his own version of *The Soldier's Return* (1790) are entirely conventional.
torn away again from his wife and child. The sentiment for the plight of the deserter found in Morland’s painting had numerous literary and theatrical echoes. Indeed, it can be seen as a conscious attempt to exploit a widespread cultural fascination with desertion evident in the final third of the eighteenth century and seen most prominently on the London stage. Beginning with Charles Dibdin’s musical farce *The Deserter*, first performed at Drury Lane in November 1773, several pantomimes, dances and main pieces took desertion as their principal theme whilst it also provided a subplot for several other works. Dibdin’s play established the absconder’s primary motivation as a broken heart rather than a lack of honour. Whilst the plot of Dibdin’s play or indeed the scenario of Morland’s painting might be seen as conforming to well-established romantic conventions, what is significant is their recognition of the redcoat’s humanity. If members of the audience for Dibdin’s play or the viewers of Morland’s work were to connect with the emotions and passions motivating the deserter’s actions then they must also have a degree of respect and understanding for his profession and plight. If this note of compassion is struck by several of the images of soldiery produced during the 1780s and early ‘90s, Morland’s is unusual in focusing on the life of the ordinary redcoat. As L

95 The other three images in the series were the bizarre *Trepanning the Recruit, Deserter Taking Leave of His Wife, and Deserter Pardoned*.

96 In addition to Dibdin’s play, which was itself regularly revived for the remainder of the century, London audiences were also presented with the theme in Horatio Robson’s *Look Before You Leap* (1788), John O’Keefe’s *Sprigs of Laurel* (1793), the pantomime *The Deserter of Naples; or, Royal Clemency* (1788) and the dances *Il Desertere* (1779) and *Le Deserter; ou, La Clemence Royale* (1784). In all these works, compassion is extended to the deserter who acts only due to extenuating circumstances. For an invaluable
suggested at the beginning of this chapter, life amongst the lower ranks went largely unrepresented and it is only as the 1790s wore on that the ordinary soldier began to be a significant presence in images of the country’s armed forces.

It is this shift that I shall trace in the following chapters. In the struggles for meaning that accompanied and followed the American War both loyalist and radical patriotism struggled to appropriate the political and cultural meanings of the armed forces. For loyalists the army was constructed along lines similar to the monarchy; that is as disinterested defenders of the nation rather than political agents in their own right. Radicalism equally sought to model an image of the soldier not as a brutalised agent of the state but as sons and brothers of a larger family of the people. In either version, there was little room for the kinds of arbitrarily dispensed power that had characterized war with the American colonists. ‘Courage, intrepidity, ambition, love of glory, magnanimity’ argued David Hume, in his *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ‘and all the shining virtues of that kind, have plainly a strong mixture of self-esteem in them’ and were clearly inappropriate in a public bound together by ties of sympathy.\(^97\) Virtue, therefore, was no longer patrician, civic and abstracted but private and practical with social morality regulated by the instinctive responses of individuals rather than by the imposition of external restraints. If as the 1780s progressed these seemed values that could be embodied by the nation’s armed forces at the beginning of the decade - as we shall see in

the next chapter – these were boundaries still being regularly transgressed by members of
the country’s military élite.
CHAPTER TWO

Fashionable war: military culture and the politics of appearances.

If the social and political identity of the common soldier was somewhat problematic, the officer’s rank and position granted a privileged status to its holder. Far from being removed from polite society, a number of officers occupied a prominent place amongst the country’s élite. Indeed, they were a conspicuous presence in London’s sites of fashionable display. Officers were highly visible in the social spaces - the theatres, pleasure gardens and streets - of the nation’s capital city. This degree of social integration was a two-way street, and polite society in turn sought to identify itself with the country’s military. During the invasion scares of the late 1770s and early ‘80s, for instance, military camps came to briefly compete with and rival the city’s well-established sites of polite assembly in popularity. Members of the fashionable élite, along with less acceptable parts of society, were keen to be seen in such spaces. This is not to say, however, that these close affiliations between the worlds of the bon ton and the military did not have disturbing implications for some contemporaries.

In this chapter, I will focus on the anxieties this relationship provoked. Firstly, I will explore some of the implications of the fascination with the camp, principally in terms of the visual and literary satirical responses to the phenomenon. In particular, I shall focus on the role of aristocratic women in these graphic and written representations. In the second half of the chapter, I shall look at another site of fashionable display: the Royal Academy. More specifically, I will examine the contemporary reception of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s 1782 portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre
Tarleton, and its relationship to the ribald gossip, rumour and satirical comment that surrounded the sitter at the time of its exhibition. These instances of the conjunction of war and fashion, dating from the middle years and the closing months of the American War respectively, demonstrate the ways in which figures of these two worlds utilized both the military and the mechanisms of urban celebrity in acts of public self-fashioning. They also illustrate how such activity made these figures the focus for the articulation of others grievances.

Fears of invasion

In the summer of 1778, with the threat of French invasion looming, Lord North’s much troubled ministry of the day established a series of military encampments across southern England. Located at strategic points, the camps were intended to frustrate the advance of any invading force and give some reassurance to a concerned populace. As the last line of defence these camps proved the focus for many stirring, belligerent anti-Gallican fanfares, as ‘The Jolly Soldiers’, a topical variation on a well-known popular song, illustrates:

Club your firelocks, my lads! Let us march to the coasts,

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To try whether monsieur will stick to his boasts:

For 'Parbleu!' he cries, 'me vill England invade'_____

But Monsieur deals largely, and fibbings his trade.

Derry down, down derry down.

...

We'll remind 'em, perhaps, as their memiries (sic) are bad,

What drubbings and dressings they formerly had:

When England's rous'd lion stretched forth his strong paw,

He ne'er missed to the Gallic baboon to give law.

Derry down, & c.

...

As these incitements to arms indicate, many Britons saw the prospect of war with the country's principal imperial rival as an opportunity to relive past victories. It was widely hoped that the glories of the Seven Years' War might be revisited, and that following the recent defeats in the American colonies the country's military reputation be restored. However, the renewal of anti-French sentiment could not disguise the disturbances and deep divisions, the partisan feelings and polarized sympathies, wrought by the more recent conflict. Indeed, discussions of the efforts being made to defend the nation's coastlines were inextricable from wider political cross currents. Commentaries upon measures introduced to meet the threat of invasion were inevitably informed by the bleak political climate. In the lens the print culture of the period trained on North's hastily assembled camps, these measures were the inspiration for the most fervent of loyalist addresses but also the

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2 This song appeared in *The European Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* (July 1779), p.39.

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subject of the most harsh of critical invectives. Printed responses to the camps took a number of
diverse forms, ranging from the driest of tactical studies to the most scurrilous of graphic and literary
satires. A study of this latter collection of texts reveals the fears and anxieties that agitated many
Britons during the period, in which it seemed the very future of the country and its empire was at
stake:

'The female troops'.

In September 1778, Carrington Bowles published a large, hand-coloured topographical engraving of
the largest of North's encampments, Coxheath, near Maidstone, which was clearly intended to
appeal to a jingoistic, bellicose market (fig.31). In its formal, grid-like arrangement of tents – rigidity
echoed in the uprightness of the drilling troops – the print dramatizes the camp as a regularized,
geometrically ordered environment. Its careful distinction between the officers' lavish marquees and
ordinary soldiers' far more basic accommodation, together with the setting in the heart of the English
countryside, constructs a socially and spatially harmonious and reassuring space. If this order is offset
by a certain sense of disarray, in the dissonant activities of the camp sutlers or relaxing troops, they
are features that as we saw in the previous chapter might actually be seen as signs of a specifically
British kind of martial proficiency. Yet there is a further visual disturbance to the order of the print,
in that alongside the soldiers stroll a number of modishly dressed females. The presence of these
fashionable interlopers indicates the extent to which the camps, such as that at Coxheath, had during
that summer become as much sites of polite assembly and spectacle as strategic defensive measures.

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The camps' cacophony of movement, colour and sound—the drills, manoeuvres and sham battles that were an essential part of an army's preparations—had quickly caught the public imagination, attracting the height of fashionable London society, the 'middling Cit' and the lowest of the artisan class alike. Reports of the camps and the free exchange between military personnel and the civilian population that they appeared to license were a constant preoccupation of the metropolitan press for the duration of the invasion crisis. The latest 'camp news' or 'camp intelligence' provided the gossip columns of the day with an apparently endless source of gossip and scandal, which in turn fed the opportunist productions of countless Grub street hacks, print makers and playwrights.

What amounted to perhaps little more than a slightly jarring note at the center of Bowles's ostensibly 'patriotic' print, came to exercise the anxieties of other commentators at length. In Bowles's view of the camp the fashionable figures are a decorous presence, and do not significantly undercut the sense of reassuring order. However, other visual and written accounts of the camps ultimately saw the attendance of such modish figures as a destabilizing element, violating a number of social protocols. For many commentators, the openness of the camps authorized an unhealthy degree of fraternization between classes and genders. A letter to the scandalous, raffish *Town and Country Magazine* for July 1778, for instance, labeled Coxheath:

> The center of gaiety as well as martial parade; where the sexes vie with each other to make the most military appearance, and ladies of the first rank encourage by their smiles the national ardour that seems to stimulate persons of every rank in society, since the hostilities have begun between us and the French. 3

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The barely concealed eroticism of the report – the vying of the sexes, the ‘national ardour’ provoked by ‘ladies of the first rank’ – was a current that ran through much of the incessant stream of satirical prints, verse and commentary the camps occasioned. Indeed, it was the free association of female camp followers with either the extravagantly dressed ‘macaroni’ officer or the rough trooper that was the most frequent focus of these various productions. The spectacle of what one writer termed ‘the female troops’ was to prove a reoccurring trope of commentaries stimulated by the camps.

Invariably women of quality, these ‘troops’ emblematized the anxieties aroused by the fashionable fascination for the camps. They were women who gleefully and publicly flouted gender conventions, and consequently much commented upon and caricatured in the various productions of urban print culture.

What is observable in these responses to the invasion crisis is a conflation of fears for the maintenance of the nation’s geographical boundaries with those over the security of societal order.

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4 It is worth observing here that during the fashion for ‘macaroni’ dress and manners of the 1770s, officers serving in the army featured prominently amongst the leading figures. They feature several times, for instance, in the print maker Matthew Darly’s series of images satirising the vogue. The public association of serving officers with such outré, imported codes of dress further exacerbated what was a recurrent theme of both macaroni and camp satires: namely, that modish fashion had a debilitating effect upon the country’s martial prowess (see, for example, [Robert Hitchcock], *The Macaroni, A Comedy* (York, 1773), epilogue). Indeed, some commentators viewed the American conflict as a ‘Macaroni war’ (see Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1995), p.254). For an informative discussion of the phenomenon, see Valerie Steele, ‘The social and political significance of macaroni fashion’, *Costume*, no. 19 (1985), pp.94-109.

control and values more generally, and in particular its class and gendered boundaries. Much of this commentary is both comic and condemnatory. The fusion of the polemic with the humorous allows it to at once deplore the pervasiveness of what it identifies as degenerate behaviour, but to also enjoy a perverse pleasure in the absurdities produced. It is evident from the tireless cataloguing of the latest rumoured affairs, or the way in which the erotic potential of women’s attraction to the military is repetitiously played upon, that curiosity governed responses as much as disgust. What interests me about this discourse – in particular – is the way problems ostensibly concerned with the state of the nation’s military came to be represented as anxieties about sexual difference. I am also concerned to look at the relations between these fears and the unstable distinction between public and private in late eighteenth-century culture. I also question the extent to which what have been seen as essentially ‘social’ satires, focused upon the follies of aristocratic living, were actually charged with a more pressing political and ideological valency. I want to do this through a short trawl of the mass of

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6 In this, the satires under discussion here might be aligned with the more general ambivalence and anxiety provoked by fashionable culture. As Harriet Guest has forcefully argued, these were problems frequently articulated in gendered terms. See her “‘These neuter somethings”: gender difference and commercial culture in mid-eighteenth-century England’, in Kevin Sharpe & Steven N. Zwicker (eds.), Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution (Berkeley, Cal., 1998), pp.173-96.

7 With regard to satirical prints, for instance, Diana Donald argues that Matthew Darly and his wife Mary, following their issue of numerous pro-Wilkite prints in the 1760s, subsequently abandoned political subjects in favour of social ones, in line with a general shift in the market in the 1770s. However, as my reading of the satires below demonstrates, it is far from easy to draw a line between satirical treatments of fashionable follies and political commentary. This would also problematize the customary notion, based on analysis of the BM Catalogue, that social satires produced in the period far outweigh political ones. See Donald’s remarks in The Age of Caricature: Satirical.
graphic and literary satires hurriedly produced to exploit the fascination and fears of the public with the crisis.

Recent examinations and interpretations of the satirical rebuttals to the invasion crisis of the period have in the main focused upon the literary response. This is an emphasis undoubtedly informed by the involvement of no less a canonical figure in eighteenth-century literature as Richard Brinsley Sheridan, by way of his musical afterpiece *The Camp*. Whilst consideration of such staged or printed retorts to the threat of invasion is crucial to an understanding of contemporary perceptions of the crisis, I want to offer another approach: exploring the wealth of dramatic, poetic and journalistic satires produced in relation to the pictorial commentary on events offered by the London print market. Examination of the graphic and literary response reveals any number of cross-references at play between word and image, and which an urban audience would have responded to. The essentially visual character of military life and spectacle made it an especially rich source for these kinds of satiric dialogue. Within the already visually saturated realm of military culture, the fashionable élite female 'camp followers' represented an essentially visual kind of a scandal. Satirical treatments of women of the camp consistently focused on issues of what Peter de Bolla has termed 'visuality': the imagery's constant concern was with the activity of looking, and understood and represented the women in terms of their appearance and self-regard. The women's 'patriotic'

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9 Peter de Bolla, ‘The visibility of visuality’, in Teresa Brennan & Martin Jay (eds), *Vision in Context: Historical and..."
attendance at the camps was readily interpreted as strident self-promotion, and exacerbated the already problematic relation of women to the public sphere. Indeed, it was their prominent public identity that rendered the women of the camp specifically a 'problem of vision'.

Before I go on to examine the specific forms this ‘problem’ might take more closely, a short digression into the tangled politics of the period is necessary. My concern here is to shed some light on the ways in which the anxieties that found a focus in the camps were informed by the wider political crisis faced by the North ministry in the late 1770s and early ‘80s. More specifically, I want to suggest that the events surrounding the national furore generated by the trial of Admiral Augustus Keppel during the summer of 1778 gave the satires on the camps I am reviewing here a political edge that has so far been unacknowledged.

The camps and the Keppel affair.

In June 1779 the Westminster Magazine published an elaborate pictorial and textual satire entitled *The Political Raree-Show: or a Picture of Parties and Politics*, which catalogued the most recent failings of North’s much troubled ministry (fig.32). The twelve stage set-like compartments of the print, each accompanied by an extended explanatory commentary, opened a peep hole into the political and military vicissitudes that had beset the British peoples in the previous twelve months. Vignettes of economic dislocation, military failure, court martial, corruption, threatened invasion,


10 BM 5548.
and domestic unrest, pictured a beleaguered, crisis-stricken nation and empire. With considerable economy, text and image drew connections between a number of contemporary personalities, scandals and events, which all appeared to be colluding in the national decline. Unraveling just one of these conspiratorial strands, for instance, sees links being established between concessions towards Catholic emancipation, the Bourbon threat and the inefficiency of Britain's defences. In a reference to the Catholic Relief Act of May 1778, visible at bottom left of the engraving are 'English Papaists laughting at Ye Protestants', whilst centrally placed at the second level the French fleet attacks the Channel Islands and in the upper right hand corner members of the country's armed forces argue amongst themselves. A little mental reshuffling of the raree-show's pictorial and textual elements reveals any number of surreptitious links between the various instances of failing and corruption that beset the nation. So whilst this brief reading far from exhausts the resonances of the print, and hardly begins at all to explore its conglomeration of pictorial and literary borrowings, it nevertheless serves to introduce something of the tangle of treasonous conspiracies widely thought to be then attacking the nation.

Along the fault lines in the nation's political ordering traced by the Westminster's raree-show, the state of the country's military leadership is of critical concern. In the uppermost central panel, labeled 'The Generals in America doing nothing, or worse than nothing', the officer, sleeping of the excesses of drink and gambling, is the self-styled man of letters and commander of the British troops at Saratoga, 'Gentleman' John Burgoyne. The loss of Saratoga was widely seen as irrevocably weakening Britain's colonial and – with the looming threat of French invasion – ultimately domestic security. This is a view that informs the scene to the immediate right of this central vignette where Burgoyne appears again, sporting an overly theatrical plumed helmet,
defending his actions in the colonies to the House of Commons. Across the chamber from Burgoyne, behind a sleeping North, a member holds out a paper inscribed ‘Admirals Trials at Portsmouth’. The Admiral in question was Augustus Keppel, and his trial an event that had galvanized public opposition to war in the colonies.

On France’s declaration of war, in a move perhaps designed to assuage the Parliamentary opposition, North had assigned the controversial Keppel command of the channel fleet – the crucial bulwark between the nation and the massed forces of the Bourbon regime. A celebrated veteran of the Seven Years’ War, and Member of Parliament allied with the Rockingham opposition, Keppel was widely known to be hostile to the American War. He had in fact refused service in the colonies. The expectations of many anti-war activists, seeking an end to imperial conflict and vindication of British honour, thus came to be centered on the Admiral. In July 1778, Keppel fought an indecisive action against the French fleet off the coast of Ushant. The recriminations that followed this humiliating incident to a large extent masked the danger it had placed the nation in. Press reports accused Sir Hugh Palliser, commander of the rear, of failing to obey Keppel’s command to reform line of battle and so cost British victory. Incensed by the reports Palliser, pro-North and a Lord of the Admiralty, applied for and won a court-martial of Keppel on the grounds of ‘misconduct and neglect of duty’. Keppel’s subsequent trial and acquittal on 11 February 1779 established the Admiral as a focal point for oppositionist agitation. The gates of the Admiralty were torn down, Palliser’s house in

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Pall Mall gutted and effigy burnt on Tower Hill.\(^\text{12}\)

The contemporary press covered the events of the Admiral’s court-martial at length. The August 1778 edition of the *Universal Magazine*, for example, carried a number of pieces about and in support of Keppel. The periodical both reproduced an official letter defending Keppel written by Captain Faulkner, who had taken part in the action off Ushant, and printed a ‘versified’ exoneration of the Admiral’s actions. Sandwiched between these accounts of the Keppel affair was a gently ribald poem entitled ‘Camp on Coxheath’ (fig.33). It is a verse that mockingly describes the polite vogue for visiting the camp, in much the same terms as numerous other satires, yet its alliance here with the highly politicized and emotive issue of Keppel’s court-martial makes for a startling contrast. In fact, particulars of national failure and crisis and accounts of frivolity amongst the country’s ruling élite running adjacently is a common feature of the press in the period. The contents of the daily or periodical press might bring together several essentially different discourses, informing each other to differing degrees. The deliberate juxtapositions of the *Universal Magazine*’s layout here suggest something of the ways in which military and cultural decline were interconnected in the minds of many contemporaries. If Keppel represented the kinds of virtuous and honorific conduct upon which the country’s strength was founded, then the camps signified the degenerate and ‘effeminate’ patrician society, culture and values that were undermining the nation’s martial potency. It seemed that the military’s ever closer links with the fashionable world, made visually explicit by the

\(^{12}\)This account and my understanding of the political dimensions of the affair are indebted to Wilson, *Sense of the People*, pp.253-59. It is important to see Keppel’s valorisation as part of a tradition in extolling the nation’s naval heroes. See Gerald Jordan & Nicholas Rogers, ‘Admirals as heroes: patriotism and liberty in Hanoverian England’, *Journal of British Studies*, vol.28, no.2 (1989), pp.201-24.
spectacle of the camp, threatened to abrogate the affiliations between the national character and the martial masculinities that had forged and buttressed Britain’s imperial project. Condemnation of the women of the camp should be seen in the context of a more general ‘middling’ condemnation of élite mores current in late eighteenth-century society. Whilst support for the American colonists came from across the social spectrum, it was especially amongst ‘middling’ groups of merchants and artisans, hardest hit by the economic dislocation of the war, that oppositionist agitation was most vehement. Fashionable pleasure and luxury dissolved the stoic martial values on which the empire had been founded, challenging the identitites and cultural certainties that underwrote national and colonial interests. The fashionable excesses of the camps allowed

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14 See the examination of loyalist and oppositionist support in Wilson, The Sense of the People, pp.238-52. Whilst I find Wilson’s inspection of loyal addresses and conciliatory petitions compelling evidence, I obviously do not wish to imply that either pro- or anti-war positions comprised in any way a monolithic or homogenous entity. On the contrary, in actuality both embraced a loose, shifting affiliation of a number of competing interests, a variety of trading, professional, landed, racial and gendered identities in their make-up. On the part of the pro-American sympathisers I am concerned with here, alliance of such diverse factions in support of the rebel colonists, was one of convenient, shared anti-ministerial interest.

15 As we have seen in the previous chapter, these arguments were most frequently couched in terms of a tradition of civic discourse which regarded the very existence of a professional soldiery as in itself luxuriant and consequently
dissenting elements within the print trade free reign to address these concerns and, as I have begun to argue with relation to the comparisons drawn by the *Universal Magazine*, ridicule the government’s efforts to protect the nation.

The carnival of the camp.

Drawing on a traditional imagery of rural retirement, the *Universal*’s ‘Camp on Coxheath’ represents the Kent countryside as a pastoral escape from urban concerns. In the poem, the hackneyed, overly refined Arcadian language of the genre ironically contrasts with the pleasurable and clearly erotic preoccupations of the visiting London throng:

Tho’ the dog-star inflames, and the heat is intense,
Dust, rabble, and riot, confound ev’ry sense,
Let us fly to the camp – such a sight ne’er was seen,
Where Mars is the King, and Idalia the Queen:
Away to the camp on Coxheath then repair,
For beauty and courage are certainly there.

As the verse illustrates, it was the conjunction of Mars and Idalia, or ‘beauty and courage’, that was ‘effeminate’: motivated by personal gain; tyrannical in time of war; idle and dissipated in times of peace. For a discussion of these issues, see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, N.J., 1975), pp.401-36.
the resonant image of the camp. What it calls the camp's 'brave raree-show' consisted less of 'the
guns, and the drums, and the soldiers surveys' than the promiscuous mingling of the sexes and ranks.
It was this hybrid, uncertain crowd of the 'Fat, feather'd, lean, flimsy, or tall' that made for
entertaining spectacle as much as the display of patriotic militarism. The amorous preoccupations
and social diversity of the visitors of 'Camp on Coxheath' were to be echoed visually in the graphic
satire *Genl. Parker exerceising [sic] the Army at Warley*, a camp near Brentwood, published the
following year by Fielding and Walker (fig. 34). The print's rough mix of high, 'middling' and low;
of patrician officers and ladies, pot-bellied 'Cits' and servants, are in the main, like the crowds of the
poem, distracted from the martial show in the distance and preoccupied with themselves. Flirtatious
couples, mischievous children and gossiping soldiers all make for an image of unbridled and
undisciplined license. However, this unruliness is not a threatening one: the humour is gentle, and the
massed lines of the troops on the horizon offer a reassuring counterpoint to the burlesque of the
foreground. Obviously, the absence of social regulation could be seen as a marker of British liberty,
in this case guaranteed by that background display. Comic responses to such scenes, however, were
not always so amiable.

*A Trip to Cock's Heath*, published by William Humphrey, 28 October 1778, as the coarse
pun of its title and crude imagery indicates, is a print that eschews gentle humour in favour of an all

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16 Not in BM. Collection of the National Army Museum, London. For further graphic satires on the camps, other than
those discussed here, see BMs 4653, 4760, 5525, 5601, 5602, 5620, 5773, 5775, 5778, 5794, 5950, 5953, 6156.
Several further prints on the theme not in the British Museum collection can be found in the National Army Museum.
The camps also provided the subject for paintings by Henry William Bunbury, Paul Sandby and Philippe Jacques de
Louverbourg.

17 Compare, for instance, Hogarth's *Invasion*, Plate II (fig. 17).
together more direct kind of address (fig.35). One of the earliest graphic satires on the invasion crisis to be marketed, a number of the central preoccupations of the visual and literary responses to the camps and their visitors are already in place in this image. In this print, a uniformed ‘beauty’, astride an officer, leads an uproarious, carnivalesque parade of leering grotesques in a visit (or is it an assault?) on the camp. The significance of both the dress and the carnivalesque elements is something I will return to in detail later. For now, I merely want to suggest the ways in which these are part of viewing the camp as a ‘world turned upside down’. This is an inverted realm in which, as with the speeding phateon seen in the background, women have taken the reins. As we shall see, the anxieties of this kind of misogynistic imagery haunt satires of the camps.

An additional frisson to satiric accounts of the public fascination with the military was provided by the actual presence in the camps of a number of prominent, identifiable individuals. In the anonymous doggerel The Camp Guide of 1778, for instance, the opening dedication addressed itself ‘To Her Grace the Dutchess (sic) of Devonshire’, a figure who was to feature regularly in the dailies latest ‘camp intelligence’. The Camp Guide’s verse preface argued:

Beauty! Bids the soldier fight.
Beauty! Courage still inspires,
Beauty! Wakens martial fires;
After Beauty, how we tramp!
Beauty brings us all to camp!

18 BM 5523.
Having been recruited or seduced in this way, the introductory verse proceeded to catalogue a litany of sensual pleasures, erotic and gastronomic, that the country’s ‘heroes’ might encounter at camp:

Heroes! Heroes! Sing and laugh,
With good claret freely quaff,
If by chance you drop asleep,
Delia’s charms the camp will keep,
Queen of Beauty, lovely fair,
Albion’s fate is in your care;
France and Spain must still submit;
To your beauty, grace and wit.19

Satiated by over indulgence and so unfit to continue their duties, the army leaves the defence of the realm in women’s hands. Such suggestions recall the female soldier of the popular ballad; heroines like Hannah Snell, whose bravery was frequently used as a means to comment upon the effeminacy and corruption of the fashionable world and the country’s armed forces.20 It also invokes the spectre

20 See Lynne Friedli’s discussion of Robert Walker’s biography of Snell, “’Passing women’: a study of gender boundaries in the eighteenth century”, in G. S. Rousseau & Roy Porter (eds.), Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment (Manchester, 1987), pp.234-60, esp. 242-43. For an informed discussion of the popular representation of the female soldier in the eighteenth century which, whilst never mentioning such figures as the Duchess of Devonshire, clearly establishes something of the context in which the behaviour of the women of the camp would
of petticoat government that haunted a great deal of the commentary and satire triggered by the invasion crisis. Fears for the safety of the national interests, intersecting with the activation of traditional anxieties over the wielding of female power, are a constant theme of commentaries upon the camps. A period of national crisis was insistently represented as licensing an unruly assertiveness and an unseemly involvement in public affairs among women of the élite. In the vacuum created by the breakdown of traditional authority, that the likely invasion threatened, women ruled. The implication of this for the nation’s military was a theme also taken up by theatrical representations of the camp phenomenon.

Responding to the invasion crisis the London stage had both revived a number of popular plays with a military theme and improvised new pieces. Sheridan’s Drury Lane, for instance, staged The Camp to near immediate popular success.21 The play’s text drew on many of the themes established by the numerous graphic and literary satires, but in particular the incongruities of female involvement and its potential for eroticism. In the play, a ‘camp follower’, Lady Sash, complains: ‘there is an Eternal Confusion between our Lords’ Camp Equipage, and our dressing Apparatus – between Stores Military and Millinery (…) on the same Shelf Carti(a)dges and Cosmetics, Pouches and Patches’.22 This confusion of the principal site of femininity, the toilette, with the mechanics of army life, obviously severely compromises the ostensibly exclusively male environment of the camp, and its display, transmission and consolidation of resolutely ‘manly’ martial values. The

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21 For a fuller reading of this play in the context of the invasion crisis, see Jones, ‘Notes on The Camp’.

carnivalesque disordering of military discipline and regularity, brought about by the intrusion of women into the homosocial bounds of the camp could be readily equated with other similarly transgressive practices. In the epistolary novel Coxheath-Camp, a character argues that a camp 'like a masquerade levels all distinction'. The comparison was apt to the extent that both were sites of hybridisation; uncertain areas in which the social and sexual boundaries of polite culture became blurred. The camp, like the popular masquerade, disrupted normative social rules, conduct and categories. They were places where high and low became interchangeable, where polite social interaction became threatening and sexualised, where men were effeminate and women masculinised.

This inversion of social codes, this 'world turned upside down', is also apparent in Richard Tickell's prologue to The Camp. This verse mockingly disarms any apprehension over the threat of a French invasion by reminding the audience of the female viragos of the camps: 'Perish such Fears! What can our Arms oppose, / When female Warriours join our martial'd Beaus'. The masquerade-like assumption of alternative personas Tickell outlines here, the travestying of (fe)male roles and conduct, whilst clearly meant as absurd, can also be seen as articulating very real anxieties. Beneath the comic intent lies a genuine concern for the state of the country's military forces, for the ability of the nation to defend itself. These were fears that found one outlet of expression in references to violations of acceptable protocol, behavior and conduct amongst

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23 Coxheath-Camp, I, 13.

24 For an invaluable discussion of the cultural significance of the masquerade, see Terry Castle, Masquerade and Civilisation: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction (Stanford, Cal., 1986).

 Tickell’s verse was also a topical reference to the visual scandals of contemporary women’s fashion. The London Chronicle for 23 May 1778, alongside details of Burgoyne’s ‘unfortunate expedition’ and a lengthy appeal to the ‘Revolted Colonies’, reported that the ‘Ladies, who attend the military reviews now all dress en militaire’. The Chronicle’s columnist attributed the adoption of military dress amongst female camp followers to Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. It is the Duchess who appears to the right, en militaire, shouldering a riding crop and parading before the Duchesses of Gordon and Grafton, as one of The Three Graces of Cox-Heath in Matthew Darly’s satirical print of 4 March 1779 (fig.36). Darly’s image draws firstly on Mortimer’s earlier A Trip to Cock’s Heath, where the ‘Three Graces’ are seen displaying a keen interest in the overtly phallic weaponry of the camp in a way that makes the ‘female troops’ fascination in military matters graphically clear. However, Darly’s image is also a witty parody of the vogue for allegorical female portraits, and an astute comment upon the capacity for alternate readings that were a by-product of that genre. It slyly acknowledges the incongruity of classical quotation in a contemporary context, and the want of modern virtue in comparison with its ancient counterpart. Dressed in military coats with epaulettes, cravats and waistcoats, sporting looped and cockaded hats, the doll-like Duchesses’ approximation of male sartorial codes, and encroachment into the masculine realm of warfare, renders the mythological appellation less than fitting. Further distancing them from classical virtue,
the partial adoption, rather than full appropriation, of regimental uniform serves to fetishize the figures, to eroticize them. That this was a potential that informed the choice of dress is a possibility that the print perhaps implies, but which other sources clearly stated. That cross-dressing enhanced desirability, and amounted to a self-consciously contrived strategy of the female troops to manipulate and monopolize the gaze of others, was recognized by the author of Coxheath-Camp, who argued that ‘this Amazonian appearance’ was clearly the devise of ‘some confident Beauty’ and ‘calculated to heighten the charms of a fine woman’.29.

Fashion and masquerade occupied a central place in the late eighteenth-century cultural discourse on femininity. It has been argued that forms of masquerade enabled women to participate in otherwise socially restrictive areas.30 However, it was also commonly deployed to denigrate feminine achievement, signaling women’s capacity for deceit and role-playing. Fashion’s emphasis on the body as a surface of changing appearances, effects and signs, cut across the idea of the body as a legible signifier of innate character or psychological essence.31 As the satirical concern for the

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29 Coxheath-Camp, 1, 26.
'female troops' illustrates, identity became performative rather than essential. The camps provided stages for these acts of self-presentation, for displays of wealth, status and sexuality, that were akin to the numerous cultural sites Georgian society established for social parade, from Bath's streets to London's pleasure parks.32 Eighteenth-century society certainly licensed degrees of public display but, as the moral injunctions against the women of the camp indicate, these were codes of behaviour that could be overstepped. As I remarked earlier, the camp was frequently likened to a fashionable masquerade. However, it was a comparison that only worked up to a point. Unlike the masquerade, identities in the camp were not concealed behind a mask of 'otherness'. As press reports and satirical commentary eagerly pointed out, in the camps recognizable individuals openly engaged in social trespass. The apparent insouciance of élite women, their provocative flaunting of social codes, appeared a means to proclaim their own importance. They could be exhibitionist and transgressive; because their status entitled them to be. However, playing on the public gaze in this way also entailed a risk of incitement, and the behaviour of the élite during a period of crisis could initiate the most ferocious criticism.


32 It might be pointed out in this context, that Bowles's view of Coxheath discussed earlier is undoubtedly reliant on images of such spaces as Vauxhall Gardens or the Mall. I am thinking here of paintings and prints after them of London's pleasure grounds made by, say, Samuel Wale or Antonio Canaletto.
Reynolds's Portrait of Lady Symour Worsley

Amongst Sir Joshua Reynolds's exhibits at the Royal Academy in the summer of 1780 was a whole-length portrait of Lady Seymour Worsley, a wife of an officer in the Hampshire militia and a regular of the London dailies 'camp intelligence' (fig. 37).33 Dressed en militaire in the deep, warm scarlet colours of her husband's regiment, the image is a provocative, overtly public expression of the subject's patriotism. Yet Lady Worsley's status as a 'society beauty', explicitly acknowledged in the critical attention the painting received, problematized such a statement.34 It was an identity which located her in much the same precarious position as the other 'female troops' of Coxheath and Warley where their proclamations rendered them both patriotic and fashionable, both symbols of national defiance and objects of fantasy. As a 'beauty', Lady Worsley was the object of both veneration and condemnation, the embodiment of 'natural' worth and capricious modishness.35 It was this uneasy position which informed many of the moral injunctions Worsley was to suffer following her involvement in perhaps the period's most infamous instance of aristocratic moral and social trespass.

The gossip column of the Morning Herald for 14 January 1782, cataloguing the latest news from Coxheath, focused on a Captain Bisset's 'attention to a certain belle militaire, whom he usually

34 See the comments of 'The Painter's Mirror' in The Morning Post, 2 May, 1780 and A Candid Review of the Exhibition (Being the Twelfth) of the Royal Academy, MDCCCLXX, 2nd ed. (London, 1780).
accompanied in her morning rides’, action which earned him ‘among his brother officers the appellation of Lady W____y’s aid de camp’. On 21 February, before the Court of King’s Bench presided over by Lord Mansfield, Sir Richard Worsley brought an action of criminal conversation against Bisset, an officer in his own regiment. Whilst the case went uncontested, Worsley was awarded only a shilling’s damages on the grounds that he had encouraged the affair. Evidence was presented that Worsley had colluded in the affair, allowing the young officer to view his wife bathing. A transcript of the trial was hastily published and its contents quickly incorporated into a slew of moralizing tracts, scurrilous verse and satirical prints, which frequently played upon the erotic connotations of Lady Worsley’s adoption of military dress. A number of these squibs drew rhetorical comparisons between modern morality and classical or biblical precedents. In the graphic satire A Bath of the Moderns, published 4 March 1782, the modern adaptation of the venerable historical theme of the female nude bathing – familiar from images of a Bathsheba or a Susanna – provides the telling contrast (fig.38).\[36] Here there is no pretence to modesty; Lady Worsley’s partial state of undress and coy gestures actually attract attention to herself and indicates her final acquiescence in the voyeurism. Another recurrent theme of the satires was that her behaviour was in some way masculinized. In one of the numerous literary satires of the scandal, Variety, or Which is the Man?, for instance, Lady Worsley was condemned as ‘a strange mutation / in her own sex’s reputation’ who had ‘rov’d thro’ carnal pleasures / Without reserve to hide her measures!’\[37] Her sexually predatory actions, her indecency and erotic aggressivity, emblematized by

\[36] BM 6106. For other graphic treatments of the scandal, see BM 6105-6112.

\[37] Variety, or Which is the Man? A Poem. Dedicated to Lady W**sl*y (London, 1782), pp.4-5. This is only one of several dozen pamphlets generated by the affair collected together with the trial in the British Library, shelfmark 107.
her confounding of accepted dress codes, amounted to an inversion of traditional gendered conduct. In a period which saw marriage constructed as increasingly an essentially procreative, monogamous institution, the sexually appetent, élite female ‘camp followers’ provided a telling ‘other’ against which the values of an urban ‘middling sort’ might be defined. The unchaste, erotic abandonment of aristocratic women was also a significant feature of the vicious Juvenillian Warley: A Satire, a pamphlet ironically addressed to the principal visual chronicler of the élite, Reynolds, who it called ‘the First Artist in Europe’. Amidst its accounts of excess, decadence and folly among the nation’s ruling class, a ‘camp follower’, Lady Bab, pointedly remarks that ‘The Woman that marries, I call her a goose / For husbands are fixtures grown quite out of use’. 38

The androgynous liberalism of élite behaviour was materially at odds with the increasingly dominant privileging of stable, well-ordered marriage as the central plank of a stable, well-ordered society. The aggressively public profile of certain leading female figures, and their status as spectacles of metropolitan curiosity, was in conflict with the representation of women current from early in the century as the nexus of innocent, domestic familial life and opposed to the dangerous, corrupting pursuits of fashionable urban culture. Whilst ideals of modest domesticity were challenged by, but also continuous and compatible with, the need for feminine visibility and display as markers of societal politeness, the potential for the latter model to lapse into excess and disturb the equilibrium was pronounced. The ‘female troops’ of Coxheath and Warley, such as Georgiana or Lady Worsley, patently failed to make the negotiation eighteenth-century society required of women. They appeared careless of maintaining the precarious balance between ideals of retired femininity

and female display. They openly flaunted the gap between the construction of desirable femininity – the ‘beauty’ incarnated on the walls of the Royal Academy, for instance – and ‘real’, apparently irrepressible female sexuality. Imprinted on the popular cultural imagination through their constant appearances in the gossip columns of the London dailies, and the incessant productions of literary and visual satirists, they became readable signs of élite degeneracy.

Perhaps surprisingly, the satirical commentaries on the camps I have examined here are largely unconcerned with the ideological focus of civic humanism’s condemnation of a permanent force, which represented a professional soldiery as an idle, debauched parasite on civil society, and which usually informed injunctions against the nation’s military. However, this is not to say that these satires lack any ideological purpose. Rather, they chose to address questions regarding the responsibilities and requirements of military service tacitly. From a position of opposition to the government and its policies, demonstrations of confidence in North’s defensive strategies would have been to lend support to its loyalist appeals. Yet overt statements of criticism would have risked accusations of treason. Further, to have actually acknowledged the invasion threat as in any way likely, which the satires rarely do, would have been to admit that criticism of the great oppositionist ‘hero’, Keppel, might actually have had some validity. Given the conflicted political climate, critiques of the effort to defend the nation’s coastlines had to come in veiled ways. These might take the form of subtle juxtapositions of material, such as that found in the Universal Magazine, or in appeals to the ‘social’ responsibility of society’s élite, as found in any number of the moral directives leveled at ‘the female troops’. In the second half of this chapter, I want to consider these kinds of


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veiled criticism further, focusing the discussion on the image of the country’s military establishment in the closing months of the American War.

Reynolds’s Portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton

At the Royal Academy summer exhibition of 1782 Reynolds submitted an ambitious whole-length portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton, a recently returned veteran of the American War and prominent figure on the London social scene (fig.39).\footnote{Much of the following discussion is based on my ‘Reynolds’s Portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton and the fashion for war’, British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies, vol. 24, no. 2 (Autumn 2001), pp. 123-44.} Critical reception of the work in the periodical and daily press was notably favourable, with the majority of reviewers singling the painting out for comment and commending Reynolds’s performance. The self-styled ‘Fresnoy’, for example, writing in the Public Advertiser, praised the painting’s ‘profound Investigation and subtle Display of Character’ and placed ‘the Colonel Tarleton of the President among the Chef d’Oeuvres of Portrait Painting, whether the modern or ancient’.\footnote{Fresnoy, ‘For the Public Advertiser, The Exhibition [1782]’, The Public Advertiser, 3 May 1782.} For the anonymous critic of the St. James Chronicle the rich incidental detail of the painting lent itself readily to the reviewer’s propensity to construct narrative incident. ‘The sublime Effect’ of the picture, he asserted, led ‘the Mind into a Train of Ideas’ which brought a ‘whole Engagement before it’ with Reynolds’s painting depicting ‘the moment of Col. Tarleton as he is taking horse to attempt the Recovery of a lost Day’.\footnote{The St. James Chronicle; or, British Evening-Post, 27-30 April 1782.} However,
the same pictorial elements, which could stimulate such lyrical fantasy, could equally incite ‘Peter
Pindar’ to mock: ‘Lo! TARLETON dragging on his boot so tight! / His Horses feel a godlike rage, /
And yearn with Yankies to engage___ / I think I hear them snorting for the fight!’ 43 Between the
critic’s reverie and the satirist’s raillery is something of the wider circumstances beyond the frame;
that is, a set of social and political concerns external to the painting but which I shall argue are
crucial to any understanding of how Reynolds’s canvas might have been read and received. To begin,
the intentional poignancy of the Chronicle’s image of ‘a lost Day’ and ‘Pindar’s’ no doubt
purposefully pointed reference to ‘Yankies’ are comments that locate responses to the painting in the
context of a colonial war by this point almost certainly ‘lost’.

For artists, at least in comparison with the glories of the Seven Years’ War, the dismal failure
of British arms in the struggle for the American colonies presented few events demanding visual
commemoration. Commissioned portraiture of military figures such as Tarleton, offering the
opportunity for an edifying conflatory style of historical portrait, represented the only form of
encomiastic image-making open for painters. Yet such a confident image of self-possessed
masculine potency and power as Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton, carried out with considerable;
panache on the artist’s part, appears strikingly incongruent with the crisis-stricken actuality of the
British military position. Reynolds’s portrait is one of absolute authority and martial command: a
surety visualized through the surrounding ‘trophies’ of enemy cannon and standards; the poised
self-control of the officer in the midst of violent chaos; and the accentuation of the officer’s
corporeal presence, for instance, in the tight fit of the elaborate uniform or the rising crest of

Tarleton's shako of black swan's feathers. Given the ignominious status of the army at this point - and indeed, as I will demonstrate, of Tarleton himself - it appears to be essentially an image of war fantasized. It should be seen, I would suggest, in the context of a desperate desire on the part of the British military establishment as a whole to elaborate a powerful, confident image for itself: a need necessitated by mounting criticism of its role in a conflict that had - as we have already seen - disrupted, disturbed and divided the nation.44

In what follows I want to explore these contentious issues through a particular strand of oppositionist polemic, of anti-war sentiment, that focused on the British military establishment, its failures, injustices and entrenched privilege, and its perceived political and moral corruption: malignancies embodied (as we shall see) to a large extent in the person of Lieutenant-Colonel Tarleton. In the face of such grievances the propensity of leading members of the British army such as Tarleton to make a defiant show of bravado might be seen, as I have already suggested, to represent an attempt to shore up something of its crumbling image. However, as the web of gossip, rumour and satirical comment surrounding Tarleton during the summer in which Reynolds's canvas was exhibited demonstrates, such unconscionable display only provided further material for the dissenting imagination of metropolitan print culture.

"a spirited Martinet": Tarleton and print culture.

Following the disastrous British defeat at Yorktown, Virginia, Tarleton was returned to London as a prisoner on parole in January 1782. Despite his somewhat aberrant status Tarleton quickly established himself with the Prince of Wales’ circle, becoming a regular of the society gossip columns most notably for his much publicized liaison with the actress, writer and poet Mary ‘Perdita’ Robinson. During this period Tarleton contrived a flamboyant public identity - or notoriety - for himself, the strategies of which included the commission of London’s most fashionable portrait painters Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough. Presumably aware of the insistent comparison made by critics throughout the 1770s and ‘80s between the two artists, Tarleton’s sitting for both Reynolds and his principal rival appears to have been a tactic purposefully designed to elicit the maximum coverage at the forthcoming Royal Academy exhibition. For Reynolds and Gainsborough, given their patron’s contemporary public prominence, the commissions would have been significant ones with the resultant works certain to attract the attention of the Academy’s public. This mutually beneficial relationship perfectly exemplifies the forms of reciprocity, exchange and transaction that operate between artist and sitter engaged in the act of portraiture. Essentially a collaborative process, the shared interests in the contract between Tarleton


47 The social and professional transaction between artist and subject, which is such a crucial element of eighteenth-century portrait painting, has been explored recently with regard to Reynolds’s studio practice by Richard
and Reynolds, for instance, is evidenced by an example of conspicuous manipulation of public
expectation in the periodical press in the weeks leading up to the Academy show. In March 1782, the
month immediately prior to the exhibition at Somerset House, the *Westminster Magazine* published a
laudatory account of Tarleton’s career illustrated with an engraving clearly derived from Reynolds’s
then unseen portrait (fig.40). The image, accompanying a sycophantic puff, served both to heighten
the ambitious Tarleton’s public profile and to provide advance publicity for Reynolds’s forthcoming
exhibit. The success of such tactics, at least for the artist, is patent from the enthusiastic response of
critics to Reynolds’s painting already cited. For the sitter however, deliberate, provocative public
self-fashioning of this kind was less readily countenanced.

As Pindar’s response to Reynolds’s painting cited above illustrates, Tarleton’s cultivation of
a prominent profile in fashionable London society provided ready material for the satiric
imagination. *The Thunderer*, published 20 August 1782 and attributed to James Gillray, is a


Tarleton, the Prince of Wales and Mary Robinson. However, Gainsborough withdrew his portrait of Robinson before the show opened. It has been suggested recently that the artist may have thought it ill advised to display the Prince and Robinson in ‘provocative juxtaposition’, given their well-known affair. See Gill Perry, ‘The spectacle of the muse: exhibiting the actress at the Royal Academy’, in David H. Solkin (ed.), *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836* (New Haven & London, 2001), pp.111-26. Interestingly, this essay does not draw out the connections both figures had with Tarleton.
trenchant graphic comment on the young officer’s self-promotion and *arriviste* status (fig. 41).oramody of Reynolds’s recently successful canvas, the print portrays Tarleton as Bobadil, the idle, fanciful adventurer of Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in his Humour*. Alongside stands the Prince of Wales, identifiable by the reptilian-like plume of ostrich feathers, who is depicted as the play’s vain ‘country gull’ Stephen and who foolishly seeks to imitate Bobadil’s posturing and bravado. The image plays on the ludicrous disparity between the poised, taut muscular body of Tarleton/Bobadil and the gauche, flabby corporeality of the Prince/Stephen, wittily visualizing the mutually emulatory behaviour of a socially aspirant Liverpool merchant’s son and a military-fixated Prince. Above the doorway of ‘THE WHIRLIGIG’ chop-house before which they stand, impaled on a projecting beam, legs and arms outstretched, is the object of both Tarleton’s and the Prince’s romantic overtures, ‘Perdita’ Robinson. With a precise visual and textual acumen the print encapsulates the arrogance, affectations and flagrant sexual promiscuity which were increasingly seen as characterizing the excesses of society’s élite and embodies them through Tarleton. Horace Walpole in a letter to William Mason remarked, ‘Tarleton boasts of having butchered more men, and lain with more women than anybody’, to which he recorded Sheridan responding “‘Lain with, (...) what a weak expression; - he should have said, ravished. Rapes are the relaxation of murder’”. Walpole’s evident delight in the foolishness of Tarleton’s self-promotion can be seen as indicative of a widespread contemporary fascination with the conduct of a fashionable élite, but also the equally

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49 BM 6116. For a perceptive account of this print, see Diana Donald’s catalogue entry in Penny (ed.), *Reynolds*, cat. no. 189, pp. 377-8.

habitual impulse to admonish that behaviour. The self-interested Tarleton of ribald gossip and innuendo, of Gillray’s public comment and Walpole’s private joke, given to violent and sensual excess, provides a telling counterpoint to the image of heroic, self-possessed masculine power in Reynolds’s portrait.

The sense of assurity in Reynolds’s canvas, in part guaranteed by the kinds of pictorial effects noted earlier, is affirmed further by the artist’s deliberate and quite literal quotation of antique sculpture in the sitter’s pose. The use in this case of a sculpture then usually identified as being of the Roman general Cincinnatus (fig.42) can be seen as being in accord with the painter’s frequent use of such venerable sources, stretching back to his career breakthrough portrait of Commodore Augustus Keppel (c. 1752-3). As with other such works the sitter might be seen as ennobled by affiliation with the classical ideal and connotative associations of austere sublimity, repose and self-containment generated by it. In the portrait of Tarleton, Reynolds’s strict delineation of the contours of his classical model provides a structuring presence in an otherwise sensuous, painterly programme. The officer appears a statuesque calm centre against the violent turbulence of the background setting; an image of control amongst the uncontrol signified by the rearing, panicked horses. However, what in one sense could be read as self-command, as self-assuredness, could be in another equated with reckless arrogance. Given what I will shortly outline of Tarleton’s own war record, not to say the recent history of British arms generally, the implicit comparison of contemporary military manhood with an illustrious ancient predecessor being made in the painting opened up a considerable disparity, a potential slippage of interpretation. The tendency of eighteenth-

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51 For details on the Cincinnatus, see Francis Haskell & Nicholas Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900 (New Haven & London, 1981), cat. no. 24, pp.182-84.
century publics to read and interpret events and personalities of the day in terms of historical precedents introduces a potential for likening which the sitter might evidently fail to meet adequately. Marcia Pointon has recently suggested with regard to Reynolds’s portrait practice how in acts of formal borrowing and quotation ‘residual traces of the original text (...) cling to the grafted passage’\(^{52}\), and that such remnants may not be fully recuperated by representation. In painting Tarleton Reynolds drew upon an image, Cincinnatus, where such ‘residual traces’ were rendolent of effective, ordered and modest military command, and so introduced a decidedly jarring comparative note.\(^{53}\) Whilst this particular potential for ambiguity was not explicitly acknowledged in any of the commentaries the painting elicited, such incoherences do appear a conspicuous element of the work. Further, the satirical response to Reynolds’s canvas, in Gillray’s graphic image and Pindar’s poetic one, suggest the extent to which a sense of such representational excesses were readily apparent to contemporaries. Pindar, for example, highlights both Tarleton’s predisposition for self-display and the potential absurdities of Reynolds’s borrowing, by reducing the artist’s citation of an esteemed classical model to the ludicrous image of the officer ‘dragging on his boot so tight’.

There may also exist a tantalizing if necessarily tentative, suggestion that Reynolds purposefully incorporated such elements of excess into the work, and that the canvas was actually intended as an elaborate knowing piece of ridicule at Tarleton’s expense. It might be pointed out, for instance, that the suggestive positioning of the gun recalls the phallic punning of countless graphic satires of naval and army life surely familiar to Reynolds. It was certainly not unknown for Reynolds

\(^{52}\) Pointon, Strategies for Showing, p. 72.

\(^{53}\) See, for example, the entry on ‘Cincinnatus’ in [John Lemprière], Biblioteca Classica; or, A Classical Dictionary, Containing a Full Account of all the Proper Names Mentioned in Antient Authors (London, 1788), unpaginated.
to introduce deliberate, piquant comments upon his sitters' sexuality. Such an allusion, however, in this case would not preclude the possibility that artist and sitter acted complicitly - it could, for instance, be seen as a display of elegant 'aristocratic' wit, of the urbane repartee of social equals. This would also in fact serve to further my argument here, that Tarleton actually revelled in his notoriety: that he acted in a self-consciously transgressive way - flaunting his sexual indiscretions, for instance - because his status and position entitled him to do so; because he, along with a small coterie of other elite figures, actively sought to occupy and control the public gaze.

Tarleton's concern to attract the public gaze, to make a visible impression, and the inevitable censure such exhibitionism could elicit obviously informed the harsh, reproachful comments of reviewers responding to Gainsborough's now lost equestrian image of the officer. The Morning Herald's critic 'Guido's' caustic observation that 'the Painter has evidently sacrificed too much to the full-speed ideas of a spirited Martinet', specifically implicated Tarleton's arrogant conceit in the painting's apparent failure. An open letter addressed to Gainsborough, which was also to appear in...
the *Herald*, similarly saw the faults of the work as residing in the vanity of the sitter rather than in the artist’s lack of facility. Derisively likening the portrait to a tavern hoarding, referring to it as that ‘enormous sign of the *Horse and Jockey*’, ‘Veritas’, the signatory of the piece, defended the artist’s role by rhetorically asking of Gainsborough ‘Was the general disposition of the picture your own choice, or had you, as I much suspect, no choice in the business?’. Beneath the speculation and layers of irony in ‘Veritas’s’ questioning lay both an anxious desire to vindicate the artist’s reputation and an urge to condemn the perceived manipulatory behaviour of the patron. The letter concluded by suggesting that the painter surely had ‘to be prevailed on to exhibit it’; implying that it was only Tarleton’s imprudent ambition that enforced its display against Gainsborough’s better judgment. The suggestion was that the walls of Somerset House were being used for the purposes of vanity, personal ambition and status differentiation rather than for reflective, contemplative or morally edifying reasons. The uncertain tension between the exhibition’s ostensible function, as site for the cultivation of polite taste and national virtue, and its status as fashionable spectacle, which always existed somewhat uneasily, had in this instance been plainly exposed.

These admonitions of Tarleton’s self-publicizing, of his own self-regard, can be seen to have a more pressing political valency, when considered in conjunction with equally censorious contemporary reports of his actions in the American conflict. Volunteering for service in the King’s Dragoon Guards Tarleton had swiftly risen to prominence through his involvement in a series of

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[57] Veritas, ‘To Mr. GAINSBOROUGH’, *The Morning Herald*, 21 May 1782. It seems likely that the artist himself had some hand in orchestrating this defense, given that his ally on numerous other occasions Henry Bate was then
successful, if bloody, skirmishes with the militant populations of the southern colonies. The most infamous of these affrays was at the town of Waxsaw where, despite what contemporary accounts termed ‘contending with a superiority of numbers’, troops led by Tarleton inflicted enormous loss of life upon the defending colonists: an episode which earned the commanding officer the appellation ‘Bloody’ Tarleton. Tarleton’s return home placed his conduct in the colonies under public scrutiny. The Morning Chronicle of the 6 and 9 of August 1782 published two intensely personal and charged letters deriding the officer’s military and personal integrity that led to a heated public debate lasting several years. The reputation established by such reports endowed Tarleton’s swaggering, boastful persona with a palpable irony and overtly politicizes references to it. In Gillray’s print, published within days of the letters appearing in the Morning Chronicle, Tarleton/Bobadil’s extravagant claims to have killed ‘two hundred a day’ appear, in the light of public sensitivity to events in the colonies, a painful reminder of the brutal military coercion utilized by the British government in the war.

58 See the dispatches regarding the conflict posted in the London Gazette Extraordinary, 5 July 1780.

59 The letters are quoted in full in Bass, Green Dragoon, pp.243-5. Seeking to counter the accusations, Tarleton – probably aided by Robinson – produced the absurdly self-aggrandising A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America (Dublin, 1787). This was a book not unreasonably labelled by Lieutenant Roderick Mackenzie, the likely author of the original letters to the Chronicle, as a work of ‘consummate artifice’ and ‘sophistry’ (Strictures on Lt. Col. Tarleton’s History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America (London, 1787), p.3). Mackenzie’s ‘low and vulgar attempts at wit and satire’ were in turn derided in a counter-attack launched by Tarleton’s friend George Hanger in An Address to the Army: In Reply to Strictures, by Roderick McKenzie (Late Lieutenant in the 71st Regiment) on Tarleton’s History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781 (London, 1789), p.3 By this point Tarleton was pursuing a career in politics.
The conflation of public failing with a lack of personal integrity, overwhelming arrogance and luxuriant sexuality, that I have begun to explore here in relation to Tarleton’s public profile, are clearly analogous to the kinds of criticism levelled at the élite women of the camps. In both contexts the subjects cultivated a provocative public image for themselves, which inevitably incited reproof. What is interesting in the present context, but also in the instance of Lady Worsley, is the use of both the military and the Royal Academy as staging grounds for attracting the public gaze. For, as the critical role the exhibition of Reynolds’s and Gainsborough’s paintings played in both the staging and subsequent reprimands of Tarleton’s performative persona demonstrates, visual culture was an active component in establishing the military’s sense of itself but also in the criticisms provoked by its image.

Patronage and preferment.

In The Cadet, a reformist military training manual first printed in 1756, Samuel Bever observed ‘Our Army is mostly composed of the Sons of our Nobility’. As the remark neatly illustrates, by the mid-eighteenth century members of the British aristocratic élite were actively seeking to identify themselves with the country’s armed forces. Enrolment in the nation’s military was increasingly attempting to capitalize on his military past, and so still found it necessary to vindicate himself.

60 It should perhaps be pointed out here that Tarleton’s claims to aristocratic status were somewhat tenuous, as he was, after all, a merchant’s son. However, as I have illustrated, his élite standing was more a question of behaviour, of how he viewed himself, and circles in which he moved.
perceived as an integral part of aristocratic sociability, an agent for genteel display, which served to both sustain and indeed further elaborate the élite’s collective imagination of itself. Military service, as Gillian Russell has most cogently argued, provided an ideal forum for the furtherance of aristocratic influence, a stage for the extension of élite action internationally. As Tarleton obviously recognized, the array of military portraits exhibited annually at the Royal Academy were an important manifestation of this phenomenon - a strategic, public visual assertion of patrician propriety and authority.

On the walls of Somerset House in the summer of 1782, alongside Gainsborough’s and Reynolds’s images of Tarleton, hung a number of other portraits of serving military officers. However, unlike his painting of Tarleton, Gainsborough’s depiction of another intimate of the Prince, Colonel John Hayes St. Leger, remained critically unscathed (fig.43). In the easy fall of his shoulders and relaxed stance the officer exhibits the same self-possessed elegance and repose encountered in Reynolds’s Tarleton but crucially, in contrast with the battle setting of that image, St. Leger is located in pastoral landscape. The siting of the officer in a rural prospect firmly associates him with those values connoted by the image of the English countryside – peace, contemplation, contentment and patriotic communal affiliation – and which seem so resolutely opposed to those summoned by Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton - war, action, ambition and individual aggression. Whilst, given the political situation of 1782, it is these connotations that render the latter painting so problematic, these adverse articulations in relation to an image like the St. Leger should not

necessarily be seen as entirely antithetical. The location of Gainsborough’s St. Leger could be seen for instance as blurring distinctions between profession and status, with the officer appearing ‘naturalised’ as much as a member of the landed gentry as an officer. It might be said that they are identities that inform one another, with both conferring gentility. Portraiture of patrician military figures characteristically employed either type of background, the underlying implication being that both war and the English landscape - and such sites of fashionable assembly as the Royal Academy? - were equally domains of aristocratic power and control, sites for the assertion of élite authority. David Solkin has argued that for a late eighteenth-century patrician élite rapidly losing confidence, the commission of elaborate grand style portraiture offered a potent pictorial reinforcement of its position. Élite participation in the military and its visual commemoration, I would suggest, bears out and amplifies Solkin’s thesis. In the self-assured ease of Reynolds’s Tarleton or Gainsborough’s St. Leger are embodied a key element of what Linda Colley has termed the beleaguered élite’s...


64 See David Solkin, ‘Great pictures or great men? Reynolds, male portraiture, and the power of art’, Oxford Art Journal, vol.9, no.2 (1986), pp.42-9, esp. 42, 47-8. Whilst space precludes a full consideration of the issue here, it might be pointed out with regard to Gainsborough’s St. Leger and Reynolds’s Tarleton, but also any number of other military portraits from the same period (eg. Reynolds’s 3rd Earl of Harrington, 1783 (Paul Mellon Centre for British Art, New Haven)), that these images’ recalling of Stuart court portraiture also possibly, rather troublingly, evoke cultural memories of seventeenth-century ‘civil’ conflict, which given the political climate again introduces a further note of instability, of provocation, into the meanings the portraits might generate.
strategy for endurance and recovery', in part necessitated by the crisis of the American war. The use of the military for the display of aristocratic propriety was however, particularly during the period of the American war and following such ignominious defeats as Yorktown, under increasingly hostile examination from those who saw in it an undermining of the nation's martial potency.

For the numerous critics of élite hegemony over the nation's forces its foundation on a system that rewarded privilege, rather than merit or 'manliness', provided perhaps the most obvious means of rebuking any such basely hierarchical form. Military preferment was seen as a system founded on nepotism and financial advantage, fuelled by pecuniary interests, breeding an indolent, ignorant and ineffectual officer corp. Advancement in the ranks was rarely related to ability, experience or accomplishment, but was rather a matter of wealth, social status and connection.


See, for example, the complaints made by Humphrey Bland in his regularly reprinted handbook, *A Treatise of Military Discipline; In which is Laid down and Explained the Duty of the Officer and Soldier, Thro' several Branches of the Service* [1724], 3rd ed. (London, 1734), p.116. For a detailed discussion of commissions, see Eric Robson, 'Purchase and promotion in the British army in the eighteenth century', *History*, vol.36 (1951), pp.57-72.

It is worth noting here that the iconographic celebration of the century's principal military hero, General Wolfe, is essentially atypical in its focus upon his meritricious rise through the ranks. Insistent comparisons between figures such as Tarleton and the 'Illustrious Wolfe' were continually made, both by those eager to praise and those equally keen to condemn (enjoying the evident disparity between the two). On Wolfe's apotheosis, see Alan McNairn, *Behold the Hero: General Wolfe and the Arts in the Eighteenth Century* (Liverpool, 1997) and David H. Solkin, *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven & London, 1993), pp.207-13. On evocations of Wolfe's memory regarding Tarleton, see Robinson's fawning 'Ode to Valour, inscribed 124.
During the American War, literary and graphic satires repeatedly drew on this theme as a means of berating the army, and by extension the struggle itself, as Thomas Colley’s *The Comforts – And Curse – of a Military Life*, published 31 January 1783, demonstrates (fig.44). In this graphic treatment of the inequity of preferment, the ‘Meritous claims’ of the wounded veteran are contrasted with the corrupt practices of two senior officers whose ‘comforts’ are paid for by the sale of promotions. The gulf between those with interest and those without is established by Colley’s image through the opposition of its two compartments, which contrast the fashionable world with domesticity, opulence with poverty, and indulgence with frugality. The officers’ spendthrift behaviour might also bring into question their motives for enlistment.

A military career was frequently represented as a calculated, desperate, yet still respectable option for those with the right connections and sufficient resources. Satiric accounts of Tarleton’s military record, for instance, represented his career as just such an ancillary measure; a contingency arising from his failure as a ‘student at law’ at Oxford. As one narrative had it, the ‘circle of dissipation’ Tarleton found himself in at university exhausted his finances and cast him into debt, making it ‘expedient to go abroad to avoid disagreeable consequences’. The ‘unfortunate misunderstanding between England and America’, rather than providing a patriotic motive for his enlistment, merely ‘pointed out to him the field of action’ where he might ‘avoid the persecution of creditors’. Being ‘intimate with several gentlemen of the army’ his commission was readily to Col. Banastre Tarleton’, in *Poems* (London, 1791), p.60.


‘Histories of the Tête-à-Tête annexed: or, Memoirs of the Intrepid Partizan and the amiable Miss W-BB’, *The
procured. That a career in the army was frequently a matter of expedience, rather than patriotic fervour, further fuelled arguments that the country’s forces were presided over by an ultimately ineffectual command, feigning control.

Published anonymously by the antiquarian, caricaturist and officer Francis Grose, *Advice to the Officers of the British Army*, again published in 1782, was a parody of military life, behaviour and institutions. Grose’s *Advice* took the form of a series of satiric maxims that endorsed the self-serving actions of superior officers: advocating bluff, flurry and a close attention to appearances as means to disguise inexperience, ineptness and indolence. In the posturing, affected behaviour prescribed by the author’s aphoristic council the contemporary reader was clearly intended to recognize certain members of the British military establishment. A correspondent of the *British Magazine* reviewing Grose’s popular work remarked ‘we are deceived if he has not particular characters in view in some parts of his instructions’. The remarks to regimental lieutenant-colonels, for instance, appear specifically addressed to the boastful, socially-aspirant merchant’s son Tarleton:

*The command of five or six hundred men will give you some idea of your own consequence, and you will of course look down upon all but your superiors in the army, and gentlemen of high rank and fortune. Though your father may have been a pedlar or an exciseman, you will entertain a hearty contempt for all bourgeois...*

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72 [Francis Grose], *Advice to the Officers of the British Army: With the Addition of some Hints to the Drummer and Private Soldier*, 6th ed. (London, 1783), p.38. Running to a sixth edition within a year of initial publication Grose’s slim volume was evidently enormously popular; testifying to contemporary public fascination with all-things military.
That the public were encouraged to identify the conduct outlined in the text of Grose’s satire with that of notable individuals is further emphasised by the freely-drawn caricatures of the proverbially-titled frontispiece, *Veluti in Speculum* (fig. 45). Amongst the self-absorbed, self-regarding officers clustered before the satyr’s trophy surmounted mirror a number of figures who featured prominently in the American and Mediterranean campaigns are identifiable. The country’s disgraced military leaders, Amherst, Burgoyne, Murray, Cornwallis, Clinton and Howe, are all featured in the print’s lineup of alternately smirking, frowning, jovial and surprised individuals. At the rear of the group and front of the picture plane, the diminutive figure carrying a riding-cane and grinning with self-satisfaction is Tarleton. The Dragoon’s slight stature, frequently alluded to by contemporaries and so carefully elided in Reynolds’s portrait, is here a further aid to identification. However, in the context of an overt satire upon the nation’s military leadership and its recent failures it also served as a reminder of the folly of appointing such commanders based only on their connections, social rank and ability to pay, of the preferment of the youth. On the wall behind the company are two charts: one, in a pointed reference to the recent loss of Minorca in February 1782, a plan of Fort St. Philip; the other, an inverted map of America with Montreal pointedly in the south,

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Grose’s book remained in publication well into the nineteenth century, by which time the specific figures which I argue the text parodies were it to be assumed no longer recognizable – the comedy becoming more generic in its associations.

73 BM 6047. George appears unaware of the print’s origins as the frontispiece to Grose’s text.

74 It might be noted that, in the light of my remarks above regarding the possible satirical intent of Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton, the officer’s impossibly youthful features in the painting appear, given the anxieties I am outlining here, another of its potential ‘excesses’, although one obviously less likely to have been sanctioned by the sitter.
picturing the colonial conflict as a profoundly unnatural, literal upturning of the world. It had of course been Montreal’s capture by troops under Amherst’s command during the Seven Years’ War that had originally secured the British position in the continent. And the bowed, ingratiating figure of Amherst in Veluti in Speculum seems to be a reference to the officer’s portrayal in Hayman’s celebrated Vauxhall Gardens painting of the event (fig.46). This distortion of Hayman’s patriotic image, the biting ironies of its transposition from an image of resolute imperial control to one of patent uncontrol, is a telling one. Through it the print makes an implicit connection between an aristocratic (or pseudo-aristocratic) military command, the disasters of the recent conflict and their grave consequences for the nation’s imperial and international standing. Before the mirror, a traditional symbol of vanity and folly, the country’s military leadership are offered the opportunity for reflection upon the misadventures of recent campaigns but see only their own rather pleasing image. The military’s obsessive concern for extravagant display, for what Grose termed ‘the minutaie of the service’, had here degenerated into vain, narcissistic self-absorption and an ignorance of duty. According to Grose’s text and its accompanying frontispiece, the nation’s welfare was being neglected and war, a space in which honour and civility were apparently acted out, transformed into an opportunity for display, self-service and social advancement.

‘figuring away’.

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76 Grose, Advice, p.8.
Grose’s text and image, together with the criticisms of Tarleton’s self-fashioning, were part of a by now established discourse of dissent which fostered a perception of the military as increasingly merely an occupation for ‘figuring away’, for overtly theatrical, exhibitionist display. Numerous contemporary commentators saw the army’s rigorous manly discipline being corrupted by the service’s ever closer association with the realm of fashion. As we have seen with regard to Tarleton, the behaviour of certain patrician officers serving in the American colonies and their subsequent conduct upon return home, where they became leaders of fashion, left them open to searing printed vilification. What George Colman termed the bon ton’s ‘constant trade / Of rout, Festino, Ball, and Masquerade’ appeared, particularly during a period of national crisis, symptomatic of the vanity, irresponsibility and lack of patriotism to be found amongst the élite. In the European Magazine for April 1782, the month Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton was exhibited at the Royal Academy, ‘The Man-Miller’, the regular gossip column of the otherwise generally serious monthly, proclaimed the world ‘perfectly intoxicated’, that such ‘extravagance and splendour of enjoyment was never known “even in the piping times of peace”’. The indulgences of the fashionable world according to the ‘Miller’ would ultimately lead to the felling of ‘the stubborn oak of England’ and a conspiracy against the nation acting to ‘destroy the very sinews of her strength’. Writing of the circles in which he traded and their taste for the foreign, the ‘Miller’ confessed that ‘We are most of us the subjects,

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[David Garrick], Bon Ton; or, High Life above Stairs. A Comedy (London, 1775), prologue. The prologue was written by George Colman the Elder.

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and all the friends of France'. The threat of a Bourbon invasion still hung over the country by the
time the ‘Milliner’ was writing. As we saw earlier in the chapter, these equations of luxurious
consumption with neglect of national security, of degenerate aristocratic behaviour with patriotic
decline, were a significant feature of moral and satiric commentary throughout the war but were still
being made in the summer of 1782. The ‘Milliner’s’ account of élite intrigues, scandal and
dissipation continued in June, for instance, with a ‘melancholy anecdote’ concerning the ‘Perdita’,
her ‘constant peer’ and ‘the gallant T______’. What can be found repeatedly in such exposés, which
also littered the gossip columns of the dailies, is a compound of salacious entertainment and political
charge. Errant sexuality and martial decline were perceived as intertwined manifestations of national
degeneration. I would argue that Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton and its reception needs to be seen as
part of this nexus of images and discourses in contemporary culture that dealt with the military, its
recent failures and place in the fashionable world. The unstable meanings the painting generated
cannot be separated from these wider debates.

As I have indicated, Reynolds’s portrait of Tarleton opens itself to a number of contrary
readings. The painting renders war an ordered, dramatized spectacle in which Tarleton can be seen
as at once its calm centre and the very embodiment of martial arrogance and disdain. These are
incoherences that might be seen as merely an inescapable part of the artist’s composite practice.
However, as I suggest above, there is also a sense in which such excesses could be seen as harnessed
to some veiled satiric commentary upon the sitter by Reynolds himself. Whilst to a degree such a
suggestion is not entirely incompatible with Tarleton’s self-imaging, it can nevertheless also be seen
as overtly critical of such a persona. As Richard Wendorf has recently written, Reynolds’s
relationships with his clients were frequently fraught and ambivalent.\textsuperscript{79} Whilst ultimately dependent upon and supportive of the networks of reciprocal obligation, duty and exchange that buttressed Georgian society, he would also chafe at the abuses privilege could apparently sanction. Whilst I would not want to speculate upon the artist’s specific relationship with Tarleton, Reynolds’s portrait of the officer certainly demonstrates his ability to rework and incorporate the potentially problematic nature of a sitter’s public persona to his own ends. Whilst painting such a fashionable public figure as Tarleton offered Reynolds an opportunity to exploit the dynamics of urban celebrity, the notoriety of his sitter, as Gainsborough was to find, also introduced the potential for critical failure. The overwhelmingly positive response generated by Reynolds’s canvas, cited at the beginning of this discussion, suggests that for most critics this was something the artist successfully negotiated, and appraisal of the work concerns itself almost entirely with the aesthetic. Whilst it might be speculated that the RA president manipulated the reception of his own work, I would also suggest that in painting Tarleton Reynolds separated himself from his sitter and that such an ironic, authorial distance manifests itself in the painting’s incongruities and ambiguities. The kinds of doubled readings the image invites appear the only sensible strategy available when, given the tense, conflicted political climate of 1782, the painting of such a portrait could not be anything but provocative. The inappropriateness of the image seems to invite just those kinds of attack on unjustified privilege that circulated around Tarleton at the time of the painting’s exhibition.

As the ‘gallant’ Tarleton’s vilification demonstrates – whether in the satire triggered by Reynolds’s portrait, the commentary Gainsborough’s lost image occasioned, or in the strictures placed upon his conduct domestically and in the colonies – the common thread running through

\textsuperscript{79} Wendorf, \textit{Sir Joshua Reynolds}, esp. pp.159-176.
discourse focused upon the fashionable world and élite participation in the nation’s military was that personal conduct was inseparable from public consequence. Preoccupation with the conduct of individuals amongst the country’s ruling class such as Tarleton was predicated upon an assumption that a continuum existed between the public and the private sphere, and that private virtue was fundamental to the moral prerogative to exert social authority over others. In the self-interested appetent behaviour of an urban minority, apparently interested only in their own self-advancement, lay the roots of a breakdown in classical civic ideals of disinterested government. Contemporary commentators identified in the transgressive practices of the élite a potential threat to the ordering patterns of society itself, with one form of disorder translating itself into another. The promiscuous, adulterous behaviour of the élite was consequently imaged as disrupting the sociable bonds of kinship; polluting the trans-Atlantic ‘social ties of blood’ that existed between the imperial centre and colonial periphery. Alarm at masculine women and effeminate men was in some sense about a nostalgic desire for a return to the apparently stable differences of the pre-war period. Epicene behaviour seemed to characterise the uncertainties of an age of uncertainty and of ‘unnatural’ civil wars. Paintings of the 1780s that focused nostalgically on the soldier’s familial bonds – those of Morland, Wheatley and Wright of Derby – must be seen as part of a wider attempt to reassert the values disrupted or interrupted by the American War. They sought to reassert the bonds of sympathy. This is a theme I want to develop further now through an analysis of the visualization of one of the few notable successes of the conflict, the siege of Gibraltar.
In June 1791, the American painter John Singleton Copley displayed his newly finished canvas *The Siege of Gibraltar* in an ornate Oriental pavilion on the edges of Green Park (fig.47). The artist had invested considerable time, effort, resources, and no little of his reputation in the painting and clearly intended its first public appearance to be memorable. Rumours about Copley's epic work had been circulating in the London press and art world for some years, and the theatrical nature of its eventual showing seems to have been in part an effort to meet anticipation. This spectacular, dramatic presentation also seemed justly fitting for what was a self-consciously significant painting, on a theme of national significance and of calculated commercial and relatively unproblematic patriotic appeal.

Following the loss of the American colonies the successful defence of the British garrison at Gibraltar under the command of General George Augustus Elliot (later Lord Heathfield), against the superior forces of a combined Franco-Spanish fleet, had restored some honour to the country's military and a degree of faith in the nation itself as an imperial power. After more than three years of siege warfare the Bourbon blockade had come to an end following British success in a climactic battle of the 13 and 14 of September 1782, and the eventual relief of the Rock a month later by a fleet under
Admiral Lord Howe. In response to this stunning victory, the Court of Common Council for the City of London established a committee to recommend and oversee an appropriate form of commemoration. Resolving that an ‘Historical Painting’ would be the most suitable way of expressing the city’s ‘respect and attention to the illustrious General Elliott (sic), Lord Howe, and the officers of his majesty’s Army and Navy, employed in the glorious defence and relief of Gibraltar’, the committee approached both Copley and his principal rival Benjamin West. Following several weeks of manoeuvring Copley undercut his competitor, undertaking the work for the reduced fee of 1000 guineas ‘hoping the Advantages of an Exhibition of the Picture and the publication of a print from it’ would ‘compensate him for the time and study requisite for completing so large a Work’. It is clear then that from his initial acceptance of the commission in March 1783, Copley recognised the potential marketability of the theme and always intended to introduce it to the public through a one-off display.

1 Proceedings of the Committee to consider the most suitable mode to be adopted by the Court of Common Council to express its Gratitude to General Elliott (sic), Lord Howe, etc., Corporation of London Record Office, Guildhall, Misc Mss/195/5, 24 February 1783.

2 Ibid., 18 March 1783. For a detailed account of Copley’s negotiations with the committee, see Jules Prown, John Singleton Copley, vol. II: In England 1774-1815 (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), pp.322-36. Any discussion of Copley’s Siege of Gibraltar is inevitably indebted to Prown, which remains the only substantial analysis of the painting. I have drawn on his work selectively for my own ends, while also supplementing his account with new information. The lack of recent critical engagement with the work, despite its undoubted importance to an understanding of the contemporary history piece as a genre, is undoubtedly informed by its protracted period in storage and lengthy period of conservation, which kept it out of public circulation until its redisplay in July 1999.
On payment of the one-shilling entrance fee to the Green Park show, visitors received a proposal for an engraving after the painting that also served as a catalogue describing the action and identifying the participants (figs. 48 and 49). Read in association with the painting, this guide presented viewers with a stirring, patriotic visual and textual narrative of British steadfastness, fortitude and benevolence:

The Painting is 25 feet wide, by 22½ feet high, divided into two Compartments; the upper describing the Victory of the Garrison, and in the moment of their triumph a display of humanity, that exalts the British character; it is composed of three large groupes; that on the right contains the Portraits of the principal British and Hanoverian Officers, of the size of life, who are assembled on the Rampart (the action being over) to view the dreadful scene which ensued from the battering Ships being set on fire. LORD HEATHFIELD, early on the morning of the 14th of September, is seen mounted on a white horse, (agreeably to historical fact,) in conversation with GENERALS BOYD, DE LA MOTTE and GREEN, pointing to SIR ROGER CURTIS, and a detachment of British seamen, who, at the hazard of their own lives, are rescuing their vanquished enemies from destruction. Several of the seamen are seen at the stern of one of the battering Ships, striking the Spanish Ensign; whilst others relieve a number of the unfortunate Spaniards from a sinking wreck: these form a second groupe, on the left. The third groupe occupy the centre, where a number of the enemy are represented in extreme distress, endeavouring to escape from a floating battery that is enveloped in flames. At a distance is a view of the Camp of the allied Army, and the head quarters of the DUKE DE CRILLON.

If, from the inclusion of this text in Copley’s exhibition, we might conclude that the intelligibility of the painting was dependent to an extent on a visual and verbal dialogue.

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Proposals for Publishing by Subscription, An Engraving, from the Historical Picture of the Siege and Relief of Gibraltar, painted by J. S. Copley, R.A. Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the King, for that Purpose, in the Green Park (London, n.d.), unpaginated.
between the picture and these words, then the spectator also had a crucial intermediary role. Reading Copley's text and image assumed a certain familiarity on the part of the reader/viewer with the events and principal actors depicted. Circumscription, abridgement and elision marked both word and picture, and a complete, informed understanding required the audience be conversant with information beyond what was being verbally and visually described. There is no reference to the wider context of the war of which the Franco-Spanish blockade of the garrison was a part, nor what had happened on 13 September. It is not made clear, for instance, that the floating batteries 'enveloped in flames' had been intended by the allies to enforce the final submission of the garrison, but had themselves succumbed to a constant rain of red-hot shot from the fortress. Cannon fire striking the magazines of these battering ships; they had exploded; leaving the British to their 'display of humanity'. All these facts were omitted. Instead, Copley invited the Green Park audience to contribute their own latent knowledge of recent history. Cognition of events beyond the frame of the exhibition placed the spectator in the unfolding drama; inextricably part of the history being staged in Copley's pavilion.

In this chapter, I want to examine how this apparently shared history so dramatically displayed by Copley came to be fashioned, and how the version of events it represented assumed an unquestioned level of authority. Initially, I shall explore the exhibition of Copley's version of the siege of Gibraltar in the context of the artistic and commercial rivalries of the late eighteenth-century London art world. I shall therefore:

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4 For the most complete modern study of the siege, which lasted from 21 June 1779 to the 6 February 1783, see T.H. McGuffie, *The Siege of Gibraltar 1779-1783* (London, 1965):
consider it in the light of the various other instances that put Gibraltar on display across
the city in the years following the end of the blockade. I also want to demonstrate how
these activities were bound up in arguments concerning the foundation of a native school
of history painting. However, whilst concerned to address Copley’s painting and its mode
of exhibition as a form of self-conscious, professional activity, as suggested here, I am
equally anxious to examine it as a document or symptom of other narratives. That is, I
want to consider the relationship of Copley’s history to the plethora of visual and
literary imagery generated by the siege of Gibraltar and that formed the iconography for
its celebration. This was the paintings, prints, poetry and prose that enabled the viewers
of Copley’s painting to complete the gaps or silences in the history being represented, but
which had also in part fashioned what was by the time of the Green Park show an
established part of the national past. In the context of the disasters of the American War,
Gibraltar represented a singular opportunity for celebration of the country’s military
forces. During the course of the 1780s, as Copley worked on his canvas, the events of the
siege and what they signified were instrumental to attempts to reconfigure the country’s
martial and imperial image. In what follows, I want to suggest that visual culture through
a close engagement with written texts had a significant role in this re-evaluation, and that
the ‘revolution of history painting’\footnote{See Edgar Wind, ‘The revolution of history painting’, \textit{Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes}, vol.2 (1938-9), pp.117-23. Since the publication of this seminal article scholarly concern for these paintings has been rather narrowly focused, with a disproportionate amount of discussion addressing itself to West’s \textit{Wolfe} and Copley’s \textit{Pierson} to the neglect of a number of other key works and the genre as a whole. Examinations of these works have also tended to concern themselves solely with the novelty of their aesthetic programmes or commercial viability to an expanding art audience. It is part of my concern in this} in the late eighteenth century - of which Copley’s
Siege was a part — was a critical component in this process. The large-scale, epic narrative canvases of West and Copley, amongst others, had consistently engaged with wars, victories and incidents in the country’s recent past, like the siege of Gibraltar, still in the process of appropriation, invention and interpretation. In arranging the constituent parts of such works — the innumerable portraits, the specific, identifiable location, and dramatic, rousing event - artists were engaged in a judicious selection of what Copley termed in his exhibition text ‘historical fact’. ‘The process of fusing events, whether imaginary or real’, as Hayden White has argued, ‘is a poetic process’, and the ‘poetry’ of Copley’s canvas involved careful sifting of the accumulated ‘historical fact’ of the preceding eight years and that now comprised the history of the siege. Rendering the chapter to offer some further thoughts on these issues, but to also shift some of the emphasis towards equally significant, if less securely canonical, works. I also want to widen the scope of inquiry by locating such works within a wider cultural discourse on, and fascination with, the mechanics of war and imperial acquisition in the period. For a comprehensive listing of the extensive bibliography on West’s painting, see Helmut von Erffa & Allen Staley, The Paintings of Benjamin West (New Haven & London, 1986), pp.211-13. The texts listed here have been augmented most recently by the important study in David H. Solkin, Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven & London, 1992), pp.209-13, and also by Alan McNairn, Behold the Hero: General Wolfe and the Arts in the Eighteenth Century (Liverpool, 1997), esp. pp.125-83. On Copley’s Pierson, see the bibliography in Emily Ballew Neff (with William L. Pressley), John Singleton Copley in England (London, 1995), pp.176-82. On the development of the contemporary history painting generally, see Carter E. Foster, ‘History and heroes: the military narrative in the wake of Benjamin West’, in The Martial Face: The Military Portrait in Britain 1760-1900, exh. cat., Browns University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1991, pp.47-52 and David Alexander, ‘Patriotism and contemporary history, 1770-1830’ , in Peter Cannon-Brookes (ed.), The Painted Word: British History Painting 1750-1830, exh. cat., Heim, London, 1990, pp.31-43.

momentous events of the nation’s recent past could at once both authorise them as ‘history’, providing a near official version, and promote a national art that would be inextricable from the authority of that ‘history’. It is this relationship between art and history that I am primarily concerned with here; an issue that I would suggest also occupied Copley whilst he worked on his painting of the siege of Gibraltar.

Gibraltar on display

During the lengthy preparation of the canvas Copley’s commitment to painting the Siege was such that it meant the virtual neglect of all other work, including his lucrative portrait practice. In the not insignificant coup of gaining the commission, usurping West, Copley effectively removed himself from the public eye. In the increasingly competitive London art world it was critical the artist maintain public awareness of his work, and he did this through the release of information and pronouncements to the London press. The World, for instance, carried details of Copley’s sojourn on the continent in the autumn of 1787 to take portraits of Hessian officers that were to feature prominently in the final painting of the siege. The daily reported ‘Mr. Copley makes the tour of Flanders; and it is presumed that his view of Rubens’s great works may not prove unserviceable in his destruction of the floating batteries before Gibraltar’. Such information almost certainly originated with the artist himself. Clear in this, and in other similar statements Copley made during the protracted gestation of the work, is the artist’s self-conscious concern to define his

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7 *The World*, 28 August 1787.
painting as important and to ensure it would be noticed by his contemporaries. These declarations, though initially addressed to the committee responsible for the commission, were leaked to the press, making Copley’s ambition publicly known and creating - it was presumably hoped - an atmosphere of charged expectation. Five years prior to the Green Park exhibition, for example, the *Morning Post* had described Copley in his Leicester Square studio ‘literally laying siege to Gibraltar, as he has models not only of the fortress, but of gun boats, ship-tackle, men, and every instrument of destruction arranged before him in all the stages of his progress’.” These details of Copley’s exhaustive preparatory work for the painting seem intended to emphasise the importance of his canvas and version of events. The exhibition of Copley’s work was geared to be a major artistic event, designed to stage a prominent painter’s return to the public arena.

Contemporaries clearly recognized that Copley’s painting of the siege was inseparable from its display. Entitling its review of the exhibition ‘The Picture and the Pavilion’, the *Morning Chronicle* commented that ‘each in its own way is striking’ and in ‘point of magnitude each of them have the lead of any thing that was ever exhibited in England’. Indeed, it seems that the kind of display Copley adopted indicates that the mode of its public presentation was almost as important as the painting itself. Any

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8 *The Morning Post, and Daily Advertiser*, 2 October 1786.

9 *The Morning Chronicle*, 23 June 1791.

10 The presentation of Copley’s painting also seems calculated to recall a significant and successful recent exemplar. In the conjunction of contemporary history painting, extolling the virtues of Britishness, military heroism and empire, and the spaces of fashionable leisure, Copley’s display is clearly reminiscent of the precedent offered by Francis Hayman’s canvasses on themes from the Seven Years’ War that decorated the
discussion of Copley's work is, therefore, inseparable from a consideration of the function and significance of the kind of exhibition that the artist organised to present his canvas and which framed its meaning.

The format of individual exhibition with an admission fee had been successful for the artist before. In the Great Room at Spring Gardens in the summer of 1781, Copley's contemporary history painting *The Death of the Earl of Chatham* had been displayed to great critical and commercial effect. Some 20,000 visitors paid one shilling each for admission and the large engraving, executed by Francesco Bartolozzi at a cost of £2000 and eventually published in 1794, generated a profit in excess of £5000. Three years later, the artist repeated the strategy to similar effect with the intensely dramatic *The Death of Major Pierson*, a work significantly commissioned by the publisher John Boydell who was to subsequently also feature prominently in the development of the artist's painting of the siege (fig. 8). Although history painting occupied a privileged

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1 For these figures and the exhibition and history of this painting, see Prown, *Copley*, pp. 275-91, 290. According to the artist, some 60,000 people attended the later Green Park show. Ibid., p.331. Delays in the completion of a satisfactory engraving after the *Siege*, however, meant that this was financially disastrous. See note 63 below.

position in academic doctrine, it was not financially remunerative. Given the lack of public patronage for the genre, Copley was well aware of the economic precariousness of such ventures and would not embark upon such a painting without securing a commission. However, the format of the one-man exhibition provided a source of income from display rather than from sales. Thus, such shows were presented as an ingenious mode of responding to artists' material needs, while also keeping art in the service of the 'public'. For, while securing the well-being of the artist, this new kind of market, 1750-1860', in The Martial Face, pp.37-46; David Alexander, 'Print makers and print sellers in England, 1770-1830', in Cannon-Brooks (ed.), The Painted Word, pp.23-30.

13 The lack of patronage for history painting was a common complaint and is illustrated, for instance, by Valentine Green's pamphlet A Review of the Polite Arts in France, at the Time of their Establishment under Louis the XIVth, Compared with their Present State in England (London, 1782). Green's laments on the subject are particularly apposite here, given his ironic comments on the increasing dependency of the genre on the charging of entrance fees for exhibitions and the commercial opportunities of printselling (p.50). His disapproval, however, does testify to the importance of such ventures for the production of history painting in the period. On the commercial 'gamble' of history painting in eighteenth-century Britain, see the important essay by Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on portraiture: the market, the public, and the hierarchy of the genres in eighteenth-century Britain', in Ann Bermingham & John Brewer (eds.), The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text (New York & London, 1995), pp.75-88.

14 On the problematic nature of the 'public' in this late eighteenth-century context, see my introduction. It is worth noting here that Jurgen Habermas's account of the formation of the 'public sphere' indicates its reliance on the private commercial activities of its participants, but does not explore the conflicts, anxieties or ambiguities that arose from such a dependence (The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (trans.) (Cambridge, 1989)). As a number of recent studies have demonstrated - most notably with regard to artistic practice Solkin's Painting for Money - the disparate interests of artist and audience, say, worked to
exhibition also guaranteed a proper public access to art. This new art display enabled the public to participate in art both physically and symbolically, granting them access to Copley’s painting by ‘sharing’ in it through the payment for the entry ticket or subscription to an engraved version of the painting on display. Rather than merely painting for money, artists might deploy their productions as virtuous models of moral edification and instruction and thus contribute to the progress of a civic art. This is not to say, however, that such apparently altruistic motives had to be entirely divorced from financial considerations. It was widely argued, for instance, that the founding of a native school of history painting – an increasingly pressing concern in the wake of the founding of the Royal Academy - would contribute to the country’s commercial prosperity. Boydell, for example, in making a gift to the City of London in 1793 that included undermine any sense of a unified or coherent ‘public’ as such, and certainly mitigated against the production of what might be termed a genuinely public art. The market-driven motivations of the speculative exhibition, for instance, represent just the kind of ‘visibly “private” commercial’ interest Terry Eagleton has argued fractured the ‘confident consensualism’ of the public sphere (The Function of Criticism from ‘The Spectator’ to Post-Structuralism (London, 1984), p.34). My point, however, is that this did not prevent the argument that such shows were the instruments of a properly public visual culture being made. In fact, the very ardency of such claims might perhaps be taken as demonstrating a certain lack of conviction in such assertions.

15 On the problems of reconciling such classical republican ideals with the motivations of a self-interested commercial society generally in the late eighteenth-century art world see Solkin, Painting for Money, esp. pp.247-76 and John Barrell, The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt: ‘The Body of the Public’ (New Haven & London, 1986). The overt commercialism of the one-picture exhibition might be seen as exposing or challenging the high-minded fiction of the Royal Academy’s rhetoric of
several works commemorating the siege of Gibraltar, saw commerce as directly responsible for the growth of a British school of painting and printmaking. Indeed, Boydell's arguments are particularly relevant here, given his vested interest in the success of Copley's show, painting and the sales of any print after it. Besides undertaking to publish the planned engraving, he had partly financed the work and served on the committee overseeing the commission in its later stages. Copley's *Siege*, and its mode of display, can be seen therefore as informed by and reinforcing the connections being made more generally between art, commerce and patriotism in late eighteenth-century Britain. In the one-man show, the patent entrepreneurialism of such ventures could in itself be seen to act as virtual guarantee of their patriotic intent. Indeed, in the second half of the 1780s, this was an argument forwarded as justification for several other instances of such exhibitions also centred upon images of the siege of Gibraltar.

It is important to see Copley's painting and its exhibition as informed by the many other visual commemorations of the siege, and by extension the confrontations, infighting and jostling for position that characterised the London art world of the period. If the disinterestedness, but I would suggest also proposed a compromised solution to the dilemmas of producing history painting in a market economy:


17 According to Bruntjen, Boydell joined the committee on 1 July 1784 (*John Boydell*, p.207). However, his name does not appear in committee minutes until the 28 June 1787.
critical and commercial success of West's *Wolfe* established canvases (and prints after them) of the nation's recent military victories as viable, if risky, speculative adventures for the capital's artists, then Copley's novel exhibition of the *Chatham* and the *Pierson* had proved an equally important precedent for the marketing of such works. In the years interceding between Copley's acceptance of the commission for the Gibraltar painting and the Green Park show, a host of artists displayed their own versions of the subject in a series of one-man shows along the lines established by the American artist. During the prolonged preparation of his painting, Copley was usurped by most notably Joseph Wright of Derby, George Carter and John Trumbull. The centrepiece of Wright's one-man exhibition at Robins's Rooms, Covent Garden, in 1785 had been an enormous canvas depicting *A View of Gibraltar during the Destruction of the Spanish Floating Batteries*, a subject which undoubtedly enabled the artist to exploit his trademark handling of spectacular light effects. Earlier the same year, Carter's well-known version of events was exhibited to seemingly public indifference along with some thirty-four other works in the former Royal Academy on Pall Mall (fig.50).

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18 See Benedict Nicholson, *Joseph Wright of Derby: Painter of Light*, 2 vols. (London, 1968), I, 159-60. Wright's canvas was 'lost' until the mid-1970s, and so was not known to Nicholson. On its rediscovery, see Biruta Erdman, 'Wright of Derby's *The Siege of Gibraltar*', *Burlington Magazine*, vol.CXVI, no.854 (May 1974), pp.270-72. The painting is also reproduced in this article.

19 On Carter's show and the apathy it met, see Edward Edwards mordant commentary in *Anecdotes of Painters who have Resided or been born in England; with Critical remarks on their Productions* (London, 1808), pp.237-8. Edwards also reproduces several passages from the now lost catalogue to the exhibition pertinent to the present discussion. Carter had approached the Court of Common Council offering his work up for consideration shortly after the award of the commission to Copley. His speculative letter, dated 19
closely the pattern established by Copley, Trumbull exhibited his *Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar, 26-27 November 1781*, an incident that took place earlier in the siege, in the auction rooms of Thomas Hammesby in Spring Gardens over the summer of 1789 (fig.51). In addition, leading figures and significant events of the siege provided the subject matter for several portraits and history paintings exhibited at the Royal Academy and Society of Artists from the mid-1780s onward. How an artist might gain recognition, given this profusion of images, was of pressing concern, particularly for those like Trumbull anxious to establish themselves on the metropolitan scene. Amidst

March 1783, offers a fascinating glimpse into the competitive machinations of the metropolitan scene in this period, and is currently held with the committee proceedings.


21 Reviewing the Royal Academy exhibition of 1783 in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* of 30 May, one critic complained that his patience had been 'literally worn out with looking at floating batteries and Gibraltar'. In this particular exhibition William Hamilton, James Jefferys, Thomas Whitcombe, and Benjamin West's seventeen-year old son Lamarr West, were all listed as exhibiting works on these subjects. During the course of the 1780s, other artists exhibiting works on the subject at the RA and the RSA included Richard Paton, Francis Swaine, and John Keyse Sherwin. If the various commemorative portraits of officers also on show at these venues, or the numerous signed or anonymous prints are considered, then this list can be seen as far from exhaustive. How Copley's painting might be seen as (necessarily) related to this mass of imagery is discussed below. For a brief, general survey of the painted commemoration of the victory, see Peter Harrington, *British Artists and War: The Face of Battle in Painting and Prints, 1700-1914* (London, 1993), pp.45-54.
the clamour for publicity and critical standing, the strategic move of organising an alternative platform for history painting appears not to have been enough in itself.

In Trumbull's early sketches for his painting it seems that his initial plan adhered closely to that favoured by the majority of artists then engaged with the theme. And was to have focused on the destruction of the floating batteries. However, Trumbull shifted his attention from the battle of the 13 and 14 of September, and began work on the sortie. The resultant painting representing the garrison commander Eliott extending his hand in a gesture of assistance to a dying Spanish officer, who refuses British aid, focused on what the artist termed the 'gallant conduct' of the officer class, a recurrent theme of Trumbull's work. Aware not only of Copley's forthcoming painting, but of any number of other artists treatment of the theme, it seems that Trumbull revised his first thoughts and focussed his composition on the sortie. It seems plausible to interpret this shift as a self-conscious attempt to assert his work as 'different'. However, it was a not wholly successful tactic in that Trumbull's painting met with an indifferent response when exhibited. Whilst its subject matter concerned itself with a demonstration of gracious British benevolence in victory, the painting's depiction of the heroic death of a-

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22 The sketches are reproduced in Cooper (ed.), John Trumbull, p.56.


24 Jaffe, John Trumbull, pp.140-1.
representative of the country's traditional enemy was obviously unappealing to a public being offered unqualified visions of national success by the artist's many competitors.

Depictions of the siege were then central to the developing exhibition culture of late eighteenth-century London. Artists exploited the intimate, near axiomatic, connection commonly made by contemporaries between British arms and the development of a national art to emphasise the patriotic nature of their enterprise. In the catalogue to Wright's Covent Garden show, the poet William Hayley made the correlation between British military victory and artistic progress explicit. In verses dedicated to the artist's painting of the repelling of the Franco-Spanish assault on Gibraltar, Hayley declared that in this 'scene of Fame' the nation's 'genius blaz'd in glory's brightest flame'. It was also clear that this was a 'glory' in which both the country's military and artistic communities could share, and again ascend to their true, deserved prominence:

Rival of Greece, in arms, in arts,  
Tho' deem'd in her declining days,  
Britain yet boasts unnumber'd hearts,  
Who keenly paint for public praise;  
Her battles yet are firmly fought:  
By chiefs with Spartan courage fraught:  
Her painters with Athenian zeal unite:  
To trace the glories of the prosp'rous fight,  
And gild th' embattl'd scene with Art's immortal light.25

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25 A Catalogue of Pictures, painted by J. Wright, of Derby, and exhibited at Robins's rooms under the Great Piazza, Covent Garden (London, 1785), unpaginated.
Hayley's characterisation of Britain as the natural, virtuous heir of classical culture had been a common assertion throughout the eighteenth century. Britain's unique constitutional freedoms, akin to the democratic ideal represented by Athens, were seen as the animating principles, in this case, of its military strength and its artistic progress. For Hayley, British arms vanquishing of the despotic Bourbon powers - 'Europe's envious realms' as the poet termed them - at Gibraltar would now inspire a properly public art committed to classical principles. Hayley's poem, then, draws a reciprocal connection between British victory at Gibraltar, the progress of a native school of history painting, and, as we have seen earlier, the commercial (and so patriotic) exhibition as part of which his words originally appeared. Whilst such connections were made explicit in Wright's painting of the siege, it is not difficult to see how such justifications informed all the numerous attempts to visually commemorate events at Gibraltar.

26 The key text through which the argument that Greek political liberty was the essence of its artistic perfection might be made was Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (History of the Art of Antiquity) (Dresden, 1764). See the discussion in Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven & London, 1994), esp. pp.54-60 and *passim*. For the translation of these arguments into the context of eighteenth-century British debates over the function of art in civil society, see Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting*, esp. pp.33-9 and *passim*.

27 It is interesting to note here, given the highly theatrical nature of Copley's exhibition, that the London stage was significantly slower than the art world in exploiting the 'drama' of the siege of Gibraltar. The inaugural performance of Sadler's Wells spectacular *The Siege of Gibraltar* was not until 2 April 1804. Written descriptions of this piece suggest that it was clearly informed by the various painted versions of events. See Charles Dibdin's contemporary account of the production, quoted in Gillian Russell, *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society 1793-1815* (Oxford, 1995), pp.71-4.
It seems then that whilst Copley attempted to keep his unfinished work in the public eye, through a number of intermittent reports on its progress in the metropolitan press, the appearance of a number of paintings depicting the siege, together with his failure to complete the painting, probably dissipated the sense of expectation. Further, besides contending with the precedents set by his academic rivals, the exhibition of Copley’s painting in the summer of 1791 had to compete with a mass of other imagery generated by the siege, and on display in London during the previous eight years across the diverse sites of late eighteenth-century urban visual culture. At a time of uncertainty and division, wrought by the ‘civil war’ with Britain’s American colonies, the entrepreneurs of the metropolitan print trade had been quick to recognise the commercial potential of the patriotic enthusiasm generated by war with the nation’s traditional enemies. From the beginnings of the siege, the print industry produced a steady stream of graphic goods calculated to appeal to a jingoistic, bellicose market. Unsurprisingly, eventual British victory had served to expand this body of texts and images still further, with consumers being offered a seemingly inexhaustible number of opportunities to buy a piece of this ‘history’. In windows and on walls Gibraltar’s siege was on printed display across London, traversing the spectrum of the city’s thriving network of retail outlets. Fluid centres of literary and visual art, dealing in textual and graphic works of all colours, these shops, together with the publishing houses that supplied them, offered consumers across the social spread various types of information about events on the Rock. Visually, in the
miscellany of the printshop or publishing house, maps, charts, and broadsides jostled for attention with and were juxtaposed alongside satires, portraits, and engravings after serious historical treatments of the siege and its participants.

Sensing the profitability of any kind of printed appraisal of the battle for the garrison publishers hurriedly produced a variety of commemorative imagery, often reprinting existing material updated to include some reference to the recent victory. William Faden's *Plan of the Bay, Rock and Town of Gibraltar*, for instance, published in January 1783, is one of the earliest of a number of charts celebrating the British victory marketed by such map specialists but was essentially a revised version of a plan originally available in the 1770s (fig. 52). Onto the earlier cartographic survey of the settlement and surrounding geography, Faden traced the tactical contours of the siege — outlining landmarks and cover, the deployment of troops and the movements of the enemy fleet and the floating batteries — translating several months of violent conflict and psychological engagement into a single, coherent image. Its austere collation of information offered a rational, empirical view of the struggle, apparently objective and accurate. During the course of the eighteenth century, there had been a marked growth in the publishing, marketing, reading, display and reproduction of such maps, focused on the distant outposts of the nation's power. These paper landscapes demarcated Britain's imperial possessions and presented the fight for their control in schematic but intelligible ways.  

28 For a fuller consideration of the role of mapping in the visualization of war in the period, together with a listing of relevant recent literature, see the following chapter. However, it is worth noting here that charts were also an integral part of the news reports and epitomized accounts of the siege of Gibraltar in the contemporary periodical press. *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, for example, carried a
If Faden’s plan charted the proper kinds of strategic and geographical knowledge of the siege, the requisite jingoism and chauvinism could be found in other types of printed imagery. Whilst Faden himself also dealt in popular prints, just along from his Charing Cross premises Thomas Colley’s shop on the Strand carried one of the largest stocks of graphic satires in London. Gibraltar was an obvious subject for the city’s satirists. In the wake of the successful defence of the Rock, the failure of the enemy cannonade to breach the garrison’s walls proved a particularly rich source of material for graphic play. Colley’s own The Bum-bardment of Gibraltar, or Fort against Thunder, for instance, published September 1783, transformed the battle into a humorous, scatological and sexualised comedy, playing on well-established xenophobic stereotypes and the coarse gibes of military slang (fig.53). In Colley’s image an orderly row of exposed French and Spanish rumps, and their violent, fetid, but ineffectual discharge, are met with the garrison’s cannon, which can be read as at once phalluses and clysters. Whilst the failure of the allies expulsions to inflict any damage on the British fortifications is the most obviously comic element, their debased actions also resonate with various popular caricatural images of sodomitical and demonic foreign archetypes. British victory is celebrated here in terms of an inherent national dignity, distancing it serialized illustrated account of the siege in its numbers for October, November and December 1782. Of relevance here, although concerned with a slightly earlier period, is E. A. Reilan, ‘Expanding horizons: maps in the Gentleman’s Magazine, 1731-1754’, Imago Mundi, no.37 (1985), pp.54-62.

29 John Drinkwater, for instance, records British officers contemptuous labeling of the Spanish floating batteries as ‘bum-boats’. See his A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar (London, 1785), p.146. For details on this print, see BM 6036. Other prints focusing on the bombardment include BM no.s 6025, 6034, 6037, and 6038.
and distinguishing it from the character of the enemy, as much as in its claims to military superiority.

Ultimately, it is this kind of ideologically determined triumphalism that connects such apparently discrete kinds of visual forms as Colley’s satirical print to Faden’s map, and in turn to other types of pictorial commemoration of the siege. Whilst not wanting to deny that these images targeted particular audiences which may or may not have been coextensive, or that their meaning and value were not necessarily shared across consumers, I would suggest that they comprised a body of visual representation that established (to an extent) a ‘common’ iconography for the celebration of the siege of Gibraltar. Further, I would argue that paintings, like that of Copley’s, could not do other than engage in this wider visual culture of the blockade: that is, the circulation of so-called ‘popular’ pictorial forms that broadly defined the parameters of the event called ‘the siege of Gibraltar’. Maps like Faden’s, for instance, established the imaginative topography of the battle site – the castle keep, the King’s Bastion, the Devil’s Tower, Old Mole – which enabled a domestic audience to orientate itself when confronted with other images purporting to represent events. In painting the Siege, Copley – along with his various competitors – was more than careful to ensure the topographical accuracy of his version of events; observing the expectancy formed by such knowledge of the principal landmarks. Similarly, Copley’s focus on a moment of peculiarly British magnanimous, gallant action is commensurate with the national differences that inform Colley’s graphic satire. The rescue of the drowning Spanish that occupies the left-hand side of Copley’s composition, for instance, was widely reported to have taken place whilst the allies

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30 For a work that actually unites the scatological to the cartographic see fig. 108.
continued their bombardment of the garrison.\textsuperscript{31} In establishing the relationship or possible points of connection between these images I should say that my intention is not to identify them as source material for Copley’s painting, but to suggest that they were engaged in a relationship of co-responsive, correspondent and inter-referential signification.

In his analysis of Copley’s \textit{Siege}, Jules Prown cites the probable ‘influence’ on the artist of a contemporary engraving, also published by Faden, depicting General Eliott together with one of his \textit{aides-de-camp} Lieutenant G. F. Koehler, to whom the original drawing was attributed (fig.54).\textsuperscript{32} Prown argues, not unreasonably, that the similarities in pose and dress suggest that Copley drew on this print in his depiction of the commander of the British forces. The supposed authenticity granted by Koehler’s actual presence on the Rock during the siege was of obvious appeal to Copley given the concern for ‘historical fact’ he signalled in his description of the painting at the time of its exhibition. However, I would suggest that more than being a question of ‘influence’, the visual echo of the print after Koehler’s image in Copley’s painting works to locate the latter in a dense network of hybrid and eclectic signs and values which comprised ‘the siege of

\textsuperscript{31}This was a point established by virtually all of the textual accounts of the incident, but most pertinently in relation to Copley’s painting in Drinkwater’s \textit{History}, pp.293-94. As I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, knowledge of these events was pivotal to a full understanding of Copley’s \textit{Siege}.

\textsuperscript{32} Prown, \textit{Copley}, p.328. Several further prints after reportedly on-the-spot drawings made by Koehler appeared on the market during the 1780s. He also ‘assisted’ Trumbull in work on his painting of the sortie: a work that also depicts the general in the same pose. This can be seen as an instance of an officer manipulating the workings of contemporary visual culture for the ends of self-promotion in the way I
Gibraltar’ for contemporaries. It serves to demonstrate how the associations generated by such a work depended to a large extent on its citation of a range of referents across the cultural field, but held to have a degree of authenticity and hence authority.

Recourse to ‘influence’, for instance, does not sufficiently account for the striking visual similarities between the left-hand side of Copley’s painting and an engraving by John Emes after James Jefferys of *The Scene before Gibraltar on the Morning of the 14th of September 1782*, published by Elizabeth Woollett, William Jefferys and Emes in October 1789 (fig.55). Both images structure the carnage of battle - the figural sprawl of drowning troops and mariners, and the confusing array of masts, chains, ropes, harpoons, canvas, flames, and smoke - around an insistent diagonal against a distant horizontal. There is also a shared concern to individualise officers out from the morass of bodies and wreckage (upright, calm centres amongst the chaos), and a care to depict specific landmarks (the outcrop of the Rock to the right-hand side of both compositions). Also common to Copley’s and Jefferys’ versions of events is the wealth of narrative detail within a visually commanding view of the whole locale afforded by an elevated vantage point. These are all visual tropes also constantly repeated within the ‘low’ art imagery of the siege. Indeed, any representation – visual or verbal – that claimed to represent the events of the siege necessarily engaged itself with its collective imagery. Copley, despite his evident desire to view the siege through the lens of tradition, could not ignore this

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33 Both works are of course also indebted to West’s *Battle of La Hogue*, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780 (Collection of the Duke of Westminster), and possibly intended to rival that work. On West’s painting, see Erffa & Staley, *Paintings of Benjamin West*, pp.209-10.

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pictorial and textual vocabulary: not to do so would mean his work might be seen as inauthentic or unintelligible. The 'popular' telling and retelling of the siege had defined the parameters for its commemoration, compelling the artist to make reference to an already established set of figures, events and locales. Indeed, Copley's inclusion of these elements in his final composition perhaps serve less to locate the action specifically on the map of the Rock, than to establish the picture within the body of imagery that clarified the episodes and the sites of the siege.

Changing history.

Besides its visual narration this was a 'history' also told across a range of written accounts - ranging from news reports to extended published journals and histories - that both provided the source material for and authenticated the pictorial representation of the siege. Study of this body of texts, along with the first set of visual responses, reveals that, following the first news of the victory, there was a certain amount of uncertainty or irresolution as to what the notable events of the siege actually were. In the main, initial reports and endeavours to commemorate the defence of the garrison focused upon Eliott's command in general and in particular upon Howe's relief of the fortress. Only later does the earlier destruction of the floating batteries begin to take precedence. Early poetic eulogies in the periodical press, for instance, tend to focus exclusively on Eliott and
Howe. In the immediate aftermath of the victory, information was limited about what had transpired. Details published in the *London Gazette* during late 1782 concerned themselves essentially with tactical data, providing little in the way of usable anecdote. It was only in the early part of the following year that the process of building what became, in the ensuing months and years, an elaborate, 'human' narrative of events began. However, writing the present into history was a piecemeal process, and contemporaries were keenly aware of what the *Annual Register* described as 'the obvious difficulties and disadvantages attending the writing and publication of history immediately on the heel of action'. Indeed, in the first substantial, extended account of the blockade to appear, the anonymous *An Authentic and Accurate Journal of the Late Siege of Gibraltar* published in late 1783, the description of the climactic battle of the 13th and 14th September 1782 made no reference to the involvement of Sir Roger Curtis in events. However, Curtis – who had led the rescue of the enemy sailors following the sinking of the floating batteries - was to become increasingly central to subsequent relations of events, whether literary or pictorial.

It also seems that the telling of the various versions of the siege were to a large extent shaped and formed by members of the garrison's command like Curtis. Indeed, as Joseph Wright’s concerns for his contribution to the visual commemoration of the events:

34 See ‘The Relief of Gibraltar’, *The Gentleman’s Magazine: and Historical Chronicle* (November 1783), pp.957-8, for example. This poem is considered below.

35 See *The London Gazette Extraordinary*, 8 November 1782.

36 *The Annual Register, Or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1782* (London, 1783), p.iv.

demonstrate, certain officers were themselves eager to assert their own reputation through the visual commemoration of the battle. Writing to his collaborator Hayley on the 13 January 1783, only three months after the climactic battle for the Rock, Wright predicted the outpouring of works the siege was to generate but also pointed to how its events were to be seen and shaped. Urging Hayley to enlist Curtis to assist in preparing his painting, Wright was also anxious he make haste as ‘there is no time to be lost, as the Subject is by: Sir. Roger’s assistance already in the hands of several & will soon be a hackney’d one’.38 An engraving also depicting the destruction of the floating batteries by John Keyse Sherwin after his own picture, published September 1784, claimed to have been produced ‘under the immediate directions of Sir Roger Curtis’ (fig.56). Similarly, in his original petition to the committee of the Court of Common Council, Copley informed them ‘he had collected Materials from General Elliots aid du Camp Sir Roger Curtis’.39 Such collaborations between artists and officers were obviously mutually beneficial. For artists, the involvement of the officers authorised their own vision of the events, whilst for the officers it consolidated their own reputations. As we have seen with regard to Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton’s self-fashioning of his own image on his return from the American colonies, officers were anxious to establish their reputation publicly and frequently manipulated the rivalries of the London art scene to this end. In the case of Copley’s depiction of the siege, officers exerted a decisive influence on the final image:

38 Quoted in Nicholson, Wright of Derby, I, 160.

39 Proceedings, 28 February 1783. There are several further instances of Curtis’s colluding with artists in what effectively amounts to his own heroïcization. Most notably Carter, in his letter to the Court of Common Council, claimed the officer had ‘superintended my design’.
A number of the officers who had been at Gibraltar objected to a finished sketch
Copley presented to the committee overseeing the commission in 1786. Copley’s initial
composition centred itself upon the destruction of the floating batteries in the harbour,
relegating the garrison officers to a distant, subordinate role on the Rock. However,
several ranking officers insisted the artist include a prominent portrait group, thus re­
orientating the focus of commemoration away from the celebration of the victory as one
of the garrison as a whole to one of specific individuals. As noted earlier, the altertions
to the painting necessitated a trip to the continent to take the portraits of several
Hanoverian officers. This was a journey partially funded by Boydell, which suggests
that Copley no doubt saw a certain commercial advantage in the inclusion of the portraits.
Among the objectors to Copley’s work was Colonel John Drinkwater, whose portrait was
eventually included in the final painting at the upper right of the foreground group.
Drinkwater’s inclusion seems to have been an acknowledgement of Copley’s debt to the
officer as the virtual ‘official’ chronicler of the siege. As we will see, the officer’s
publication of his authoritative *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar* in 1785:
effectively dictated the way in which the blockade was perceived, and so governed the
composition of Copley’s version of events. It seems then that a number of central
protagonists in the siege came to shape and define how the ‘history’ of events was
produced both in terms of its visual and textual commemoration.

41 These paintings are reproduced in Ibid., figs.495-8. See also Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England*,
pp.160-3. A painting on an easel is prominent in the foreground of Bartolozzi’s engraving for the entrance:
ticket to Copley’s Green Park show discussed below. It seems likely that either Copley’s original sketch or
these highly finished portrait sketches were then also exhibited.
That the garrison’s command was instrumental in the processes of the siege’s commemoration is also confirmed by some of the written accounts of events. A key text here was the extended description of the destruction of the floating batteries in the *Annual Register* for 1782. This included, for instance, a letter by Eliott describing the bombardment, and praising ‘the personal intrepidity of Brigadier Curtis’. It also consisted of a lengthy, overtly dramatic account of the battle, which emphasised Curtis’s involvement. Probably drafted by Drinkwater, this version of events established the facts, chronology and tone of how this episode, indeed the British victory as a whole, was subsequently viewed:

It seemed, that nothing could have exceeded the horrors of the night; but the opening of daylight disclosed a spectacle still more dreadful. Numbers of men were seen in the midst of the flames, crying out for pity and help; others floating upon pieces of timber, exposed to the equal, though less dreadful danger, from the opposite element. Even those in the ships where the fire had yet made less progress, expressed in their looks, gestures, and words, the deepest distress and despair; and were no less urgent in imploring assistance [. . .] The generous humanity of the victors now, at least, equalled their extraordinary preceding exertions of valour; and was to them far more glorious. Nor were the exertions of humanity by any means attended with less danger, nor with circumstances less terrible in their appearance, than those of active hostility [. . .] and it may truly be said, (and highly to the honour of our national character) that the exercise of humanity to an enemy, under such circumstances of immediate action and impending peril, was never yet displayed with greater lustre.42

The prominence Curtis assumed in various written and visual commemorative texts may be related to his central role as the figure through which the meaning of Gibraltar was

being developed during the 1780s; a process in which, as I have suggested above, the officer himself seems to have been complicit. Curtis’s ‘exercise of humanity’, amidst chaotic, ‘sublime’ horror, demonstrated a self-reliance in the face of adversity from which a moral, virtuous message might be elicited for all. As the *Annual Register*’s account makes explicit, the actions of this one individual conformed to and confirmed an image of a general, honourable ‘national character’. As we shall see, this was a narrative that fully met the contemporary demands of historical forms of painting and writing. For if, as the numerous paintings and prints focused upon the incident illustrate, the pictorial drama offered by these ‘sublime’ events were of obvious attraction to painters, they also met the demands of those writing their history.

Writing history:

In his *Elements of Criticism*, Lord Kames had argued that ‘In narration as well as in description, objects ought to be painted so accurately as to form in the mind of the reader distinct and lively images’. Kames went on to develop this associative, pictorial metaphor further, suggesting that ‘The force of language consists in raising complete images; which have the effect to transport the reader as by magic into the very place of the important action, and to convert him as it were into a spectator, beholding every thing that passes’. Such visual, performative kind of narratives, in which the events being related became vivid and tangible to the reader, were engaging in that they established a

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sense of 'actuality'. Historical narratives, for instance, following this pattern could be seen as of serious and edifying value, but also entertaining and diversionary. In fact, involving the reader in this way, making history 'appear' as it were, could be seen as ultimately reinforcing the content of the narrative by making it that more accessible. One way in which the reader might be 'transported' in Kames's terms, was through the use of first-person narrative in the present tense. As Kames recognised, 'describing a past event as present, has a fine effect in language'.

Samuel Ancell's *A Circumstantial Journal of the Long and Tedious Blockade and Siege of Gibraltar*, published in August 1784, purports to be an unmediated record of events addressed by the author, a serving officer, to his brother. Its entries are meticulously dated and timed, and written entirely in the present tense. Indeed, Ancell attempts to establish the authenticity of his account in his opening address by claiming that it was penned 'amidst the Roar of Guns, Mortars, Howitzers, and the bursting of Shells'. 'Day-break' on the 14 September, the morning following the destruction of the floating batteries, records:

Our bay appears a scene of horror, our gun boats have been chasing two boats that have left the junk ships, one of which they have taken, they are now employed in saving the unhappy wretches from flames and death, while the enemy from the land batteries inhumanely fire upon our boats to prevent their giving them relief.

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44 Ibid., I, 98.


46 Ibid., p. 264.
In reading such an account there is a shift from the space and time of the events being represented to the spatial and temporal frame of its narration. However, the absence of reflective revision and immediate presence Ancell is at pains to establish through such strategies is then undercut, by his constant modulation into obviously composed verse. Immediately following the journal entry cited above is a poetic version of events:

\textit{To hear the lamentation of the crews,}
\textit{The groans and cries that through the flames resounded,}
\textit{Imploring our assistance from the danger,}
\textit{Of fire and water – ready to devour;}
\textit{Words are too weak, to give a just description!}
\textit{One of their ships blew up with dreadful noise,}
\textit{While \textit{Curtis} grappled to her scorching sides,}
\textit{The blazing beams, the masts, the yards, and carriages,}
\textit{In the explosion scatter’d in the air,}
\textit{And cover’d o’er the sea with foaming wreck.}\textsuperscript{47}

Whilst Ancell’s lines strive to further authenticate his status as an eye-witness to events, by evoking a hyperbolic fervour and lamenting the inadequacy of language, in their still patently reflective form they only succeed in questioning that authority he claims. However, what the author does demonstrate to the reader through these verses is an ability to respond emotionally to the ‘drama’ before him: a responsiveness that might be seen as actually endorsing, reinforcing and supplementing his claims to being an eye-

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p.264-5.
witness. Prosaic eye-witness verisimilitude is here transformed by Ancell's emotive, poetic 'force of language' (to use Kames's words) into an intense, near pictorial image. The responsive, dramatised qualities of Ancell's journal, the techniques by which the author engages his reader, are also encountered in a variety of other types of contemporary writing, whether speculative, factual or fictional. In other words, Ancell's text constructs meaning in much the same way as any other kind of written narrative of the period. Whilst Ancell's chronicle of the siege is concerned to establish the authenticity of its version of events - Hayden White has persuasively argued - those events have no 'meaning' in themselves. Rather, they assume 'meaning' only in terms of their relation to a coherent narrative whole. Historical writing involves a process of judicious selection, assessment and collation of the 'facts', which are endowed with 'meaning' through their ordered arrangement. The ability of a 'history' to convince or compel depends on the deft sequencing of otherwise unconnected incidents and events following a trajectory to a conclusion or point of closure. As Roland Barthes has argued,

48 Such strategies, for instance, are a notable feature of contemporary travel writing. See Chloe Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography 1600-1830* (Manchester, 1999), pp.53-6, 85-91, 99-100.

49 White, *Tropics*, pp.83-4. See also Hayden White, 'The value of narrativity in the representation of reality', in *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, 1987), pp.1-25. For a useful overview of recent challenges to the claims of historical writing to the depiction of 'objective reality', that take their cue from White's work, see the editors' introduction and the essays in Robert H. Canary & Henry Kozicki (eds.), *The Writing of History: Literary Form and Historical Understanding* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1987). See also the works by Roland Barthes cited below.
the function of history is not so much to ‘represent’ as to ‘constitute’. The relative authority of the ‘history’ described, over other competing narratives, is contingent upon a complex of factors that may include the internal coherence of the text and its methods but also the circumstances of promotion and publication.

If Ancell’s account of the blockade relied on the force of the essentially undocumentable, on the first-hand response of the author, John Drinkwater’s A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar, first published in 1785, was significantly less emotive and dependent upon the narrator’s evident familiarity with detailed forms of specialised knowledge. The titlepage announced Drinkwater’s credentials as a serving officer at Gibraltar - and so also an eye witness to events – but the authority of the History was assured by its careful deployment of an array of authenticating verbal and visual strategies (figs.57-61). Drinkwater marshals an abundance of material evidence – recounting the history of the Rock, listing figures, citing letters, reproducing maps and drawings – but also enlivens his narrative with less than easily substantiated anecdotal incidents and the quotation of direct speech. Drinkwater thus demonstrated not only a control of verifiable ‘factual’ kinds of information but also, by reference to the insignificant and undocumentable, displayed a level of knowledge outside of that of the audience. Incidental occurrences and utterances, that otherwise interrupt the narrative flow, appear to signal the ‘real’ and thus confirm the veracity of the author’s larger


'history'. While Drinkwater's self-deprecating preface is careful to eschew any claims to his account’s authority, nevertheless his text consistently demonstrates a sure command of various kinds of data. The concern expressed in the opening, that ‘Readers who might peruse for entertainment . . . would find the relation too minute and circumstantial’, virtually states that much of the readership could be assumed unable to question the authenticity of the account.\(^5\)\(^2\) However, this does not mean that Drinkwater alienated his readers or was not as concerned to ‘visualise’ or ‘dramatise’ his account for them as Ancell.

A notable feature of Drinkwater’s *History* is the interaction of its verbal and visual components. The narrative strategies by which the author authenticates his account are supplemented by a range of topographical and graphic approaches, which form a kind of contrapuntal commentary on the textual version of the unfolding events. Interleaved into the volume at regular intervals, and ‘pointed to’ in the text, these maps, charts and views impart kinds of information communicable by visual means alone. Images that in their stark documentation of information served to verify still further the authority of Drinkwater’s account, they also located his narrative in a specific topography. Indeed, the primary visual element of Drinkwater’s *History* comprises a series of views across the harbour and bay detailing the coastal profiles (figs. 58 and 59). Drawn looking north, south, east and across the straits, they survey the rises and falls of the siege landscape in crisp, clear detail keeping aesthetic or atmospheric effects to the minimum. Their primary purpose is to convey information, to provide an archival record of the terrain’s features as a way of registering that landscape’s obstacles, cover and fields of fire. They offer then a

\(^{52}\) Drinkwater, *History*, p.v.
commanding, virtual 360-degree survey of the area surrounding the garrison, placing the reader at the centre. In fact, in their economy of pictorial effects, elevated viewpoints, and proportions of height to length, they conform to what Michael Charlesworth has termed the 'panoramic visual field' of the contemporary military survey.\textsuperscript{53} The views offered then not only the requisite kinds of archival documentation 'history' demanded, but also a means to engage the reader more fully visually. In addition to the views of the harbour, bay and straits, Drinkwater's book also included other kinds of essentially illustrative images. Detailed, sectional diagrams, with a key and notation, offered further strategic visual information, while a drawing 'copied from a sketch taken by an ingenious officer of the 12\textsuperscript{th} regiment' supplied an engaging 'View of the Grand Attack' (figs.60 and 61).\textsuperscript{54} In this second image, the panoramic sweep of the coastal profile is enlivened at its corner edge by the anxious, bustling activity of a group of troops manning the battlements. The gestures of these figures and their telescopic gazing direct the reader's eye across the harbour and the line of fire, and into the space of the battle.

However, the definitive, authoritative status Drinkwater's account of the siege came to assume was not solely reliant upon its persuasive, comprehensive documentation, and access it appeared to offer to the plenitude of the events it

\textsuperscript{53} Michael Charlesworth, 'Thomas Sandby climbs the Hoober Stand: the politics of panoramic drawing in eighteenth-century Britain', \textit{Art History}, vol.19, no.2 (June 1996), pp.247-66. Draughtsmanship was an increasingly important element of warfare in the period, providing vital strategic information in an accurate, analytical manner. It also formed a part of an officer's education and training, sanctioning his status as a gentleman. For a fuller consideration of these issues, see the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{54} Drinkwater, \textit{History}, p.291.
described. In its title and opening dedication, Drinkwater's text self-consciously announced itself as 'history' with all the attendant properties that denoted for contemporaries. It is clearly stated that in addition to his own observations 'daily noted down upon the Spot', the author was 'assisted by the information and remarks of several respectable Characters, who also were Eye-witnesses of the transactions'. These included Captains Holloway and Vallotton who were also listed amongst the subscribers to the volume, suggesting that the writing of the History and the finance for its publication were inextricably linked. If Drinkwater's version of events assumed a prominence that say Ancell's failed to attain, it was as much due to the interested ratification and support it received as to its 'factual' veracity. From the opening dedication to the king to the venerable list of subscribers, including Eliott and the entire complement of the garrison's officers, it is clear that Drinkwater's account amounted to effectively an 'official', sanctioned version of events. Unsurprisingly, Copley was concerned to identify his painting of the siege closely with Drinkwater's History, as the inclusion of the author's portrait in the final composition demonstrates. Copley's close collaboration with the author lent his pictorial account virtual 'official' status by association.

Copley's interaction with the verbal and visual elements that comprise Drinkwater's text takes place at several levels. As the catalogue description of his painting of the Siege points out, for instance, his version of events is informed by

55 The 'authority' of Drinkwater's History is such that it has remained the primary source of reference for more recent commentaries on events, such as that of McGuffie, Siege of Gibraltar (see n. 4 above) or indeed Prown (see Copley, pp.322-23).
56 Ibid., p.v.
historical fact’. To this end, his collaboration with Drinkwater supplied the requisite detail. At the same time, however, such textual accounts might be seen as exerting a certain force upon the composition and viewing of a painting like the Siege. In Drinkwater’s History the linear content of the textual commentary is at once supported by and broken by the explanatory and imaginative imagery that offers multiple views of the action’s locale. In contrast, viewing a painting of history involved contemplation of a ‘significant moment’ selected from the larger ongoing narrative. The conventions of history painting demanded a visually unified recounting of an event, which condensed the compounded temporal and spatial complexity of a narrative into an immediately comprehensible, singular image. However, whilst the privileging of one moment’s role within a broader chronology endowed a weighty significance on the instant represented, it was also recognised that it placed limits on painted narratives which forms of textual or dramatic representation escaped. For instance, whilst Kames suggested narratives should be conceived of in overtly pictorial ways, he considered purely visual images lacking in efficacy. ‘It must not however be thought, that our passions can be raised by painting to such a height as by words’ he argued:

a picture is confined to a single instant of time, and cannot take in a succession of incidents: its impression indeed is the deepest that can be made instantaneously; but seldom is a passion raised to any height in an instant, or by a single impression... our passions, those especially of the sympathetic kind,

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require a succession of impressions; and for that reason, reading and acting have greatly the advantage, by reiterating impressions without end.58

For Kames, the unifying moment of history painting imposed a degree of closure on its narrative content, denying the kinds of imaginative and emotional engagement that could be afforded by words. The ‘single impression’ of painting, its privileging of a section of the action, lacked the emotional investment of the written or spoken word. Whilst the most elevated pictorial genre shared the motivating principal of moral action with written and dramatic history,59 the impact of its message was diluted by the academic imperative of visual unity. According to academic theory moral meaning could only be achieved by sacrificing descriptive detail, and establishing the figural elements as the primary focal points.60 Following these precepts, painting could not demonstrate the kinds of factual grasp to engage an audience in the ways we have seen operating in a text like Drinkwater’s History. Copley’s painting, however, did not wholly adhere to these codes. Like West before him, Copley fused the general and ideal with the highly particularised. He alluded to a range of venerable artistic models, but was also concerned to document identifiable individuals and a specific locale in accord with the accepted versions of events. In his seminal discussion of the contemporary history piece, Edgar Wind argued

58 Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, I, 97.

59 See the discussion of David Hume’s *History of England* below.

60 For an influential contemporary statement of the principle of subordinating distracting parts and conspicuous detail to the general effect of the whole, see Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, Robert Wark (ed.) (New Haven & London, 1975), Discourse III [1770], pp.39-54
that the colonial context for such images permitted a degree of "mitigated realism".\textsuperscript{61} What Wind's suggestion implicitly recognised was the impingement of new discourses - namely the experience of empire - on the production of such paintings. I would suggest, therefore that the hybridity of such paintings - their mingling of the poetic and the prosaic - might be seen as an attempt to recuperate for the academic system representational practices that exceeded its terms of reference. A convincing 'history' of the siege of Gibraltar, for example, necessitated an engagement or acknowledgement of a range of 'popular' visual and verbal narratives. In what follows, I want to suggest that through the deliberate arrangement of its various constituent parts, together with the subtle orchestration of pictorial conventions in the canvas itself, Copley's exhibition of his \textit{Siege of Gibraltar} endeavoured to incorporate these elements into the experience of viewing the work. Through the theatre of the exhibition he sought to maximise the spectator's involvement, and engage in them the 'passions, those especially of the sympathetic kind' recognised by Kames as formed through a 'succession of impressions'.

\textit{Painting history:}

Bartolozzi's engraving for the admission ticket to Copley's Green Park show, at once advertisement and souvenir, offered an imaginative pictorial projection of the material organization and social experience of the exhibition (fig.62). Before Copley's epic, grand-style depiction of this significant British victory, Bartolozzi describes a scene of

\textsuperscript{61} Wind, 'The revolution of history painting', esp. p.117.
polite assembly, conversation and conviviality: connoisseurs submit the painting to scrutiny, veterans discourse upon its veracity, and fashionable members of society demonstrate their membership of the ‘republic of taste’. At a Pembroke table to the left of the framing pillar and drapery, subscriptions for the proposed print after Copley’s painting (again, at this stage, to be by Bartolozzi) are taken. Polite exchange and commercial venture become patriotic display in front of Copley’s painting. This is activity that takes place below what amounts to a secular altarpiece devoted to the nation’s imperial might. Barely visible below Copley’s overwhelming canvas is a slender ‘predella’ panel depicting the relief of the garrison at Gibraltar flanked by medallion, donor-like portraits of Admirals Howe and Barrington painted by (the uncredited)

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62 For an extended consideration of the concept of a ‘republic of taste’, relevant in the context of the present discussion, see Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting*, pp.1-68 and *passim*. The coupling of a notion of civic participation and aesthetic sensibility that the phrase describes is of particular relevance to my arguments in this section. I am indebted to the brief but suggestive remarks on this conjunction made in Geoff Quilley, “‘All ocean is her own’: the image of the sea and the identity of the maritime nation in eighteenth-century British art”, in Geoffrey Cubitt (ed.), *Imagining Nations* (Manchester, 1998), pp.132-52, esp. p.133-4, and its citations of Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford, 1990). It is worth noting here that, as the shilling admission fee to Copley’s exhibition indicates, affiliation to this constituency was far from inclusive and was divided along lines of class and gender. For example, as Barrell has argued, the critical requisite mental faculty to abstract and generalize from the particular was considered to be only held by the disinterested, propertied male. See *Political Theory of Painting*, pp.66-8. However, it is also worth pointing out that in Bartolozzi’s engraved image a number of women also circulate. In the context of such a social situation their presence might be seen as having a polishing effect: women embodying the softer ‘private’ virtues, such as sympathy, which as I argue below are crucial to the effects of Copley’s painting.

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Dominic Serres (fig.63). Essentially descriptive, these images offset the idealized, heroic action above or perhaps offer a 'factual' counterpart confirming its veracity. In other words, they act as a kind of visual citation (or footnote) demonstrating knowledge of archival evidence. In his original proposal to the Court of Common Council's commissioning committee, Copley had undertaken to depict the defeat of the floating batteries and to give 'a View of the Relief of the Fortress by the Fleet under Lord Visct. Howe'. When it appeared evident that the simultaneous rendering of these events was going to be unrealisable, he subcontracted the marine specialist Serres to produce the view of the relief. Wide-angled and lacking an obvious central focus, Serres's painting is essentially concerned with chronicling the atmospheric conditions and the geographic alignments of the movements of Howe and Barrington's ships. Visual description of this sort was also supplemented by the textual narration of the exhibition catalogue, which as I suggested earlier was a critical component of the show.

63 Although delivered along with Copley's canvas to the city in 1794 Serres's painting is now lost, and only exists in its engraved form. The prints after the two paintings, and Copley's portraits of Howe and Barrington – Serres's by Robert Pollard, the Copley's by William Sharp following a disagreement with Bartolozzi – were finally published by the artist himself on 22 May 1810. Unsurprisingly, given the length of time that had elapsed between the siege, the proposal for the subscription and eventual publication, they were met with consumer indifference. See Prown, Copley, pp.335-36.

64 On the role of citation and referencing as the basis for historical authority, see Barthes, 'The discourse of history'.

65 Proceedings of the Committee, 28 February 1783 (Draft Minutes). Besides offering to undertake the work at a reduced rate, it also seems that Copley's assurance that both incidents could be included in the same composition was instrumental in his securing of the commission. West maintained it would require two separate works.
In Bartolozzi’s imagined view of the Green Park pavilion, the audience are seen alternating between viewing and reading: matching and corroborating their observations on the image in the textual exposition. As I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the fragmentary nature of the image risked a degree of incoherence with the brochure available on entrance to the exhibition completing at least some of the breaches in the narrative. Nevertheless, there were still gaps in the visual and verbal narration of the events to be bridged, not least in the space between the image and the textual description, which allowed the spectator to participate in the representation of this crucial event for the nation. It seems here that the viewer gained the satisfaction of what Peter de Bolla has termed – with regard to Kames’s observation that it is ‘a tendency or propensity in the mind to . . . carry things to their full perfection’ – ‘the completion of the contemplating mind’. In the interactions between image, text and viewer, the latter became a conduit through which the narratives of the others became fully intelligible. It was through the spectator’s knowledge of the larger context (the before and after), gained through a familiarity with other representations of the siege, that the painting was rendered fully coherent. Engaging the audience through the organisation of the exhibition in these ways, these effects in fact only served to enhance the strategies of involvement at its centre in the canvas itself.

In a lengthy review of Copley’s exhibition, the critic of the Morning Chronicle drew attention to the all too obvious spatial anomalies in Copley’s painting observing that:

when Mr. Copley describes his Picture as composed of three large groups we must be pardoned for differing from him, for in truth there is no more then one large group. The seamen, about Sir Roger Curtis, and some of them are as full as near to the eye as the Governor of Gibraltar, appear another race of men. If the canvas were divided, it would form two pictures. On the opposite of the Picture, a busy and confused scene is well depicted, but to some of the figures almost at the mast head, and far in the background, appearing or larger than those which are at the bottom, and close to the eye we have some objections.  

Reorganising the painting to include the portrait group had disrupted the unity of the canvas, and resulted in a clearly bifurcated composition. Nevertheless, despite the obvious problems with the painting, Copley endeavoured to reconcile the two halves of his painting in ways that reinforced its message. In a manner characteristic of many of Copley’s works, the ‘two Compartments’ draw a contrast between the ordered, pyramidal arrangement of the grouping on the bastion, and the disordered, chaotic tangle of the harbour. This is a formal distinction that correlates with the implicit contrast the painting makes between two types of heroism: the contemplative (embodied by Eliott) and the active (manifested by Curtis). That these conceptions of heroism are in fact reciprocal, is indicated by the comparable gestures that visually link these two figures across the painting’s two halves.

Eliott’s guiding, outstretched arm conveys a sense of deliberate, yet decisive authority; a calculating, cerebral, but still effective kind of control. It also seems that in adopting the format of equestrian portraiture, Copley alludes to certain conventions of

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67 The Morning Chronicle, 23 June, 1791.
depiction that reinforce this sense of Eliott’s leadership. What the catalogue to Copley’s exhibition of the painting termed the ‘historical fact’ of Eliott on horseback, presiding over and literally directing the rescue of the shipwrecked enemy through his gesturing hand, belongs of course to an iconography of command stretching back to antiquity. The display of self-command and horsemanship in the midst of violent confusion that the painting depicts establishes the governor of the Rock in a well-established pictorial tradition of venerable warriors. In fact, the disposition of Copley’s composition as a whole consciously echoes a tradition of battle painting, developed most notably in seventeenth-century France by artists like Adam F. van der Meulen, that itself borrowed from the precedent of the Capitoline monument to Marcus Aurelius. Important and widely reproduced translations of this tradition into a British context were Jan Wyck’s paintings of the War of Spanish Succession, commemorating the Duke of Marlborough’s campaign victories (fig.64). Within works like Wyck’s, the commanding general or monarch’s role in events is always distanced. He holds a privileged position, a literally commanding view, guiding the tactical movements of the troops below almost dispassionately. The surveyed battlefield, even if cartographically precise, is secondary. In this form of military painting, the locus of the viewer’s interest is the portrait group, which establishes a degree of historical veracity for the image, but also in their proximity to the picture plane a certain physical and psychological rapport with the spectator of the

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work. Copley certainly seems to encourage the viewer's identification with the concerned, animated grouping to the right, and was successful in this for at least one contemporary. Whilst wary of the failings of the composition as a whole, the Morning Chronicle's critic cited above thought the portrait of Sir Robert Boyd 'not merely a map of the face, but a picture of the mind: you see what passes in his soul at the moment'. However, whilst clearly working within the tradition of van der Meulen, Copley's concerns in the relationship between the 'two Compartments' of his painting also subtly shifted some of the emphasis of such models.

Eliott's placement on a promontory overseeing events was an image of the governor established early in the developing iconography of the siege, as the engraving after Koehler discussed above illustrates. It was also a crucial element in Reynolds's reflective portrait of the governor, for instance, a work again commissioned by Boydell (fig.65). Weighing the keys of the fortress that he had refused to surrender in the first days of the siege, Eliott's steadfastness and resolve is also indicated by his close identification with the Rock in Reynolds's painting. Eliott's contemplative,

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69 The Morning Chronicle, 23 June 1791.

70 Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1788 Reynolds's portrait was then transferred to Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery. It was displayed there flanked by three sea pieces by Richard Paton (an arrangement echoed again once the pieces moved to the Council Chamber of the Guildhall in 1794 as part of Boydell's gift to the City). That Reynolds was concerned to virtually transform the sitter into 'the rock upon which Britannia builds her Mediterranean interests' is a point also made by Desmond Shawe-Taylor, who also suggests that there is a covert comparison with St. Peter. See The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society (London, 1990), p.49. See also Martin Postle, Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Subject Pictures (Cambridge, 1995), pp.54-6. So closely was the governor's resolve identified with the Rock,
compassionate leadership and close association with the Rock also informed a poem entitled 'The Relief of Gibraltar', that had appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine in November of 1783. This literary commemoration of events began with Eliott looking down 'from Calpe's height', where

He view'd th' approaches of the threaten'd fight;
Beheld, far-stretch'd, combining fleets surrounded,
And heard, unmov'd, the battle's distant sound.

Calm and 'unmov'd' in the face of adversity, in the aftermath of the destruction of the floating batteries the poem argued Eliott demonstrated similar qualities in victory:

Mean time from England's fort no weapon flies,
And all the rage of war subsided lies,
The victor ELIOTT sees the direful woe,
And mourns the fate of his now conquer'd foe.
A foe no-more, with eager hast's he saves
Their ruin'd army from the threat'ning waves;
Each kind relief with friendly zeal supplies,
And once more apes to light their languid eyes,
He, with whose rage of late Iberia rung,
Chears with the soothing of a parent's tongue.

It was this image of Eliott’s composed, compassionate command that was echoed and reinforced visually in Copley’s Siege. However, the poem in the Gentleman’s Magazine was written still relatively soon after the event, and it is Eliott who is the principal figure who attends to the imperilled Spanish. In Copley’s painting, in accord with the commemoration of events as they had emerged during the course of the second-half of the 1780s, this image of control, magnanimity and sympathy is complemented by the actions of Curtis, who is the principal focus of the work’s second ‘Compartment’.

From the elevated point of the bastion, the viewer’s eye is led across the harbour by the sweeping diagonals and intersecting horizontals noted earlier. Over the body-strewn wreckage, the artist distributes a series of tragic vignettes of abandoned, drowned corpses, sailors desperately appealing for help, and rescuers attempts to lift them from the sea. This is a human drama played out against a sublime, elemental backdrop of earth, air, fire and water. In fact, signs of the sublime - as codified by Edmund Burke - dominate the scene. Obscurity, darkness, immensity, against a ‘material ground’ of armed conflict, were all qualities identifiable as sublime, and are summoned in Copley’s canvas by swaths of painterly colour, and dramatic contrasts of tone, scale and form. Burke’s taxonomy of the sublime imposed a system on what was by its very nature paradoxically unsystematic.71 Safely distanced and aestheticized, the sublime terror of warfare, for instance, might be rendered perversely pleasurable.72 “The passions which turn on self-

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71 On the cataloguing effects of Burke’s analysis, his attempts to fragment, explain and describe sublimity, see de Bolla, Discourse of the Sublime, esp. pp.62-72.
72 On the complex, contradictory connections between the sublime, terror and pleasure in Burke’s Enquiry, and their basis in Longinus, see E.J. Clery, ‘The pleasures of terror: paradox in Edmund Burke’s theory of...
preservation are’ Burke observed, ‘delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger without actually being in such circumstances’. Sublime experience might then engage the passions and moderate the excessive tendencies of violent narratives that otherwise disturbed the stillness expected of serious, high-minded art. For, theoretically, the painting of war and indeed violence generally was problematic. Its contingent, anecdotal nature was considered inappropriate to abstract, intellectual painting, distorting the balance and repose expected. War and its aftermath was incompatible with the dignity supposed to characterise the elevated and elevating arts. It was necessary then to subject battle’s depiction to controlled processes of sublimation. Subjugating violent conflict to the containing power of an aesthetically ordered composition imposed a clarity and calm onto the chaotic tumult. In Copley’s Siege, for instance, the potential excesses of the left side of the canvas are recuperated by its meaningful, expressive structuring, its evocation of the sublime, and quotation of eminent, revered exemplars.


If, as I suggested earlier, Copley’s heroic, grand painterly style makes conscious reference to a variety of popular sources, then it also synthesizes an eclectic range of venerable devotional pictorial models. For instance, the desperate, imploring bodies adrift in a sea of flame recall the infernal imagery of a Last Judgement, whilst the disposition of the clambering figures abandoning the ships visually echo the composition of a Deposition. A demonstration of the artist’s visual erudition, these references to religious art - together with the icon-like material organization of Copley’s canvas – also served to heighten the sympathetic, emotional content of the work and so lessen the potential violent impact of the image. Signs of horror are further mitigated through recourse to the controlling aesthetic of classical quotation, in the powerfully contorted male nudes clinging to the foreground wreckage and in the adaptation of the Apollo Belvedere in the figure of Curtis. Affiliation with such antique archetypes, of course, served to at once ennoble the officer by association and identify him with those qualities of self-containment, self-possession and repose summoned by the classical ideal. Curtis, seen against a tumult of indistinct bodies, movement and violence, is an image of self-control and calm. Such a display serves to temper the sublime horror of the scene, but also conforms to models of heroic and moral rectitude advocated by contemporaries. Adam Smith’s Theory of Moral Sentiments, for instance, had argued that ‘The man who is himself at ease can best attend to the distresses of others’.  

Republished in 1790, the year prior to Copley’s exhibition, Smith’s Theory argued that society depended upon the relations expressed by mutual feeling or

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‘sympathy’,76 his argument gaining considerable currency and popular endorsement as part of an emerging ‘culture of sensibility’.77 In the theatre of Copley’s painting and its exhibition, the audience could find themselves bound together by the sensible, sympathetic feeling promoted by its narrative of heroic, sublime action. Copley’s painting made violent conflict a redemptive vehicle of affirmation. It articulated the brutality of battle to elicit an effective response, addressing itself to the audience’s pity and tragic sense.78 That actions that elicit fear, sympathy and/or admiration might be beneficial to viewers was recognized by Kames in his *Elements of Criticism*:

> let us figure some grand and heroic action, highly agreeable to the spectator: beside veneration for the author, the spectator feels in himself an unusual dignity of character, which disposeth him to great and noble actions: and herein chiefly consists the extreme delight every one hath in the histories of conquerors and heroes . . . [this is] the sympathetic emotion of virtue; for it is raised in a spectator, or in a reader, by virtuous actions of every kind, and by no other sort.79

Copley’s Green Park show of the ‘grand and heroic action’ at Gibraltar, met just such demands. In the sublime victory against overwhelming, near insurmountable odds, versus the combined forces of the elements and the enemy, the viewer of Copley’s exhibition was offered ‘the extreme delight every one hath in the histories of conquerors and heroes’:

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76 Ibid., esp. I, 9-16, 38-43.
79 Kames, *Elements*, I, 63.
and 'virtuous actions'. Engaging the spectator's sympathies in this way, the painting also sought to encourage his or her historical identification with the image.

The narrative staged by Copley's *Siege of Gibraltar* can be seen as involving the artist and audience in a form of 'social transaction', in which each party had a vested interest. As I have suggested, Copley's painting and exhibition of the *Siege* deployed a combination of strategies to involve the viewer as fully as possible in the work, manipulating their knowledge of recent history and their sensibilities. In so doing it also appealed to each subject's sense of himself or herself as part of a larger imagined community. In the self-possessed, resourceful and benevolent figures of Eliott and more particularly Curtis, were found aspects of a virtuous national character with which the multifarious forms of the viewing public could align itself. In a narrative that pitted British self-sacrifice and fellow feeling against a display of callous, foreign inhumanity, regard for others was represented as a characteristic national trait. Smith's *Theory*, that had argued that the expression of sympathy was critical to the affiliations of society, also saw individual subjects as only able to imagine themselves in terms of how they saw themselves as viewed by others. According to this suggestion, any individual sense of self was inextricably bound to a larger collective identity. By identifying with the narrative of Copley's *Siege* the spectators also identified themselves with a shared national history of which they were all a part. That is, by identifying with the characters

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81 On this aspect of Smith's thought, and its relationship to the political imperative of national identity in the period, see the suggestive remarks in Andrew Ashfield & Peter de Bolla (eds.), *The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory* (Cambridge, 1996), pp.6-7.
in the staged narrative of Copley’s Green Park exhibition, the viewer could both find and define their own national and historical identity as British subjects. For, as we will see, by the summer of 1791, when Copley’s canvas was exhibited, the events depicted and staged had assumed a degree of authority and were now established as part of the nation’s history.

The siege of Gibraltar as history

In *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, Viscount Bolingbroke had argued that ‘history, true or false, speaks to our passions always’. He went on to suggest that ‘The true and proper object of this application [that is, history], is a constant improvement in private and public virtue’. These were also the animating principles for his *Remarks on the History of England*, first published in 1762, one of a growing body of indigenously produced histories of the nation published in the second half of the eighteenth century. Beginning with Tobias Smollett’s *A Complete History of England* of 1748 numerous studies were published which either supplanted or augmented the previously accepted standard history of the nation’s past by the French historian Paul de Rapin-Thoyras. Such texts were instrumental in fashioning the mythic origins, religious fate and martial values

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upon which it was increasingly argued the nation was founded. They imposed a coherence and order on what was to be seen as a shared past: one which might in turn impart a sense of cohesion to the actually disparate set of political, class, gendered and racial identities that comprised the nation. Works like David Hume’s *The History of England*, first published between 1754 and 1762, selected, ordered and organised the nation’s past in an essentially prescriptive rather than merely descriptive way. Didactic and instructive, they offered histories of the nation philosophically framed to instruct by example; their selective views of the past chosen for their morally-edifying value. This was also a view of history that assumed it unfolded according to a set of apparently unchanging, universal precepts. For Hume, the focus of historical inquiry was the identification of events that demonstrated ‘the constant and universal principles of human nature . . . the regular springs of human action and behaviour’. The lessons gleaned from this understanding were nevertheless one way of shaping a more immediate, particular history. In their turn to the past, these texts seemed to offer a means for understanding and making sense of the present. Whilst Hume had argued that the focus of historical analysis should be the recognition or reiteration of timeless moral precepts, secure assumptions regarding permanent meaning were being severely questioned. A number of new versions of the nation’s past, together with updated and revised editions of earlier histories, began to be published in the late 1780s. In the wake of the American War, appropriating the past to reinforce certain shared cultural myths was a potent means of re-establishing some sense of the nation’s affiliations damaged by the recent troubled

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past. However, new or revised histories still had to account for and find meaning in those events.

An illustrated edition of George Raymond’s *A New, Universal, and Impartial History of England* from 1790, the year before the first public appearance of Copley’s *Siege*, devoted a significant part of its section covering the reign of George III to the siege of Gibraltar. Its schematic, abridged account of the blockade focused its attention almost exclusively on the destruction of the floating batteries of the 13 September 1782 and Curtis’s actions the following morning. This textual version of events is accompanied by two illustrative plates that correspond with the action focused upon by Copley’s ‘two-Compartments’: Eliott’s surveying of the battle scene from on high and Curtis’s rescue of the stricken Spanish (figs.66 and 67). It seems then that by the summer of 1791, when the Green Park show opened, Copley’s version of the history of Gibraltar had assumed a firm role in the history of the nation.

Engravings of the kind found in Raymond’s *History*, along with maps and tables, increasingly supplemented popular historical narratives in this period. These visual adjuncts were irretrievably bound up with concomitant developments in historical painting. Other plates in Raymond’s text, for instance, illustrating recent events, consciously drew on contemporary history painting. Engravings of the deaths of the Earl of Chatham and Lord Robert Manners demonstrate a more than obvious debt to the paintings of these subjects by Copley and Thomas Stothard respectively. In Raymond’s *History*, these graphic works functioned in tandem with one another, transforming a
series of alternatingly heroic, reassuring or disturbing incidents into a rhythmic repetition of similar events. The unique, inexplicable or troubling became a sequence of comparable historicized incidents either analysable for comparable motives and effects or supplied with them. This was a view of history that conformed to the kinds of pattern Hume saw as observable in the past. As such, Raymond’s textual and visual history of the recent past offered some assurance that the past was past, and that now meaning could be drawn from it. Similarly, Copley’s grand style history offered a consoling degree of closure upon an incident from the last war. As Stephen Bann has argued, visual representation offers a potent means ‘to concretize the awareness of the past’.  

Copley’s Siege celebrated a display of British magnanimity in victory, but in the context of overall defeat. Nevertheless, celebration of the perpetuation of British interest in the Mediterranean was critical to the processes of exorcising the trauma of the American War. In the main, it was enthusiastically embraced by all shades of political opinion. However, that the flurry of popular enthusiasm for the relief of Gibraltar

Edward Barnard’s A New Complete and Authentic History of England (London, 1791?) also incorporated a similarly abridged account of events and illustrated them along the lines of Raymond’s History.

amounted to little more than a cultural exercise in forgetting, did concern some commentators. An anonymous tract entitled *The Propriety of Retaining Gibraltar Impartially Considered*, published in 1783, argued that ‘the warmest friends to the Independence of America’

hold forth Gibraltar, at the same time, as an invaluable possession, which on no consideration whatsoever ought to be relinquished; preferring thus, to all appearance, a few acres of barren rock, to the largest and most fertile extent of territory that ever a nation was possessed of . . . Such a whimsical paradox . . . the possession of America has been sacrificed to the retention of Gibraltar’. 87

Amidst the general clamour to commemorate the victory on the Rock, the author of this pamphlet was a rare dissenting voice. However, what his ‘whimsical paradox’ effectively admitted was that that celebration was little more than an attempt to deflect attention from a far more significant loss. Ultimately, the success of such an exercise lay in the appeal of such victories to more than just ‘the warmest friends to the Independence of America’; it necessitated the forging of a relatively disinterested image of patriotism founded on the assertion of the nation’s difference from its enemies. During the decade following Copley’s Green Park show, any sense of what it was to be British was increasingly fostered through and dependent upon war against a range of foreign others. For as Linda Colley has suggested, ‘There are few more effective ways of bonding together a highly disparate people than by encouraging it to unite against its own and other outsiders’. 88 During the course of the 1790s the all too evident disparate interests of

the nation were increasingly channelled into war and imperial expansion. Indeed, as Copley’s *Siege of Gibraltar* was being exhibited in London, the metropolitan press was filing reports of imperial conflict in the Indian subcontinent, and it is to the visual ‘history’ of these events I will turn in the following chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

Redrawing the lines of engagement: colonial war in India

On the 7 April 1794 the *Morning Chronicle* carried a lengthy report detailing a reception at the Mansion House held in honour of Charles, First Marquess Cornwallis (later Lord Cornwallis), during which the then Governor-General of India was granted the freedom of the City of London. In its account, the *Chronicle* drew attention to the large crowd that had gathered to watch the proceedings, and who became so swept up that the ‘multitude took the horses from his carriage, while the air rung with shouts of joy’.

Earlier that same week, Alderman John Boydell had announced that he intended to commission a portrait of Cornwallis ‘as large as life’ for the Common Council Room. The finished painting by John Singleton Copley was part of the gift the publisher gave to the City later that year and was to ultimately hang alongside the same artist’s *The Siege of Gibraltar* (fig.68). These festive and pictorial celebrations were intended to mark British victory in the Third Mysore War. Fought between 1790 and 1792, the conflict represented a

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1 *Morning Chronicle*, 7 April 1794. For details of the planning of this elaborate event, see the minutes of the Committee of Naval and Military Victories, Misc Mss/195/1, Corporation of London Record Office, Guildhall, London.

2 *Whitehall Evening Post*, 3-5 April 1794.

concerted effort to bring the stubbornly independent southern Indian state of Mysore – and its Mughal ruler Tipú Sultán - into submission. Its progress was followed avidly in England where, as the commemorative events of April 1794 illustrate, Tipú’s final surrender was greeted with much enthusiasm, rejoicing and relief.

In this chapter I shall trace the diverse ways in which this far off conflict was visually mediated to the metropolitan public. It will examine the war from the stuttering, early failures of Cornwallis’s initial campaign, which were eagerly seized upon by London’s satirical print makers, to the extensive commemoration of the eventual British victory in illustrated campaign histories, maps and charts, paintings and prints. In focusing upon the ways in which this distant fight for empire was evaluated, defined and consumed through visual forms, I want to explore how the war existed as much in ideology and the imagination as it did in policy. This will also involve an awareness of the multifaceted impact of empire upon domestic sensibilities, noted in earlier chapters. For, as W.J.T. Mitchell amongst others has noted, imperialism is a far from simple, homogenous phenomenon but a complex system of cultural, political and economic

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4 Study of the role of the visual arts in the history of Anglo-Indian imperialism has until recently confined itself essentially to surveys of paintings, drawings and sculptural monuments by British artists working in India. There has been little critical analysis of the role of visual culture in the ideological coercion of colonial India. Nevertheless, any critical discussion of work produced by British artists on sojourns to India is indebted to the cataloguing of, most notably, Mildrid Archer (see references below).

expansion and domination. It involves a complex process of exchange, mutual transformation and ambivalence. This is a process conducted simultaneously at concrete levels of violence, expropriation, collaboration and coercion, but also at a variety of symbolic and representational levels. It is, then, with the ways in which war in colonial India was variously represented and debated, and the frequently contested meanings it could have for the imperial centre, that I am concerned.

P.J. Marshall has argued that for much of the eighteenth century India was peripheral to metropolitan cultural concerns. However, during the course of the 1780s there had been a growing recognition that East India Company affairs bore directly upon the nation’s economic and military fortunes. Questions regarding the conduct of the British in India, which had been subordinated to the problems of the American War, came increasingly to centre stage. For instance, there were considerable misgivings over the riches being accrued by certain Company officers, and the violent conquest of new territories. In fact, war spoils were only one source of illegal Indian wealth flowing to the fortunate few. However, spectacular fortunes were to be made through the waging of

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6 W.J.T. Mitchell, 'Imperial landscape', in W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), Landscape and Power (Chicago, 1994), pp.5-34. Whilst I cannot begin to summarize here the varieties of contemporary postcolonial criticism that has characterized recent writing in this area my own approach has been informed by the following works: Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (New York & London, 1992); Sara Suleri, The Rhetoric of English India (Chicago, 1992); Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism (New York, 1993); Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (New York & London, 1994).


8 For an overview of these attitudes, see Philip Lawson & Jim Philips, "Our Execrable Banditti": perceptions of Nabobs in mid-eighteenth-century Britain, Albion, vol.16, no.3 (Fall 1984), pp.225-41.
war and the consequent expansion of Company interests. In *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan* of 1764, the Company official Robert Orme had argued that war was inevitable for ‘the preservation of their commerce in the East-Indies’. By the 1780s, however, such was the aggressive nature of Company expansionism that it seemed to many contemporaries that it fought wars of conquest, not expedience. This was a central issue for Edmund Burke in his numerous writings and speeches (1788-94) against the Company administrator Warren Hastings’s abuse of power in the government of India. Many of Burke’s charges against Hastings focused upon the prosecution of unprovoked, unjustified war as evidence of corrupt practice. Hastings’s impeachment was under way throughout the course of the Third Mysore War, and inevitably inflected the ways in which that conflict came to be understood and defined. Yet, as we shall see, the celebration of British victory in Mysore explicitly acknowledged that this was also a war of conquest, along the lines Hastings was being accused of waging. It is clear in this that British victory in Mysore did much to deflect the anxieties about an empire of conquest made explicit by the Hastings affair. During the

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course of the 1790s, then, the lines of imperial responsibility in India were being
substantially redrawn.

This is not to say, however, that recurrent fears and misgivings had been entirely
recuperated. Hostility to wars of conquest fed on fear, as much as ideals of peace. Adam
Ferguson, John Millar and Richard Price, writing during the 1760s and ‘70s, as we have
seen earlier, had all seen acts of acquisitive aggression as inevitably leading to
despotism. In *A Discourse on the Love of our Country* (1789), a text which provoked
Burke to write *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Price argued ‘Offensive wars are
always unlawful and to seek the aggrandisement of our country by them, that is, by
attacking other countries in order to extend dominion, or to gratify avarice, is wicked and
detestable’. Price was not alone in expressing such sentiments, and similar anxieties
were articulated across a broad political and social spectrum. Horace Walpole, for one,
confessed that military success in the east held little satisfaction. Reflecting on the
victories of Cornwallis, he told Mary Berry ‘I am told that our Indian skirmish was a
victory, and that Tippoo Saib and all his cavalry and elephants ran away; but sure I am
that the first impression made on and by those who spread the news, was not triumphant;
nor can I enjoy success, if it was success, in that country, which we have so abominably

\[11\] It is worth pointing out in this context the shared imagery employed by Burke in both his denunciations of Hastings and his speeches of the mid-1770s during the dispute with America. See Nigel Everett, *The Tory View of Landscape* (New Haven & London, 1994), p.95.

usurped and plundered'. In reactions to eventual British victory in Mysore jubilation was tempered by regret and suspicion. Indeed, these were feelings that attended the war from its outset, and allegations of ineptness, corruption and maladministration were present in the earliest news of Cornwallis's campaigns on the subcontinent.

'False news': rumour and counter-rumour

On the 22 April 1791 The Times falsely reported the taking of Tipú's fortress at Seringapatam, some ten months prior to its actual fall. In fact, the Cauvery river, swollen by the winter's monsoon floods, had become an insuperable barrier preventing the capture of Tipú's island capital, and troops led by Cornwallis had been forced to retreat.

The relative security or otherwise of Company stock was, of course, extremely sensitive to stories of success or reverses. Company dispatches to government departments, such as the Board of Control or Secretary of State's Office, were considered the most authoritative sources of information. In the later stages of the war, full versions of these posted in the London Gazette were almost immediately republished by the London dailies as well as the monthly periodicals. However, the metropolitan press did not confine itself to reporting news of established, 'official' provenance. Letters from Company officers and officials or articles reprinted from sources like the Madras Courier filled the columns.

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of the papers ‘Indian news’, alongside items of more doubtful origin. Indeed, it seems that the press might manufacture information or at least manipulate the timing of the release of verified news to further profits. Fashioning the news for speculative purposes ran risks, however. Rumour is marked by what Homi Bhabha has termed ‘an infectious ambivalence’. That is, it is inherently unstable and in constant state of transformation. Its discrepant and fragmentary nature means that its basic substance is forever being added to or subtracted from, with the result that whatever the initial impetus for its circulation may have been it becomes difficult to fully control. This is a situation exacerbated when the fabricated rumour and verified ‘fact’ come into opposition. In the incessant circulation of unsubstantiated comment, gossip and rumour about the nation’s colonial outposts in India, ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ news frequently came into conflict creating a climate of mistrust. It served to create a situation in which any sign, of whatever form, might signify and be freely interpreted. In a letter to Lady Ossory, written within days of the report in *The Times*, Walpole noted ironically that the news from the subcontinent ‘was dispensed as a defeat; but on Friday evening, like many defeats, was construed into a victory’. What probably began as an attempt to guide and direct the fortunes of Company stock, as we shall see, actually only succeeded in inducing further


15 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, pp.198-211, 202.

16 Walpole to Lady Ossory, Monday 25 April 1791, *Correspondence*, XXXIV, 108.
anxieties about British actions in Mysore. Amongst the oppositionist elements in metropolitan print culture, the uncontrolled dissemination of half-truths, rumour and hearsay by the metropolitan press about the progress of the campaigns in India could be readily utilised for its own ends.

Rumour was the virtual stock in trade of the contemporary satirical print market: indeterminate and ill defined, ripe with double meanings and puns, it was readily seized upon by producers of this popular art form. In December 1791, for instance, several graphic satires appeared in response to further ‘news’ about the withdrawal of British armies from Seringapatam the previous May. Several articles had appeared in the London press over the preceding few weeks, using unofficial sources to fill out the scant information available through the Company. The Morning Chronicle, for example, which supported the opposition, used French sources, letters from the British army, and accounts of a Mr. Parley who had travelled aboard a French ship, to suggest a major British defeat. Unsurprisingly, the government tried to discredit its sources and construct a more optimistic version from alternative sources. However, the pro-Whig papers retorted that ministers could not conceal ‘from the scrutinising people of England, the solemn and sad truth of our disaster’. Such attempts to obscure the actual nature of events for the government’s own advantage were quickly exploited by satirical print makers.

For London’s graphic satirists, Cornwallis’s withdrawal from a position around Seringapatam provided an obvious subject for ridicule. Both William Dent’s Rare News:

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17 Morning Chronicle, 21 November 1791. Cited in Marshall, "Cornwallis Triumphant", p.59. See also the report in The Observer, 4 December 1791.
from India, or, Things going on Swimmingly in the East, published 5 December 1791, and James Gillray’s The Coming-on of the Monsoons; - or - the Retreat from Seringapatam, published the following day by Hannah Humphrey, exploited the obvious comic potential of the rainy season that had halted the British advance (figs.69 and 70).19 Dent pictures Cornwallis’s advance being swept away in a copious stream of urine that issues from ‘Tippoo’s horse’. In the Gillray, just behind a retreating phalanx of Grenadiers, a frightened, panicked Cornwallis, riding an ass, gallops over the scattered corpses of dead British soldiers in an effort to evade a torrential rain of piss emanating this time from a grinning Tipú. Gillray’s targets here include not just the exaggerated claims made for the campaign in the east but also celebration of the nation’s heroes in contemporary painting. Gillray’s inclusion of a fluttering ensign against a receding line of troops subtly parodies the conventions of contemporary history painting. The print’s satiric armoury also includes the use of literary allusions. Gillray makes the Mughal ruler a Rabelaisian figure, clearly identifying the repelling of the British advance with the examples of Gargantua’s urinal flooding of Paris and Pantagruel’s vanquishing of his enemy, King Anarchus, by similar means.20 Inscribed below the design is a quotation from Shakespeare’s Henry IV, Part I:

‘here be Four of us, have taken a City this morning – where is it? - where is it? where is it? taken from us it is; a hundred Thousand, upon poor Four of us, I am a rogue, if I was not at half-sword with a

18 Morning Chronicle, 16 December 1791. Quoted in ibid, p.59.
19 BMs 7928 & 7929:
20 On these urinal inundations, see Mikhail Bakhtin, Rabelais and His World, Hélène Iswolsky (trans.) (Bloomington, Ind., 1968), pp.150-51, 190-91 and esp. 333-36.
thousand of them for two hours together, I have escaped by miracle, I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose, my buckler cut through & through, my Sword hack'd like a hand-saw, I never dealt better since I was a man: all would not do!" 21

In the context of Gillray's print, these exaggerated claims, made by Falstaff, are obviously to be equated with the 'false news' of the taking of Tipu's fortress at Seringapatam. However, it also establishes a wider context in which the English retreat might be seen: Shakespeare's rousing, patriotic history. Here, however, the context is far from 'rousing' or 'patriotic'. As Jonathan Bate has argued with regard to Gillray's use of such allusions, the viewer/reader puts the quote back into context and works through its implications from there. 22

In another print from this period, Isaac Cruikshank's *How to Gain a Complete Victory, and Say, You got Safe out of the Enemy reach*, published 15 December 1791, Cornwallis's advance aboard an ill-drawn elephant is halted by an excretory blast from Tipu's horse (fig.71). 23 This foetid discharge might be equated with the 'hot air' concerning Tipu's supposed defeat then filling the London papers. The doubt implied here by the title and imagery is the thematic link between this print and those by Dent and Gillray. This sense of distrust seized upon and provoked by satirists in December 1791 was further exploited the following May, when news of British victory in Mysore once


23 BM 7932. For other prints on the 'false news' of victory, see BM7904 & 7939.
more reached London. Such was the destabilising nature of the visual and verbal rumours being circulated in the capital regarding Indian news, that any ‘official’ news was thrown into doubt.

Rumourmongering is the very stuff of Gillray’s *Scotch-Harry’s News; - or Nincumpoop in high Glee*, a print published on the 23 May 1792 by the politically-contentious James and Ann Aitken (fig.72).24 Pressed up close to the picture plane in an intimate huddle, Gillray clearly depicts the King and Queen’s obviously private exchange with Pitt’s minister Henry Dundas – who speaks from behind his hand – as conspiratorial. Leaning forward with a satisfied and cunning smile, the minister reports to the royal couple ‘Serigapatam is taken! Tippoo is wounded! & Millions of Pagodas secured’. Gillray’s use of this kind of headlinese, which is also apparent in the short, compound titles and ebullient, fractured texts of other prints relating to the ‘news’, reinforces the image’s relationship to its source material.25 For this print fed upon the rumours that Dundas had manipulated the newspapers earlier coverage of the war, feeding letters to the press sympathetic to the government position.26

Dent’s *Flying News; Or, Seringapatam taken by Stratagem!*, published only two days earlier than Gillray’s *Scotch-Harry’s News*, made the connection between the ‘false news’ and the city’s speculative activity even more explicit (fig.73).27 In Dent’s print, Dundas hurriedly bears Tipú’s fortress along a thistle-strewn path to a waiting George III

24 BM 8094.


27 BM 8093.
and Charlotte who oversee his arrival through telescopes. Over the wall, a Jewish stockjobber also watches the minister's progress. Seringapatam has become a funeral bier for Tipú's dead body, and is enclosed within a bubble blown along by a blast from the Stock Exchange. Dent's imagery consciously echoes the satirical iconography of the financial disasters of an earlier speculative adventure, the South Sea Bubble of 1720; the memory of which continued to haunt economic activity. As this imagery and its textual inscription make clear, Dundas's news was little more than 'Stockjobbing Humbug' intended to artificially inflate Company stock.

Issued a week earlier than Dent's and Gillray's prints was Wonderful News from Seringapatam, probably by Richard Newton and published by his regular publisher, William Holland, on 18 May 1792 (fig.74). In this complex, multi-figured image, two sequential rows of soldiers, stockjobbers, government ministers and members of the royal family all reflect upon the riches promised by Cornwallis's capture of Seringapatam. As in the other prints, allusions are made to the orchestration of the press by India House and the manipulation of the stock market. However, in a number of subtle ways the sheet extends its attack on these events. In the caption below the image, for instance, three

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29 BM 8090.

30 It is worth noting here, that all the publishers of the prints of May 1792 – the Aitkens, Humphrey and Holland - were at this point under suspicion for being sympathetic to radicalism. See Diana Donald, The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III (New Haven & London, 1996), p.147. On
Holland published prints on the slave trade are advertised for sale: *Justice and Humanity at Home, Cruelty and Oppression Abroad* and the *Blind Enthusiast*. Whilst their billing might be simply publicity for the publishing house’s latest fare, it is difficult not to see their advertisement as also extending the critique of empire made in *Wonderful News*. It addresses the apparent disparity between the ideals of English libertarianism and the despotic rule of the colonies. *Wonderful News* also questions the benefits of empire for the ordinary Englishman, in the ambivalent, ironic couplet above the final exasperated figure at bottom right of the print: ‘Now the People of England most heartily damn, / The wonderful News from Seringapatam’. Here, the print vents its frustration at the rumours and counter-rumours circulating about events in the east, and their ultimate irrelevance to the majority. Clearly, the spoils of war were only to be enjoyed by a select, unscrupulous few.

**Humanity and inhumanity.**

The focus in these graphic satires of May 1792 fell upon the avaricious greed stimulated by conquest. However, whilst their publication suggests a marked degree of suspicion regarding British motives in Mysore, others were eager to defend the government role. If the capture of Seringapatam meant little for the final figure of *Wonderful News*, the enthusiastic response of others to the event suggested it was of ‘national’ significance.

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Holland’s battles with the authorities, eventual imprisonment, and his relationship with Newton, see David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English Caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester, 1998).

31 These were anxieties still felt as late as 1800, at the conclusion of the Fourth Mysore War. See BM 9516.
This idea ultimately underlay the plethora of literary, dramatic and visual celebrations of the victory that far outnumbered and outlasted the transitory criticism of a slim body of graphic satires. Indeed, at this time, there was a marked shift in the representation of the British presence in India. Military occupation of the Indian subcontinent was no longer seen as an act of aggression. Rather, it was increasingly represented as having a moral value. For example, a short pamphlet purportedly written by ‘an Impartial Observer’ argued that ‘Tippoo reduced is an event far more desirable than Tippoo extirpated; and by abridging his power, by circumscribing his dominion . . . we have nothing to apprehend from his future machinations’.\footnote{A Letter to a Member of Parliament, on the Conclusion of the War with Tippoo Sultan (London, 1792), p.4.} As this instance indicates, part of the process of recuperating the image of British involvement in Mysore, at least, involved a redirecting of any accusations of tyranny and despotism away from the British and towards the figure of Tipu. In this, one key event from the conclusion of the campaign came to dominate the way in which the war was represented domestically.

Following British victory at Seringapatam, part of the process of brokering the peace treaty involved Cornwallis taking two of Tipu’s sons into custody. Hostage taking was a tactic employed widely by the British in negotiations. Ten-year old Abdul Kaliq and eight-year old Miuz ud-din were taken from their father to the camp of their enemies, and subsequently participated in an overtly theatrical treaty ceremony. The ‘official’ version of these events amounted to little more than a relatively terse reference in Cornwallis’s dispatches to the Company and Dundas, published in the London Gazette on the 26 July 1792. Reports in the periodical press, however, soon elaborated upon the
scant details of the official correspondence, and in the numerous campaign histories that inevitably followed the incident came to represent the climactic event of the narrative. Various 'eye-witnesses' gave specific descriptions of the appearance, reaction and conduct of the young princes, particularly focussing on the moment of their reception. These details were hastily seized upon by a host of artists, who recognized the pictorial possibilities of the incident's narrative of separation, welcome and return.

Present as 'official war artist', Robert Home recalled Cornwallis 'received the boys with the tenderness of a parent'. In the painter's verbal account of the reception of the princes, Cornwallis, the actual instigator of the hostage plan, assumes the role of benevolent guardian. Home's large-scale 1793 canvas, *Lord Cornwallis Receiving the Sons of Tipu Sultan as Hostages, Madras*, offered a pictorial reinforcement of this parental image of the Governor-General (fig.75). In this image, amidst a mass of portraits, precise topographical description and exoticizing local detail, it is Cornwallis's embrace of the youngest prince's hand that is the focus of the composition. It is this small, finely observed detail that, through a series of attentive looks, gestures and compositional lines, links all the parties present. However, Home's work does more than just elaborate on an otherwise apparently insignificant moment. It endows it with a more forceful meaning through purposefully recalling a significant pictorial precedent for such a scene. Home's painting of the reception makes clear reference to the imagery of the

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Seven Years’ War. More particularly it refers back to an iconography of benevolent military conduct in victory established by Francis Hayman’s *Lord Clive meeting with Mir Jaffir after the Battle of Plassey*, part of the Vauxhall Gardens installation (fig.76). It was the battle of Plassey that had ensured the Company’s control over Bengal, and which had become by this point the conventional symbolic beginning of British imperialism in the subcontinent. In aligning his image of the taking of the hostage princes with Hayman’s painting, Home established Cornwallis’s actions as part of the continuation of British power on the continent. This was an iconographic parallel inevitably picked up by other artists.

For Home’s painting was only one of a number of images focusing on Tipú’s sons produced between the close of the Third Mysore War and the early part of the nineteenth century. Mather Brown, for instance, exhibited paintings of both *The Departure of the Sons of Tippoo from the Zenana* and *The Delivery of the Definitive Treaty by the Hostage Princes to Lord Cornwallis* at the Orme brothers’ Morland Gallery as early as November 1792 (figs.77 and 78). Brown’s fanciful interpretation of events accentuated the

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36 On these paintings, see most recently Constance C. McPhee, ‘Tipu Sultan of Mysore and British medievalism in the paintings of Mather Brown’, in Julie F. Codell & Dianne Sachko Macleod (eds.),
paternalistic aspects of the narrative still further. In the reception piece, for instance, the
two princes gaze adoringly at Cornwallis. There is also an inference that this fatherly role
might be extended to the people as a whole, in the clear compositional contrast that is
drawn between the upright, individualized British figures on the right and the supplicant,
Orientalized figures on the left.

Beyond these painted versions of the hostage incident, the events were also
presented in several variations on the stage.\footnote{A musical play by Mark Lonsdale, entitled \textit{Tippoo Saib; or, British Valour in India}, was staged at the
Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, as early as June 1791. See Charles Beecher Hogan (ed.), \textit{The London Stage: 1660-1800}, part 5 (Carbondale, Ill., 1968), pp.1361-4.} And during the banquet at the Mansion
House for Cornwallis in April 1794, the ceremonial festivities included the display of a
large transparency depicting the Governor-General greeting the princes.\footnote{\textit{Morning Chronicle}, 7 April 1794.} It was, then,
the hostage exchange, in and through its various representations, which became the most
potent image of the war. In them, an expedient action became something more enduring,
something more concrete. These scenes might be likened to a form of imperialist
also Dorinda Evans, \textit{Mather Brown, Early American Artist in England} (Middletown, Conn., 1982), pp.111-16, cat.no.s 245-6, pp.243-5.} This is a process which, in
part, serves to distance the colonising nation from the actual vulgarity of the colonising
process, through the fostering of a self-perception of benevolence. It is a central
contradiction of imperialism that whilst it is dependent upon violence it must also negate:
that violence. And in the visual metaphor of the parent-child relationship, artists were able to express a notion of protection, guidance and aid that both resolved the violence of conflict, but which might also be read as indicative of a wider resolution to the problem of rule.

Critical to the associations these scenes might generate was the absence in them of the father who had given up his own children. This apparent callousness was a key component in the image of Tipú then being constructed in the public imagination. Rather than being an innocent victim of commercial greed, like those whose cause Burke had advocated, Tipú was represented as despotic, violent and cruel. For example, in a lengthy account of the Mysorean campaigns of 1792, the *Annual Register* argued that Mysore was a kingdom quite unlike the states that surrounded it:

ruled by an ignorant, weak, and effeminate Rajah; but by one of the greatest princes who had appeared in the east for several ages; brave, enterprizing, prudent, and politic. He was, at the same time, ferocious and cruel; a fanatic in the Mahometan religion; - a zealous adversary to all Europeans, or Christians;

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and a bitter and sworn foe to the English; so that, on the whole, from several points of resemblance, he has been called the Modern Hannibal.\textsuperscript{42}

Such a characterization was typical of writings on Tipú circulating in the late 1780s and early '90s.\textsuperscript{43} Conversely, whilst numerous texts placed an emphasis on the supposed barbarity of the Mughal ruler, Tipú might also be praised for his 'consummate Generalship' or 'perseverance and fortitude'.\textsuperscript{44} In the first published full-length history of the Third Mysore War Alexander Dirom argued that Tipú's 'government, though strict and arbitrary, was the despotism of a politic and able sovereign, who nourishes, not oppresses'.\textsuperscript{45} From such statements, it seems that it was critical for Tipú to be seen as a worthy adversary, as well as brutal despot, if the actions of the British against him were to be vindicated. Such alternating aspects of the Islamic character were not only to be found in variously 'factual' or 'fictive' sensationalist accounts, but were also being reinforced through scholarly research, analysis and interpretation.

\textsuperscript{42} The Annual Register, Or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1792 (London, 1793), p.191.

\textsuperscript{43} See, for example, [Thomas Lloyd], A Narrative of the Sufferings of James Bristow, belonging to the Bengal Artillery, During Ten Years Captivity with Hyder Ally and Tippoo Saheb (Calcutta, 1792).

\textsuperscript{44} Authentic Memoirs of Tippoo Sultaun (London, 1799), pp.123, 135.

\textsuperscript{45} Alexander Dirom, A Narrative of the Campaign in India, which Terminated the War with Tippoo Sultan, in 1792 (London, 1792), p.249. Dirom was far from alone in such characterisations of Tipú. See also Edward Moor, A Narrative of the Operations of Captain Little's Detachment, and of the Mahratta Army, Commanded by Purseram Bhow; During the Late Confederacy in India, against the Nawab Tippoo Sultan Bahadur (London, 1794), pp.197-8.
What Sara Suleri has called ‘the colonial will to cultural description’ found its fullest expression in this period in the activities of William Jones and the Orientalists of the Asiatic Society. By the late eighteenth century, their cataloguing of Indian history, society and culture had created a general sense that these were areas now thoroughly investigated. Critical to the project had been the categoric assertion of difference between the Hindu and Muslim peoples. In *An Historical Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India* of 1791, William Robertson, for example, wrote of ‘the ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticism of [the] Mahomodean conquerors’. Yet, if the Muslim was insistently represented as warlike, then this was largely in terms of his difference to the Hindu. In *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Hindoostan*, Orme had written of the Hindu that:

He shudders at the sight of blood, and is of a pusillanimity only to be excused and accounted for by the great delicacy of his configuration. This is so slight as to give him no chance of opposing with success the onset of an inhabitant of more northern regions.... His manners are so gentle; his happiness consists

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in the solaces of a domestic life; to which sufficiently inclined by the climate, he is obliged by his religion.50

Beliefs in such Orientalist assumptions about Eastern fatalism and passivity permitted a construction of the Hindu as a benign and co-operative partner in the colonial project. As Marshall has argued, the indigenous Asiatic peoples rated highly along the great chain of being.51 Robertson’s Historical Disquisition, for instance, included them in the category of ‘commercial peoples’.52 There was a general agreement, however, that Hindu culture was in decay politically and was militarily vulnerable: its technology was supposedly backwards and capacity for improvement insignificant. Above all, it was a society in which the potential for change had atrophied. Whilst Jones and others in the Asiatic Society saw the culture as formerly rich and pre-eminent, this was now in the past. This cultural decline was best explained in terms of Islamic conquest and despotism. Predatory Muslim conquerors had irrevocably arrested Asian society’s continued progress. And the inherent instability of arbitrary rule plunged the culture into a decline from which it could not recover.

According to these suggestions, victory against Tipú was represented as a triumph for British humanity. In a travel narrative written by John Taylor, the author argued that:

The feelings of humanity recoil, and human nature shudders at the recital of the cruelties exercised on the people of Malabar by Tippoo, or the engines of his power. Should it ever happen (which God forbid...
that) those miserable wretches should be deserted by us, what horror must await them, what will not be inflicted as the punishment for their revolt? . . . Let us maturely weigh the tenor of Tippoo’s conduct, and then say whether his dominion should not be crushed, for the quiet of India, and the safety of British possessions. 53

British invasion of Mysore then was depicted as liberatory and not a war of conquest. In a poetic eulogy to Cornwallis written by E. Cornelia Knight, for instance, the Marquis’s intervention in the region is seen clearly as an act of benevolence rather than aggression:

O may’st thou still in Britain’s cause prevail
Parent of glory, peace, abundance, hail!

Thy powerful arm strikes off the captive’s chains,
And glad restores him to his native plains:

Before Cherrfet the grateful India smiles,
From barbarous rapine freed, and Gallic wiles.
The conquering host in martial pomp appears,
And ev’ry brow the well-earned laurel wears:
By pleasures unsubd’ud, by wealth unmov’d,

Where GEORGE with mild paternal rule commands:
A grateful nation join’d in union’s bands; 54

Knight’s verse is careful to distance defeat of the sultan from the taint of being a commercial victory. Rather, as in the images of the hostage taking, it stresses the paternalist nature of British intervention. However, in Knight’s reference to the restoration of the ‘native plains’ she also alludes to the function of the hostage taking. In both of Brown’s images of the hostage taking a scroll is prominently placed. This is a salient reminder of the princes’ function as a bargaining tool in the division of territories made during the partition treaty at Seringapatam. On those pieces of paper the share of the real spoils of war—land—was apportioned.

In the next section, I shall examine the representation of this newly won territory through the interconnected practices of historiography, cartography and art. Victory for Cornwallis in Mysore was predicated on detailed knowledge and description of the region’s terrain. Visual description of the campaign landscape was of practical and ideological use; playing a critical role in the processes of war and enabling a metropolitan audience to imagine the sites of battle.

Knowledge of the ground.

It was a commonplace amongst late eighteenth-century military reformers that officers should possess a degree of graphic ability. ‘Not only Geography, but Topography should:


55 This was a point also made by other poetic celebrations. See also the anonymous pamphlet verse *The Hero: a Poetic Epistle, Respectfully Addressed to Marquis Cornwallis* (London, 1794).
make part of the Study of British Officers' remarked one commentator, 'for it is probable, that to an ignorance of some essentials therein, we may date several misfortunes in the annals of British History'. Reformers desire to inculcate young ensigns with the requisite skills, however, met with no little resistance from those who continued to see the military as an essentially 'gentlemanly' pursuit. Reformers also constantly met with habitual British disdain for the establishment of military academies, which continued to carry autocratic, continental associations. However, such barriers, at least in the education of cadets in graphic skills, were overcome to an extent by officers own self-consciousness about their status. Somewhat ironically, given the reluctance to professionalize the service, it was drawing's status as a polite accomplishment and practice that in part legitimated its becoming an element of an officer's duties. Indeed, it might be suggested that the demonstration of such skills played a critical role in the kinds of cultivation of social status and reputation members of the officer class engaged in, and which we have already seen in the previous two chapters. By the period of the Third Mysore War, drawing had certainly come to play a key role in devising assaults,

56 An Essay to Prove the Insufficiency of a Subaltern Officer's Pay in the Army, Compared with the Necessary Expenses Attending his Station (London, 1784), p.105.


supplementing route maps and in geographic description of campaign areas. However, for the majority of officers, as with other aspects of military education, knowledge was received primarily through texts. But for those who did attend Britain’s first military academy, topographical and cartographical skills were a central part of the academic curriculum.

Established in 1741 for the training of engineers and artillery officers, the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich trained only a minority of officers, but did much to entrench drawing and more particularly map-making as part of military culture. By 1796 the East India Company took some 40% of places at the Academy, and mapping projects on the subcontinent came increasingly under the auspices of military officers. Robert Orme’s unpublished ‘Essay on the Art of War’ written during the winter of 1764-65 had stressed the utility of maps to the Company’s operations. Probably circulated amongst Company officials, Orme’s text advocated that officers should keep journals.

59 For a brief survey of the developments, see Bermingham, Learning to Draw, pp.78-91. Bermingham’s argument that Woolwich made topography and cartography ‘part of a general military education in Britain’ is not entirely sustainable, as I would argue that the developed programme this suggests was not implemented until much later (p.83). See also Sloan, ‘A Noble Art’, esp.pp.106-9. On the development of the military academy in Britain, see John Smyth, The History of the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, 1741-1961 (London, 1961).

detailing the landscape ‘& describe each Part of the Country by a Map’.\textsuperscript{61} Orme recognized that a cartographic knowledge of the territory was essential to both the waging of war and maintenance of Company authority. It was Orme who subsequently initiated the \textit{ad hoc} surveys of Bengal by Major James Rennell between 1765 and 1771, and effectively established cartography as central to the exercise of Company control.\textsuperscript{62} That war and mapping were inseparably linked, and critical tools in the furtherance of Company interests, was openly acknowledged in the decorative title cartouche of Rennell’s first map of Hindoostan, published in 1782 (fig.79). In this elaborate allegory, Britannia stands before a pedestal engraved with a list of British military victories and gestured to by a kneeling sepoy. Rennell’s \textit{Memoirs of a Map of Hindoostan}, published simultaneously with the map itself, included an explanation of the image which argued that it was these conflicts that were the ‘means of which the British nation obtained, and has hitherto upheld, its Influence in India’.\textsuperscript{63} In the cartouche, the presence of mathematical dividers amongst the tools of the nation’s dominion scattered at the feet of Britannia also points to the key role of cartography in these actions.

By the time of Cornwallis’s forays against Tipú, the mobilisation and deployment of troops were increasingly predicated upon officers’ cartographic and topographical skills. Landscapes – drawn, painted and written – played a central role, both in the:


\textsuperscript{63} James Rennell, \textit{Memoirs of a Map of Hindoostan; or the Mogul’s Empire} (London, 1783), p.xii.
waging of campaigns and in how those conflicts were mediated to a metropolitan public. The sites, battles, and tactical manoeuvres of the campaigns of 1791 and '92, for instance, produced a massive volume of maps, drawings and cataloguing verbal descriptions, much of which was subsequently made available for public consumption. Their wider circulation promoted a fuller domestic understanding of the empire then being created.

Recent analysis of maps and mapping has drawn attention to their profoundly ideological nature. Cartography allows for the definition between states, and invariably accompanied, not to say allowed and enabled, claims to new territories. Its practice proved a potent symbolic means by which a culture might visually impose itself upon a space. However, as well as inscribing a claim to the lands delineated, maps were also temporal, pointing to a future prospect to be exploited. Military and commercial designs were often first inscribed through surveying and mapmaking. Theatres of operation, and the contested sites that comprised them, were essentially defined according to the mapmaking process. As was clearly recognized by Orme, and those he subsequently employed in cataloguing the Indian landscape, to govern a territory it must first be 'known'. Rennell, for instance, observed with regard to his own mapping of the campaigns in Mysore during the early 1790s, that this was a conflict 'undertaken at the distance of some hundred miles from the centre of our established influence, and powers

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of regular supply'. In alien, hostile terrain, Rennell's cartographic description of the landscape of Mysore proved crucial to troops orientation. Maps were thus not only texts of ownership and control, but also instruments of war composed of variously accurate and inaccurate knowledge.

Amongst the earliest visual images produced in response to Cornwallis's success in Mysore, was a lavish large-scale map produced by Rennell outlining British forces' tracking of Tipú's troops across the south Indian landscape (fig.80). In terms of its visual calligraphy, its actual look, Rennell's map is austere: lines vary in thickness, colour is limited, lettering is in simple type. It reduces the competing forces to pure geometry, to small coloured squares – Cornwallis, red, Tipú, orange - and so empties the field of war's human cost. In this highly abstract form of signification, British presence in the landscape is normalised and uncontested. Rennell's map is a paper simulacrum of the battlefield, which allows the viewer to be indifferent to the material conditions of war. Its emphasis is on legibility, producing a single, apparently coherent view of a conflict that actually comprised a series of skirmishes. In this, of course, it elided the complex manoeuvres and numerous small-scale confrontations that actually composed this bloody

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65 James Rennell, *The Marches of the British Armies in the Peninsula of India, during the Campaigns of 1790 and 1791; Illustrated and Explained by Reference to a Map, Compiled from Authentic Documents, transmitted by Earl Cornwallis from India* (London, 1792), p.9.

66 On the notion of omissions or 'silences' in maps, see Hartley, 'Maps, knowledge and power'. On the map as a 'text of possession, see G.N.G. Clarke, 'Taking possession: the cartouche as cultural text in eighteenth-century American maps', *Word and Image*, vol.4, no.2 (April-June 1988), pp.455-74, 455.

67 This was published simultaneously with a separately published textual account which confirmed, as it were, the veracity of the map (see note 63 above).
conflict. Tactics adopted by Tipu’s troops were highly fluid and forced the Company’s forces to tap into complex and long established networks of informants, spies and local guides.  

Rennell’s map is an attempt to comprehend and systematize local knowledge. Its schematic compilation of tactical and geographical data transforms the unwieldy, difficult and problematic into the ordered, clear and comprehensible. This map was followed a few months later by a second, companion piece, which laid Mysore out according to the division of territories drawn up at the Seringapatam peace treaty (fig.81). In its detailing of the partition and possession of the peninsula of India, this map supplemented and extended the information provided by the earlier campaign outline. However, it might also be seen as resolving the implied narrative of that first map, with its careful, judicious selection of events prior to the treaty.

As the metropolitan publication of Rennell’s maps illustrates, besides specialist, military value and use, the imagery of the map also had a much wider cultural resonance. It was instrumental in articulating and disseminating the ways in which information from the warzone was received and comprehended domestically. Maps and plans initially intended for use in the field were frequently published in engraved form at home, reaching a wide audience especially when published in popular journals and magazines.

Indeed, the periodical press followed the campaigns in detail, reprinting the latest news from the *London Gazette* as well as a variety of supplemental material both textual and

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68 See C.A. Bayley, ‘Knowing the country: empire and information in India’, *Modern Asian Studies*, no.27 (1993), pp.3-43.

visual. The European Magazine for May 1792, for instance, carried a lengthy descriptive account of Seringapatam and its surrounding topography reportedly ‘written by a Bengal officer’. This text was accompanied by an illustration and two maps / battle plans, that served to give a ‘general idea of the great importance to the British power in India’ (figs.82 and 83). Such views, charts and plans played a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge regarding the nation’s fight for empire. They also testify to a relatively widespread cartographic literacy. As indicated in the preceding chapter, cartography established the topography of the battlezone in the public imagination and thus helped frame other forms of representation. Furthermore, maps can be seen as part of a wider contemporary cultural concern with observation and depiction. Being cognisant in the reading of the landscape could also be seen as having distinct nationalist connotations. Mapping was perceived as belonging to a common sense, Baconian tradition of empiricism and as such represented a particularly British mode of thinking, in contradistinction to more abstract and theoretical systems of knowledge identified as French.70

As I have suggested with regard to Rennell’s mapping of the campaigns of 1790 and the following year, the conventions of the survey offered a way of translating a local, vernacular sense of place into a more sophisticated form of geographical knowledge.

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70 It almost goes without saying that this was an issue of pressing concern at this particular moment. See David Simpson, Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt Against Theory (Chicago, 1993). Also pertinent here are W.J.T. Mitchell’s observations regarding Burke’s bias against government by a priori abstract formula rather than ‘natural’ principles (Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology (Chicago, 1986), pp.135-43). For a perceptive re-orientation of Mitchell’s reading of Burke, see Bermingham, Learning to Draw, pp 107, 261, n.124.
With this in mind, maps and drawings should in fact be seen as very much mutually informing, parallel texts. Mapping provided a visual model for expanding the scope of landscape to take in a wide range of information and associations.\textsuperscript{71} Drawings made by Colin McKenzie and his engineers during the campaigns of the Third Mysore War demonstrate the utility of a variety of topographical skills in combat conditions.\textsuperscript{72} MacKenzie’s own sketch plan of the final assault on Seringapatam, for instance, was produced in the field and details the topography of the area and planned troop movements through it with considerable economy (fig. 84). Whilst this sketch is essentially spare and functional, others were far more elaborate. McKenzie’s \textit{View of Nandridroog, with the Batteries firing on the Place during the Siege, 1791} brings the conventions of topographical landscape to bear upon the deployment of troops and weapons during an attack upon a hill-top fort (fig. 85). Labelled ‘No.1’, and so presumably the first in a series of views of the battlefield considered from various angles, McKenzie’s drawing demonstrates how the engineer determined the position of the batteries. McKenzie’s principal concern in such a work seems to be with the delineation of practical and utilitarian information; surveying the network of prospects, refuges and hazards that


\textsuperscript{72} The drawings discussed here are all drawn from a portfolio of some thirty-three sketches of the Mysore landscape, mostly relating to the Third Mysore War but with some also post dating this period that subsequently formed part of the vast McKenzie collection. These can now be found at Western Drawings 569–601, India Office Library, British Library. On MacKenzie’s activities, see Nicholas B. Dirks, ‘Guiltless-
comprised the visual field of the battle site. It can be seen therefore as very much an extension of, or supplement to, the kind of plan represented by the previous image. McKenzie's sketch was one part of his military calculations; a means of developing strategies for Cornwallis's assault upon the droog. The drawing's function therefore appears utilitarian, and its aesthetic of precision linked to the exigencies of war. However, in the careful, finished nature of such a view, together with the fair copies made of such sketches and the subsequent arrangement of the drawings into labelled portfolios and volumes, it seems clear that these were works also intended for future publication. Drawings ostensibly carried out for military purposes, as the maps and plans published in the *European Magazine* illustrate, clearly had a domestic audience. McKenzie's sketch plan for the final assault upon Seringapatam, for instance, was the evident model for a number of plans published in the wake of Cornwallis's victory.\(^{73}\)

That later reproduction was probably intended also seems confirmed by the careful framing, composition and presentation apparent in other works carried out by McKenzie's team of engineers (fig.86). In this highly finished watercolour, the spatial and temporal precision of its ink inscription - 'Distant View of Mulwakull and of Earl Cornwallis's Army filing off towards that place on the March. February 26\(^{th}\), 1791. Sketched on the spot by - J.G. Newman del.' - provides a textual confirmation of the authenticity of the visual image. From a hilltop vantage, the watercolour represents a valley landscape bisected by the thin red line of Cornwallis's troops traversing the terrain. In its elevated prospect view over the terrain, use of landmarks for orientation, and...
relatively even focus, Newman's drawing conforms to the specification of features, form and function seen in topographical views. It seems to be part of MacKenzie's survey and attempts to gain knowledge of the ground. However whilst the work is marked by detailed differentiation of the terrain's features, it also seeks to integrate them. Newman's drawing is circumscribed by the aesthetic requirements of the picturesque. For all the attention to the objective description of the terrain, there is also an equally evident concern that the image also forms a harmonious, coherent composition. Newman creates a sense of depth, for instance, mainly through three overlapping grounds, in a way that conforms to practice advocated by any number of picturesque theorists of the period. Equally, there is a concern to employ a variety of form and line: there are abrupt shapes, such as the irregular hills, crumbling ruins, and intricate detail. There is also a notable

73 See, for instance, the siege map reproduced in Dirom, *A Narrative of the Campaign in India*.
74 As recent writers on the picturesque have argued, it is not possible to limit this term to single coherent aesthetic meaning. Its usage crossed a number of cultural practices, and could have strikingly different implications depending on whether it was being deployed in relation to tourism, literary or pictorial representation, or, indeed, in a military context. With regard to this final use, it is ironic to note the extent to which the development of the aesthetic might actually be dependent upon military imperatives apparently inimical to the values it apparently celebrates. On the term's varied use, see most recently Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860* (London, 1986); Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot, 1989); Sidney K. Robinson, *Inquiry into the Picturesque* (Chicago, 1991); Kim Ian Michasiw, 'Nine revisionist theses on the Picturesque', *Representations*, no.38 (1992), pp.76-100; Stephen Copley & Peter Garside (eds.), *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, Landscape, and Aesthetics Since 1770* (Cambridge, 1994); and works cited below. On the ways in which military modes of representation:
human presence. Whilst it might be suggested that the landscape is peopled in order to display the organisation of troops or provide scale, the foreground figures also clearly play a role. This tension between the work's function and aesthetic demands is observable in a number of officers' attempts to represent the Indian landscape.

By the period of the Third and Fourth Mysore Wars the practices Orme promoted in his 'Essay on the Art of War' were firmly established as part of an officer's duties, as Newman's painting and a journal kept by William Lambton during a march through the region in 1799 illustrates. Lambton's chronicle of his troops' trek through Secondah and Bednore, with its detailed scenic analysis, conforms closely to the model Orme had proposed some three decades earlier. Lambton's written summary of the landscape encountered utilises two separate, distinct modes of topographical description that might be seen as not entirely compatible. In its opening sections the journal adopts the conventions of the polite, picturesque travel narrative:

The numerous flocks and herds which are scattered in all directions, give a rural sweetness to the face of nature, and the Mysore, like antient (sic) Arcadia, both from the mildness of its Climate, the variety of its beauties and the simplicity of its native inhabitants (Gentoos) may afford abundant subjects for pastorals & poetry.\(^7\)

\(^7\) Impinging upon civilian artistic practice, see Michael Charlesworth, 'The ruined abbey: Picturesque and Gothic values', in Copley and Garside (eds.), *The Politics of the Picturesque*, pp.62-80.

Such erudition might be seen as an attempt to establish Lambton's social status with his superiors, the most likely readers of the text. However, other sections of the journal are far more prosaic. In the officer's description of military strongholds the language is spare and precise:

The fortress of Seva, which is of modern structure, is a large square work with high Cavalier bastions at the Angles, and four smaller ones between each Angle. – A large dry ditch, with a regular Glacis, is on each side of the gateway.  

Apparent in Lambton's journal is a disjunction between two alternate modes of description that echoes the pictorial compromises of Newman's earlier watercolour. Newman and Lambton's visual and verbal framing of the landscapes of Mysore's battlefields serves to aestheticize those spaces. As Elizabeth Bohls has argued with regard to the representation of the landscape of the late eighteenth-century West Indian plantation, the aesthetic is a powerful tool of colonial legitimisation. The picturesque as a way of looking obscures the links between the topography of a place and the material needs of those who live there. In Newman’s graphic image and Lambton’s literary description of the terrain, the aestheticized presentation effectively neutralises the violence that allows that act of representation. However, it might also be suggested that in Newman’s painting the red-coated figures, whilst elements of an artistic composition also openly acknowledge the violence that allows for that representation to take place.

76 Ibid., fol.64.

In the campaign narratives that inevitably followed in the wake of Cornwallis’s victory in Mysore, graphic representations of the territory were also frequently incorporated into the volumes alongside the written text. Visual observation complemented the presentation of the landscape textually described. Alexander Dirom’s *A Narrative of the Campaign in India, which Terminated the War with Tippoo Sultan, in 1792*, for instance, was prefaced with a broad panoramic view of the north-east walls of the fortress at Seringapatam (fig. 87). Produced for the volume by the specialist map publisher William Faden, the frontispiece depicts the siege landscape that is the space for the narrative’s concluding sections. Amongst the information given in the engraving’s accompanying text, inscribed below, it declares itself as being after an image ‘Drawn by I. Smith from a View taken on the Spot’. Having established its authenticity in this way, the image itself announces its exotic difference through the foreground signs of indigenous plant and animal life. Rises and falls of the terrain are carefully delineated. And significant landmarks of the fortress pointed to by way of a key that uses groups of birds. Interestingly, the key differentiates between the ancient Hindu Pagodas and the Muslim buildings imposed by Tipu. This bespeaks a despotism that is echoed at a formal level by the layout and the form of topographical image the frontispiece visually recalls. In its panoramic sweep, the view seems to consciously echo the visual patterns of park and fields, seen in framed recession from a commanding house, characteristic of

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estate portraiture. In such prospects, their repeated structures imply the organisation of power and property of which they formed a part. The rhetorical charge of this despotic trope would have been all the more forceful in the context of the post-revolutionary 1790s.

Prevailing picturesque tastes found mapping of this order too indelicate a display of property. It was an axiom of a number of writers on the landscape in the 1790s that liberty was a prerequisite for the picturesque to operate. According to Archibald Alison, for example, only once the landscape was 'freed', could it be pictured as such. In a lengthy footnote to his Essay on the Picturesque of 1794, Uvedale Price had argued:

A good landscape is that in which all the parts are free and unconstrained, but in which, though some are prominent, and highly illuminated, and others in shade and retirement – some rough and others more smooth and polished, yet they are all necessary to the beauty, energy, effect, and harmony of the whole. I do not see how a good government can be more exactly defined; and as this definition suits every style of landscape from the plainest and simplest to the most splendid and complicated, and excludes nothing but tameness and confusion, so it equally suits all free governments, and only excludes anarchy and despotism. It must be always remembered, however, that despotism is the most complete traveller; and he who clears and levels every thing round his own lofty mansion, seems to me to have very Turkish principles of improvement.


Price’s Essay was in part a response to his friend Richard Payne Knight’s lengthy poem The Landscape, also of 1794, which had represented the solitary mansions of earlier taste in decidedly despotic terms: ‘Tear down the long result of all his toil, / And build their mansions with their neighbour’s spoil’. Knight argued that ‘prim despots kept the country clear’. Price and Knight argued that the picturesque landscape of artfully controlled ‘naturalness’ – its unpruned trees, asymmetry and curves over straight lines – was readily perceptible by its contrast with the terrain of France. According to contemporary aesthetic theory then, the picturesque connoted liberty. There is of course no little irony in that to construct this appearance of liberty on the territories of empire necessitated the imposition of power. It might be noted, for instance, that a regular line of British troops enters the picture space at bottom left of Dirom’s frontispiece.

Whilst Dirom’s campaign history represents a professional soldier’s view of the Third Mysore War, professional artists also sought to offer their own representation of events, as a volume of engravings published in 1794 by Robert Home as Select Views in

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Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan illustrates (figs. 88-92). Home's lavish compilation of architectural and topographical views are sequenced to trace a single, linear campaign trail that retraces that taken by Cornwallis's troops in 1792. Subdivided into sections that correspond to significant sieges, battles or skirmishes, Home's landscapes are supplemented with brief prose sketches of 'the leading events of this glorious war'. Home's views were clearly intended to be 'read' in conjunction with the accompanying text, which narrativises the otherwise apparently emptied landscapes. Yet, there is a marked disjunction between image and text in Home's Select Views. Whilst the fragmentary literary descriptions of the campaign outline the putative events of the various violent confrontations of the campaign, including the names of some of the fallen, the landscape views are literally emptied of violence, and all marks of conquest or scars of war are effaced. Rather, they rationalise and control the warzone, creating order from the disorder. Home's Mysorean landscapes frame their views of the terrain in a broad, horizontal, panoramic format, taking in details about the physical and human geography. An absence of atmospheric effects brings features on the horizon into clarity. Highly detailed information is displayed evenly across the picture space. Specific, precise and correct, they convey an impression of empirical 'truthfulness' that the accompanying first-person of the text reinforces.

In the View of the Pettah Gateway, the accompanying text alluded to a Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Moorhouse, who had died when engaged upon an attack upon the pettah (or civilian) gate at Bangalore, a town held by forces loyal to Tipú. The View

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83 On the circumstances surrounding the publication of this album, see William Foster, 'British artists in India 1760-1820', The Walpole Society, vol. 19 (1930-31), pp. 1-88, 43.
also served as the backdrop for Home’s painting, *The Death of Colonel Moorhouse, Madras Artillery, at the Siege of Bangalore, 8 March 1791* (fig.93). Home’s death tableau obviously recalls the precedent established for such an image by West’s *Wolfe* (fig.3). A number of features present in the earlier work are repeated in Home’s painting: the setting on the edge of a battlefield in an exotic locale; the shallow semi-circle of figures; and the native observer squatting in the foreground. As in the artist’s painting of the princes’ reception, which also recalled a noted pictorial celebration of the Seven Years’ War, such echoes might be seen as part of the process of imagining a cohesive and coherent idea of empire. For Moorhouse’s heroic sacrifice, like Wolfe’s, meant that his image – and by extension Britain’s empire – would be maintained and then endure. This is inferred in the painting through the use of Christian iconographic reference points, but reinforced through other acts of commemoration. In a poetic eulogy to Moorhouse that appeared in the *European Magazine* as early as September 1791, the dead officer was praised in terms that celebrated his personal qualities:

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\begin{align*}
\text{Gentle as manly, merciful as brave,} \\
\text{Friendship and glory, consecrate thy grave!} \\
\text{Heroes shall wonder where thy bones repose,}
\end{align*}
\]

\[84\] Home, *Select Views in Mysore*, p.vii.

\[85\] For a fuller discussion of the links between these two works, see Barbara Groseclose, ‘Death, glory, empire: art’, in Codell & Macleod (eds.), *Orientalism Transposed*, pp.189-201. The arguments of Groseclose’s work echo the ones I make here, and earlier in discussion of Home’s *Lord Cornwallis: Receiving the Sons of Tipu Sultan*. 

.229
Gaze on thy wreck, and moralize their woes.86

The importance of Moorhouse’s sacrifice is made clear in the view of the pettah in Home’s Select Views. Stripped of its scene of heroic death, the gate merely appears neglected and overgrown. What is lacking is underlined by the prominence assigned compositionally to the idol on the left. The apparent political oppression and cultural decline of contemporary Mysorean society is encoded in this landscape.87 Seen in conjunction with The Death of Colonel Moorhouse, Home’s image of the pettah represents British intervention in this landscape as rescuing the land from its own decadent demise.

In such images, British imperialism is represented not so much through the exotic Oriental subjects but in the celebration of the colonising culture and its values. Mapping and picturesque landscapes masked the brutal conquest of the landscape but also enabled domestic audiences to visualise the subcontinent. In particular, the picturesque gave Britons a means with which they could understand the native geography and peoples, and at the same time view themselves against the backdrop of such a setting. As such, it offered a potent pictorial means of resolving the contradictions of British rule in India.


the problem of reconciling domestic ideals of liberalism and clearly despotic rule of India.

Lines redrawn.

Despite the public acclaim, Cornwallis’s long costly war between apparently unequal forces had produced something less than total victory. In 1799, Cornwallis’s successor as Governor-General, Major-General Arthur Wellesley, thought it necessary to invade Mysore again. Victory in this final conflict inevitably produced a wealth of further imagery, most notably perhaps the epic panoramic view of the taking of Seringapatam by Robert Ker Porter that toured Britain in the early years of the nineteenth century.88 The emphasis of this imagery largely fell on the death of Tipú. Ultimately, what made Tipú so fearful to the British, as C.A. Bayley has pointed out, was not his ‘perfect despotism’ or Muslim zealotry, but the fact that he was fighting, like the Company, with weapons of trade, monopoly and boycott.89 Celebration of the victory over Tipú, however, carefully elided such problematic issues. Instead, as with Cornwallis’s success in the earlier war,

the conflict was drawn up as very much the triumph of British humanity over despotic cruelty. As such it was then apparently a victory in which the country as a whole could rejoice, and share the spoils. As Alexander Beatson observed, in his history of the campaign, it was 'a War, which terminated with so much glory and advantage to the British nation'.

Public reception of the Third and Fourth Mysore Wars suggests that pride in British rule in India and in military successes had become widely accepted elements of British patriotic identity. The enthusiasm with which Cornwallis’s victories in Mysore were greeted seems to signal a significant shift in the nature of opinion regarding imperial conquest from the atmosphere of the Hasting’s trial. Indeed, activities in India were never again under such hostile scrutiny from within the mainstreams of public opinion. In part, this was due to the imposition of a more authoritarian form of rule on the subcontinent. Under Cornwallis and later Wellesley, for instance, increasing efforts were made to control the flow of information from India. Disclosures to newspapers regarding events in the Indian territories were carefully controlled, and the kinds of infectious rumourmongering, that had proved disturbing to public perceptions of events, neutered.

Appeals to national pride in the country’s military exploits found ready favour in the context of the early 1790s. Enthusiasm for Cornwallis’s victory took place against the background of threatening events in revolutionary France, stirrings of radicalism in Britain and the first attempts to rally loyalist sentiment. By early 1793, Britain was at war.

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with revolutionary France. Alongside reports of the celebrations at the Mansion House for Cornwallis, the *Morning Chronicle* for 7 April 1794 carried news of British troops under the Duke of York in retreat. In the face of such events, public celebration of Tipú’s defeat might be seen as an attempt to reinforce any potential doubts concerning the nation’s martial capabilities: representing a defiant show in the face of enemies both foreign and domestic. Indeed, Cornwallis’s acclamation should be seen as an integral part of the loyalist counter offensive of the 1790s, and one of numerous shows of strength in that decade. It is to these that I want to turn in part in the next chapter.

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91 *Morning Chronicle*, 7 April 1794.
For the anonymous author of a short but splenetic tract entitled *Dangers that Threaten Europe*, war with revolutionary France posed a threat that was, at once, external and internal:

All Europe is involved in circumstances hitherto without precedent. It has to combat enemies really formidable by their number, their courage, and resources of all kinds; but still more dangerous by their horrid and dark conspiracies; by their criminal indifference about the means of obtaining success; by their principles of anarchy and disorganisation, so well contrived to delude the multitude; by the correspondence they have contrived to keep in all countries, in all classes, even with some ministers.\(^1\)

Having established the unprecedented nature of this conflict, and the treacherous, conspiratorial network of the Jacobin menace, the writer breaks off: 'Respect arrests my pen, and prevents my pointing out, to the astonishment of future ages, characters still more conspicuous'.\(^2\) Such intense hyperbole was a characteristic trait of the wealth of loyalist pamphlets issued in Britain in the early to mid 1790s, which took as their subject war with the French *patrie*. For these writers, it was to be as much a conflict fought at

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\(^1\) *Dangers which Threaten Europe* (London, n.d.), pp.1-2. This pamphlet was also issued in slightly different form by Debrett as *Europe in Danger*.

\(^2\) Ibid.
home as on the battlefields of Europe, and as much a war of ideas as a war of bloody combat.³

Despite the hysterical warnings of pamphlets like *Dangers that Threaten Europe*, the violence that engulfed much of the Continent was never experienced directly on the British mainland. War with revolutionary France was, instead, primarily encountered and translated through a variety of commodities - newspapers, journals, pamphlets, poetry and prints – in which it assumed an explicitly ideological form. This was a paper battlefield in which those forces supportive of the war met, and were in turn challenged by, those hostile to the conflict. In this struggle between pro- and anti-war ideologues for public opinion, the control of ideas, signs and symbols was of critical importance. It is with the contest over the symbolic image of the agents of the war - the British military – that this chapter is concerned. In particular, what interests me are both the bellicose and pacifist attempts to appropriate the ambivalent cultural image of the soldier, noted in earlier chapters, during the revolutionary turmoil of the 1790s. This was a debate played out in the arena of the political and satirical print, as much as in the extensive textual commentary on the war. Indeed, the far from straightforward relationship between the visual and verbal representation of the issues is something I shall address here.

Existing discussions of the British visual, and to a large extent the textual, response to the turbulent events of the final decade of the eighteenth century have

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³ For a thorough, recent analysis of the war against revolutionary France as ‘a war of ideas’, see Emma Vincent Macleod, *A War of Ideas: British Attitudes to the Wars Against Revolutionary France, 1792-1802* (Aldershot, 1998).
focused, in the main, upon reactions to the Revolution itself. In what follows, however, I shall be concerned more particularly with the ways in which war with revolutionary France was represented. For whilst attitudes towards the Revolution inevitably informed assessments of the war, the stresses and strains imposed upon British society by conflict with republican France produced a debate which was in many ways distinct. Before I go on to explore how this often conflicting, contradictory discourse was worked through, shaped and formed on a visual level, it is necessary to consider the terms of the debate that this imagery engaged in as it was established in the pamphlet literature of the period.

'a war of a peculiar nature':

Francis Plowden's *A Friendly and Constitutional Address to the People of Great Britain* of 1794 offered an assessment of the various arguments put forward in condemnation and justification of the war with revolutionary France. If for some, Plowden contended, the conflict was 'defensive', for others it was a war of 'aggression'. However, it had also been suggested that British intervention in Europe was merited on grounds of 'religion'.

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Plowden’s analysis of the theories put forward to condemn, legitimate or explain the conflict helpfully summarises the range of frequently conflicting, sometimes contradictory, responses war against revolutionary France engendered. Double standards, inconsistencies and confusions amongst both pro- and anti-war commentators and agitators marked responses to the war, and opinions within either side were far from homogenous. ‘We all unfortunately too well know that at this moment we are engaged in a very bloody and desperate war with France’ wrote Plowden, ‘and yet neither in nor out of parliament can be found ten men who agree in the reasons, motives and objects of the war’.

These arguments, divisions and uncertainties arose in the main from the near unprecedented ideological nature of the conflict with revolutionary France. It was widely accepted that this was a war where policy could not be separated from principles. Thus debate about the prosecution of the war constantly turned – as Plowden’s summary indicates – on the legitimacy or otherwise of British involvement, its proper conduct and its precise nature. Was this a defensive war, as conservative opinion usually maintained, intended to protect Britain from the scourge of French atheism and republican chaos? Or was it an illiberal war, as anti-war protestors frequently asserted, fought with the intention of enforcing one nation’s views on another? It is important to realise, of course, that the war was also one of far more pragmatic, self-interested motivation, fought, not

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5 [Francis Plowden], *A Friendly and Constitutional Address to the People of Great Britain* (London, 1794), pp.3-5.
6 Ibid., p.3.
least, with regard to the preservation or potential expansion of imperial interests. Nevertheless, it was the conflict’s profoundly ideological character that provoked the most intense debate.

Questions concerning the causes, purposes, nature, and conduct of the conflict, further complicated the already acrimonious and conflicted earlier debate on the Revolution itself. That debate had been effectively launched by Richard Price’s sermon to a meeting of the London Revolution Society on the 4 November 1789, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*. It was Edmund Burke’s alarmed response to Price’s enthusiastic welcome of events in France, the following year’s hugely successful *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, that did most to establish the political and religious ideological ground for subsequent debate on the war. Indeed, Burke had already tacitly advocated the armed suppression of the Revolution as early as the autumn of 1790. In the *Reflections*, he had suggested that the British government ‘may find it expedient to make war’. Over the next three years Burke’s eloquent condemnation of the Revolution, as an attack on the basic foundations of the existing social order, conventional morality and belief, elicited numerous replies, most notably and provocatively Thomas Paine’s *The Rights of Man*. Before war was eventually declared in February 1793 the ideological divide that was to structure responses to that conflict had already crystallised.

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9 On the initial responses to Burke’s work, see Gregory Claeys, ‘The *Reflections* refracted: the critical reception of Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* during the early 1790s’, in John Whale (ed.),
Burke’s early conviction that war was an inevitable consequence of the Revolution was pursued throughout his correspondence, publications and speeches of the early 1790s. In this period, Burke largely determined the conservative view of what the nature of this inescapable conflict would be. It was clear to Burke, for instance, that this was not a ‘common political war’ fought over a ‘territorial or commercial controversy’, but a conflict against a political system that merely manifested itself through acts of acquisitive aggression. Consequently, this was no ordinary war. In the first of his ‘Letters on a Regicide Peace’, Burke argued:

We are in a war of a peculiar nature. It is not with an ordinary community, which is hostile or friendly as passion or as interest may veer about: not with a state which makes war through wantonness, and abandons it through lassitude. We are at war with a system, which, by its essence, is inimical to all other governments, and which makes peace or war, as peace and war may best contribute to their subversion. It is with an armed doctrine that we are at war.

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10 For an analysis of Burke’s writings of this period, which charts his persistent agitation for a military solution to the ‘problem’ of the Revolution, see Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, esp. pp.9-29.


War with an ‘armed doctrine’ was one conducted without sense of honour or integrity. Rather, this was to be a total war, since the enemy themselves had decreed it a ‘war of extermination’.

Burke’s arguments were instrumental in establishing the tone for much of the British debate on the conflict. His influence was plain, for instance, upon the hordes of loyalist pamphleteers whose work appeared in the wake of the declaration of war with revolutionary France. If their language was perhaps more pragmatic and populist than Burke’s, the violence of their rhetoric was no less potent than their model.13 Dangers which Threaten Europe, the pamphlet cited at the beginning of this chapter, was one such text that made extensive use of Burkean ideas, language and imagery. Like Burke, its writer saw the conflict as bearing ‘no resemblance to ordinary wars’, and so was of near apocalyptic consequence:

It is a war of extermination, as the regicides themselves have, with great reason, named it. The monster of anarchy must perish, or Europe must expect to see the downfall of every throne, the dissolution of all the bands of subordination and society, the abolition and contempt of all religion, the subversion of all principle, the violent attack of all property, and the massacre of half its population!!14

for since crime has prevailed in France, from the time that the grand machine, shaken to its foundations, has menaced all with speedy destruction, we have seen the very scum and outcasts of society, collected from all parts, around this centre of corruption; as hungry hyenas, attracted by the exhalations of dead bodies, unite to share the horrid repast.14


14 Dangers which Threaten Europe, pp.2-3.
Sensational accounts such as this, listing the depredations, savagery and violence the enemy were capable of, both inside and outside France, were a common feature of pro-war commentary. Indeed, the extreme, violent and hyperbolic imagery of this pamphlet was by no means unique to this writer. Another fervent loyalist pamphleteer argued that 'it is better to die fighting, than to be devoured alive'.15 Such arguments reinforced a view of total warfare, where nothing less than absolute commitment to the cause would be necessary to overcome such a fanatical enemy.

Pamphleteers stark polarisation of the issues at stake was readily translated into visual form. Prints like The Contrast/Which is Best - first published in December 1792 during the 'cold war' but a design reused subsequently in many loyalist publications - graphically summarised conservative contentions (fig.94).16 Works such as this offered a simple Manichean vision of the conflict, with atheism and republican chaos replacing Catholicism and tyrannical absolutism as the French converse of British Protestantism and mixed government. In this image, these opposing values are embodied respectively in the graceful figure of Britannia, who sits in a symbolically rich, verdant landscape gazing out to sea, and a Medusa-headed fury (straight from the pages of Burke's Reflections), who strides through an anarchic townscape littered with corpses. It was John Reeves's Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property Against Republicans and

16 BM 8149 & 8284. On the print's iconography and its complex publication history, see George, English Political Caricature, II, 1; Bindman, Shadow of the Guillotine, p.34, cat.nos.71-72, pp.118-21; Donald, Age of Caricature, pp.152-53.
Levellers that sponsored the publication of this print, as they did many other reactionary, conservative enterprises during the war years.17 Through the distribution of such propaganda, Reeves's Association appeared to lend the loyalist cause a cohesive identity it lacked in actuality. Historians have recently questioned the extent to which loyalism represented a united, unified front, in a way which has profound repercussions for an analysis of support for the war.18

It is clear, for instance, that pro-war attitudes were not necessarily informed by an ideological hostility to French revolutionary principles. Governmental responses to armed conflict with France, and those of individuals within the establishment more broadly, were as likely as not influenced by responsibilities, ambitions, causes or more practical stakes in the outcome of events. War was initially justified by ministers in terms of the defence of British interests against unprovoked attack. Nevertheless, Pitt's administration did also find it expedient to represent the war, at least until late 1795 when it first solicited a peace, as essentially counter revolutionary. This was not least because this was a war that was internal as well as external. In theory, at least, since popular radical societies subscribed to the principles of the enemy, the government was fighting a war on two fronts, fighting enemies within as well as enemies without.

17 On Reeves's Association and its sponsorship of satirical and political prints in particular, see the excellent discussion in Donald, Age of Caricature, pp.142-83.

If support for the war was far from uniform, opposition to the conflict was equally
diverse and fractured. Party politics, pacifism or sympathy for French revolutionary
principles variously informed opposition to the conflict. Whilst the anti-war protests of
the Foxite Whigs and their supporters were largely motivated by their opposition to Pitt’s
government, those of, say, the Friends of Peace were essentially moral or religious, and
the arguments of radicals and reformers influenced by their solidarity with republican
politics. It was this latter group, then, that saw the war most clearly in the ideological
terms laid out by Burke. However, again, it is difficult to define, limit or
compartmentalise proponents of institutional amendment, as they – like the loyalist
associations - did not comprise a ‘discrete entity’.19 Equally, it is far from easy to
determine reformers' attitudes towards the war with revolutionary France with any
certainty. Their interest in campaigning against the conflict was informed perhaps less by
solidarity with the French cause, than with the opportunities it offered for agitation for
reform at home. These were also arguments determined by a distinct shift in the nature of
a radical, oppositionist stance on war.

In an early anti-war tract, the radical publisher Daniel Isaac Eaton argued,
‘Britons! be assured, that in fighting against France, ye are fighting against yourselves,
that if the liberties of France are lost, your own, such as they are, will not long survive.’20
Eaton’s argument recognised the profoundly different nature of this conflict from earlier
wars, in that the enemy now proclaimed many of the same goals as the radical opposition.

20 [Daniel Isaac Eaton], Extermination, or an Appeal to the People of England on the Present War, with
Whilst radical, oppositionist politics for much of the eighteenth century had been characterised by a bellicose nationalism, following its realignment in the wake of the American War it increasingly couched its critique of the establishment in anti-war sentiment. Radicals work for political reform, as Eaton’s words indicate, stressed the effects of war upon the lower orders. It addressed the ways in which the poor bore the brunt of war’s hardships. Poverty, unemployment, and food shortages caused by the war, provided ready material for the radicals’ arguments. It was, of course, also the poor that provided the man power required to fight.

In these arguments, foreign affairs were actually of little interest. Rather, as I have already suggested, the real concern was with reform at home. Consequently, popular protests against the war were made in various forms and against various intermediary targets. Most commonly, these were the government and the king. However, soldiers, as the agents of war, were also the butt of criticism. In an ironically-titled pamphlet, The Blessings of War, the anonymous author maintained that ‘Soldiers have no privileges, no rights, no feelings of humanity to guide them to action, no sentiment of regard for their fellow-men! They are a distinct order, kept apart, that all sensibility, all sympathy for the sufferings of others with them may be extinct’. However, as already explored in the context of the image of the soldier during the earlier American War, contrary arguments which evoked pity for the lot of the common soldier might exist alongside such views, and might also use a similar form of emotive address.


In a short tract of 1793, entitled *Letters on the Impolicy of a Standing Army*, the pseudonymous ‘Albanicus’ summed up the lot of the soldier’s life:

For what is more perfect slavery, than for a man to be, without relief, obliged to obey the command of another, at the hazard of his life if he obeys, and under the penalty of certain death if he disobeys, while the smallest misbehaviour may bring upon him the most painful and disgraceful punishment.²³

This equation of life in the ranks with ‘perfect slavery’ was commonly made, and echoed similar arguments made during the American War.²⁴ Drawing such parallels with the oppressed status of the slave pointed out the ironies of military service, in which the common soldier was denied the very liberty for which he fought and which he was held to represent. It is also notable that anti-war rhetoric of this nature, in common with much of the discourse of anti-slavery, couched its appeals in the language of sensibility. Anti-war and anti-slavery rhetoric both demonstrate the growing politicization of such language during the 1790s.²⁵ Sensibility’s implication in the libertarian ideas of the American and French Revolutions had rendered it politically volatile. Its accent upon


²⁴ See chapter one, above.

individual energies, together with the primacy it attached to fellow feeling, endowed sensibility with a radical, democratising propensity that Burke, in his _Reflections_, was all too alert to.\(^{26}\) In this section, I want to examine a critical aspect of this politicization as it informed the image of the nation's armed forces. For sensibility, as we shall see, provided the means, mode and imagery through which, _pace_ Oliver Goldsmith, 'the distresses of the common soldier' might be articulated. This form of rhetorical argument was found in discursive forms as apparently disparate as the pamphlet literature of Albanicus's _Letter_, satirical prints produced for the London market, or in the still more ephemeral form of the broadsheet.

Sympathetic appeals for an understanding of the soldier's predicament took various forms, but included the articulation of dissent from within the ranks of the army itself. Whilst disaffection within the land forces never had the kind of national consequence of the naval mutinies at Sheerness and the Nore of April to June 1797, nevertheless soldiers still made their discontent known publicly.\(^{27}\) During the mid-1790s, in towns throughout the country, soldiers were being given handbills urging them to resist their superior officers and identify with the cause of the people. Seditious material might indeed stem from the military itself, as a broadsheet addressed from the 105\(^{th}\) and 113\(^{th}\) Regiments to 'the Public, and their Brothers in Arms' illustrates (fig.95). Distributed by men of Irish regiments, this particular incitement to desertion is couched in relatively sophisticated form. Its use of short, broken sentences interrupted by dashes, question and

\(^{26}\) For a discussion of Burke and sensibility, see Esther Schor, _Bearing the Dead: The British Culture of Mourning from the Enlightenment to Victoria_ (Princeton, N.J., 1994), esp. pp.76-88.

exclamation marks, together with its use of highly emotive imagery, suggests an author versed in the literature of sensibility. This use of the language of sentiment helps establish the agitators as sensible, fellow citizens, capable of reasoned thought and of fellow feeling, and not just the brute soldiers of popular stereotype. Pointedly, the address rhetorically asks of the reader ‘do you not sympathise with us?’ It invites the reader to identify with the soldiers’ situation, as men whose affections lay naturally with them, the people, and not the state. The text goes on to stress how the regiments have been ill used by their commanders, and like Albanicus likened their treatment to that of slaves. These calls, evoking a benevolent, humanitarian response to the soldiers suffering, are characteristic of what Chris Jones has termed the ‘Radical Sensibility’ of the 1790s, but, more specifically, were also a recurrent trope of critiques of the nation’s war effort. Radical discourse, as Albanicus’s Letter also indicates, made frequent reference to the soldier’s oppressed status in its arguments against the war. It is noticeable in this context that the Cork regiments bulletin suggests that they have been ‘Crimped and Sold by unfaithful Officers’. This loss of liberty, through the corrupt practices of their supposed superiors, had a potent political force during the mid-1790s as the need for recruits began to increase.

Overwhelmed by the numbers of the French levée en masse, British troops first meeting with the enemy - in Flanders in mid 1793 - was proving disastrous. In a winter retreat into northern Holland, the British forces suffered heavy losses from cold, sickness and starvation. As a consequence, recruiting parties scoured the country for replacements and made extensive use of crimping houses to make the quotas. Unsurprisingly, such
measures met great hostility. In August 1794, rioters in London attacked houses used by the army for crimping.\textsuperscript{29} Responding to these so-called ‘Crimp Riots’, the author of *Reflections on the Pernicious Custom of Recruiting by Crimps* attacked the seductive, but ultimately tawdry, appeals of military life:

> For what mortal had never before seen a soldier could look without laughing upon a man accoutred with so much paltry gaudiness and affected finery? Yet these fine allurements, and the noise made upon a calf’s skin, have drawn in, and been the destruction of more men in reality, than all the real or fancied crimes in the world. Today the swine-herd puts on his redcoat, and believes every body is earnest that calls him a gentleman . . . As to the real dignity of the employment, we know that when recruits are wanted, men convicted of burglary, and other capital offences, are gladly enlisted and received for soldiers; which shews that to be made a soldier, is deem’d a preferment next to hanging.\textsuperscript{30}

The ironic, self-conscious reference to Burke’s characterisation of the Parisian mob as a ‘swinish multitude’ here, clearly aligns this publication with other radical publications of the mid- to late-1790s that appropriated the term.\textsuperscript{31} However, its central argument, that the ‘fine allurements’ of military service would only lead to destruction, was one also found in the putatively more refined mode of address of the satirical print.


\textsuperscript{30} *Reflections on the Pernicious Custom of Recruiting by Crimps; and on Various Other Modes Now Practiced in the British Army* (London, n.d.), p.5.

It is the destructive effects of military service on domestic life that is the principal theme of James Gillray's *John Bull's Progress*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 3 June 1793 (fig.96).\(^3\) In its title, imagery and structure, Gillray unmistakably identifies his print with the modern moral progresses produced by his satirical forebear William Hogarth in the 1730s and '40s. Gillray's tragic narrative of human folly, broken into separate but related scenes, dense with accumulated symbolic details, clearly refers to Hogarth's celebrated series paintings and engravings. However, as well as evoking Hogarth, Gillray also makes knowing references to other, more polite forms of pictorial practice. In the first compartment of this four-part narrative, Bull is pictured sleeping contentedly before a roaring fire, with his faithful hound at his feet, his children happily playing, and his wife working industriously away. It is a scene of ideal, rustic domesticity, which subtly parodies any number of sentimental genre paintings of the period. This knowing appropriation of more highly regarded forms of visual imagery is continued in the second scene, 'John Bull going to the Wars'. Here, Gillray pointedly gestures to the conventions of contemporary history painting. This is most obvious in the print's compositional division, between the stark geometry of the rigid, angular line of receding soldiers on the right and the flowing contours of grief-stricken women and children on the left, whose rhetorical poses are familiar academic types. This parodic mimicry of 'high' art forms works to question the values and 'heroic', glorious actions usually celebrated and commemorated in supposedly more respectable visual forms. For, as the third and fourth instalments of Gillray's progress make clear, the effects of war are poverty and hunger for the family and an emaciated and damaged body for the soldier. Reduced to a state of

\(^3\) BM 8328.
penury, the family first pawns its property then, huddled in the now spartan cot, are alarmed by the ‘glorious return’ of a crippled, gaunt Bull. If Gillray’s progress began by mimicking the conventions of contemporary genre painting, it also ends with an oblique reference to the sentimental expectations of such works, as they are found, say, in Francis Wheatley’s *The Soldier’s Return* (fig. 28).33

Gillray’s sardonic reflection upon the devastating domestic effects of war were echoed thematically and compositionally within the month, in Isaac Cruikshank’s *He Would be a Soldier, or the History of John Bulls warlike Expedition*, published by Samuel Fores on the 1 July 1793 (fig. 97).34 In its characters, situations and formal layout, Cruikshank’s graphic satire seems to consciously respond to and elaborate upon the tragic narrative established by his rival’s earlier print. By and large, Cruikshank’s print works to fill out Bull’s progress, focusing on his experiences of enlistment, training and service, rather than the struggles of the family. However, Cruikshank’s sequence also ends with the soldier a blinded amputee, here reduced to begging alms to keep his wife and children. They both conclude by bringing together the mutilated body of the returning soldier with his equally pitiable family.

In both Gillray’s and Cruikshank’s sad histories, Bull is a man literally broken by suffering. It might be suggested that the returned, injured soldier, then a common sight on London’s streets, serves to question the jingoistic, bellicose rhetoric of the loyalist, pro-war lobby. However, given the extreme difficulties of making such a suggestion in this period, it necessarily does this in circumscribed ways. Rather than protest the war’s

33 See the discussion of this work in chapter one above.
34 BM 8333.
objectives, anti-war sentiment tapped the widespread hostility to another bloody war by stressing its individual consequences. In this way, the war’s protesters were able to rhetorically align the experiences of the individual family with those of the nation as a whole. For example, in making the focus of their progresses the symbolic embodiment of the nation, Bull, Gillray’s and Cruikshank’s prints collapse distinctions between the public and private. They also do this at a moment when the stability of these boundaries was a matter of pressing concern. It was an anxiety central to Burke’s Reflections, for instance, in which the writer asserted ‘We begin our public affections in our families’. However, as I have already pointed out, he was aware that an excess of benevolence and sympathy led to politically dangerous, indiscriminate feeling.

To return to the Cork regiments address, it is worth noting that their appeal ends: ‘Yes, we will defend our Country, our Homes, our Wives and Children, to this we are pledged, and from this we shall never Flinch’. This earnest promise serves to guarantee the soldiers loyalty to their country. Their provocative call for liberty is thus distanced from too close an identification with the malevolent, destructive forces of Jacobinism, and instead aligned with traditional, patriotic motivations. These same incentives were - as the quotation above from Burke’s Reflections makes clear - also central to loyalist propaganda. Indeed, both sides manoeuvred sentimental rhetoric to their own partisan ends, and the loyalist use of such discourse is something I will return to later in this discussion. However, it is worth noting here that in the struggle for symbols of the 1790s, of which this was very much a part, both pro- and anti-war arguments constantly turn around and converge on the same thinking, reasoning and imagery. This inevitably results

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35 Burke, Reflections, p.120.
in a number of ambiguities. It becomes difficult to fully reconcile a work like Joseph Wright of Derby's *Dead Soldier*, for instance (fig.29). This is a work of the late 1780s, and discussed already in relation to the aftermath of the American War, but it was republished several times in engraved form throughout the following decade. Indeed, Wright’s depiction of grief over the fallen gained an additional resonance in the 1790s with the war widow becoming a recurrent subject of contemporary verse.

Wright’s image is incongruous in several ways. It situates a family group, evidently modelled on a Madonna and Child, in an Italianate landscape, the pastoral peace of which has been broken by the cannon in the foreground and cannon fire in the background. What is of note in the context of the present discussion, is the extent to which this image of a grieving widow huddled over the body of her dead soldier husband lends itself to a variety of not necessarily compatible readings. For, as Mary Favret has noted of the popular literary representation of the theme, the war widow is ‘an image of ideological instability in wartime’. Whilst it might be held up as a plea for the maintenance of domestic security – as an image of that which the soldier’s bravery protects – it simultaneously undermines that fiction by focusing on the dissolution of

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36 See discussion in chapter one above. On the publishing history of works after Wright’s original, see Judy Egerton (ed.), *Wright of Derby*, exh. cat., Tate Gallery, London, 1986, pp.254-55.
familial life. During the early to mid 1790s, the terms of Wright’s image – its sympathetic appeal and concern with the private effects of public action – were, as we have seen, keenly debated, and very much open to appropriation.

These reflections upon the wounded, damaged bodies of soldiers returning from the Continent, and of the devastating domestic effects of war, were being circulated at a point when Britain’s war with France was going badly. Indeed, both Gillray’s and Cruikshank’s Hogarthian progresses were published as British troops engaged the French in Flanders and are very much responses to that campaign. As we shall see, these works were not the only ones in which these two artists responded to events on the Continent, returning soldiers and each other. And I now want to examine the response to the campaign in the Low Countries in more detail, and – in particular – its twin focus upon the lot of the common soldier and the failings of the British commander, George III’s son, Frederick, Duke of York.

‘the reeking plains of Flanders’: the campaigns in the Low Countries

Although the campaign against the French in the Low Countries appeared relatively successful in its early stages, in actuality the hastily-arranged coalition of European powers faced insurmountable problems from the outset. British forces found themselves

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39 For a concise account of the war, on which I draw here, see Ian R. Christie, *Wars and Revolutions: Britain 1760-1815* (London, 1982), pp.215-34.
co-operating with allies, including Austria, Prussia and Spain, who were all operating to a different agenda. In May 1793, an Anglo-Austrian force defeated the French at the Camp de Famars. On the 28 July, following a successful siege, Valenciennes surrendered. However, success was short-lived. Following a disastrous attempt to besiege the heavily-fortified town of Dunkirk – a long term symbol of Anglo-French hostility – and then defeat at Hondschoote on the 6 September, British forces were forced to retreat. Following a harsh, bleak winter, 1794 saw further losses to the French. York’s forces fell back through the Austrian Netherlands, and then through the United Provinces. Whilst it was a fighting withdrawal, British troops were always outnumbered and were decimated by a further hard winter, lack of adequate provisions and disease. In April 1795 the British were evacuated from Bremen, and were not to return to the continent until 1799. As this brief survey of the campaigns demonstrates, the war in the Low Countries was an on-going saga of defeat and retreat, recall and censure. In fact, criticism of events in Europe had begun almost immediately. Unhappy with the progress of the war in Flanders, soldiers returning home on leave spread rumours of discontent amongst British forces on the Continent. Much of the dissatisfaction was directed at the leadership of the Duke of York. In particular, the Duke was accused of dereliction of duty and his personal conduct and integrity brought into question. ‘News’ from the Duke’s camp was of gaming, drinking and whoring.Whilst textual accounts of the Duke’s supposed behaviour in Flanders did not actually make it into print for at least eighteen months, makers of satirical prints were able to respond much more readily to the rumours.40

40 On the relationship between satirical prints and rumour in this period, see chapter four above.
Rumours of the Duke's imagined luxurious excesses were hastily exploited by London's print trade, becoming the source for the Bacchanalian festivities of Gillray's graphic satire *Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders*, for example (fig.98). Published as a large, hand-coloured etching by Humphrey on the 20 May 1793, Gillray's print depicts a staff dinner fuelled by alcohol. A cast of drunken, leering grotesques, entertained by a military band, fills the cramped space of the open tent in which the revels take place. At the head of the table sits the Duke, raising a glass in toast and balancing a plump Flemish woman on his knee who lasciviously plays with his sword. Alongside the Duke sits the impassive, bloated Stadtholder, Prince of Orange. Opposite him, swigging wine from a bottle, is a savage, violent-looking Austrian officer. Amongst the extreme physiognomic and somatic distortions of the revellers, the Duke goes noticeably uncaricatured. His finely executed facial features, familiar from any number of contemporary portrait prints, suggests something of the evident disparity between the 'official' image and the rumoured actuality. Seen amidst this scene of sensual indulgence the regal face becomes just that, a 'face'; a mask, disguising the real bodily appetites beneath its surface. This is reinforced by the awkward way in which the delicately-observed head sits on the slumped, stout body. Together with the fleshy, gross corporeality of many of the other feasting figures, this contrasts markedly with the scrawny, emaciated appearance of the foot-guards serving them. Entering from the right, staggering under the weight of the drink they bring, these common soldiers are obviously malnourished. Their gaunt physicality also identifies them ironically with the supposed enemy, the French, who were conventionally depicted in similar terms. In this, Gillray was referring back to a

41 BM 8327.
tradition of identification with the lot of the ordinary soldier, exemplified pictorially by Humphrey’s *Six-Pence a Day* (fig.26). It is a reference that deepens the ironies of the print, questioning who the enemy of the ordinary soldier actually is. As the hardships and frustrations of the war in the Low Countries began to become ever more pressing, such questions became central to the way in which the conflict was perceived. As winter set in and the allies became entrenched in the mire of the Flemish fens, the leadership of the Duke once more came under examination.

Gillray’s comic assault on the campaign in Flanders was echoed a few months later by Cruikshank, in the latter’s *The Wet Party or The Bogs of Flanders*, published by Fores on 7 December 1793 (fig.99). In Cruikshank’s print, a ruddy-cheeked Duke of York, astride a half-submerged gun carriage, raising a punchbowl aloft, drunkenly addresses his fellow officers. In this absurd, distorted take on the equestrian portrait, the composition ironically gestures to an established and accepted pictorial code for the representation of military leadership. In this reference the image underlines the Duke’s patent inability to measure up to such a role. Rather, he is concerned only with his own pleasure, and remains ignorant of the hardships that surround him and his men. In a gross parody of a rousing pre-battle speech, the lines of ‘a new song’ inscribed beneath the design reinforce this drunken indifference to the travails of the common soldier:

Why soldiers Why;
Should we be Melancholy, boy;
Why Soldiers, why?

42 BM 8351. Cruikshank had already produced one print on the theme of the Duke’s conduct in Flanders, see BM 8327.;
Whose business 'tis to die

What sighing fie!

Damn fear, drink on, be jolly, boys!

'Tis he, you or I .

Cold hot wet & dry;

We're allways (sic.) bound to follow, boys, and (sic) scorn to fly!

Written in a sliding, sloping, drunken scrawl, this exhortation, seemingly to drink to the soldier's own death, underlined the disparity that existed between the ranks and the relative conditions they endured.

Whilst comparatively few men were killed in action, large numbers perished on account of unsanitary conditions and the brutal winter conditions. In a slim pamphlet entitled *The Present State of the British Army in Flanders*, published in early 1794, the author asserted that during the British retreat 'Many of the poor fellows who were not dangerously hurt, perished on the road for want of attendance'. This leaflet took the form of a series of journal entries reputedly written by a now dead 'British Officer'. Whilst this provenance is obviously questionable, its degree of detail does suggest some first-hand knowledge of frontline conditions and its arguments were certainly well known as Cruikshank's earlier satire illustrates. The circulation of such news also brought into question the authenticity of some of the information being published in the *London Gazette*. In the same pamphlet, the anonymous author complained of the then Secretary of State that 'the people of England would derive but little information from what has

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43 *The Present State of the British Army in Flanders; With an Authentic Account of their Retreat from Before Dunkirk, By a British Officer in That Army* (London, 1794), p.4.
been published with the signature of Sir JAMES MURRAY'.

This diatribe against government censorship went on to suggest that:

The truth, which it cannot be improper for you to know, nor, as far as I can see, for me to declare (whatever they may think at the Secretary of State’s office) is, that the French are too strong for us in this quarter, and that their great superiority of numbers forced us to give way.

This pamphlet should be seen as part of the recriminations that followed the Duke’s return to London in the early 1794, and which were also exploited by satirical print makers.

Gillray’s Pantagruel’s victorious return to the Court of Gargantua after extirpating the Soup-Meagre’s of Boaitte Land, published by Humphrey’s on 10 February 1794, satirized the Duke’s return from Flanders earlier that same week (fig.100). In Gillray’s satire, a drunkenly wavering Duke presents his father – an excited, frog-eyed George III in hunting dress - with the keys of Paris. Boasting of his achievements, the Duke also proffers a host of other worthless spoils: broken swords and cannon, spent ammunition, decapitated heads, clogs, frogs, and breeches. Behind the throne, an avaricious Charlotte gleefully holds out her apron to collect coins from a sack representing the Civil List scooped for her by the Devil. Seated on the dais at the King’s feet, Pitt draws up ‘new Taxes not to be felt by the Swinish Multitude’, including ‘Bricks – Rum – Brandy – Water – Air’. Gillray’s principal targets here are the wastefulness of

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44 Ibid., p.9.
45 Ibid.
46 BM 8425.
the war, royal nepotism and the injustices of preferment. The title also seems to return the viewer back to the Rabelaisian banqueting imagery of the satirist's earlier *Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders*.

At the extreme left of Gillray's print, the Duke's secretary 'Suckfizzle' rolls out a scroll headed 'Authentic Journal' filled with details of the material and human cost of the war. According to the secretary, the manuscript lists the 'glorious Actions' of the campaign and promises it 'will soon come to a conclusion'. This mock campaign journal is undoubtedly a reference to the histories of the campaign that Gillray knew would eventually follow in its wake. Inevitably, the conflict in the Low Countries did lead to the publication of several campaign narratives, most notably Philip Astley's *A Description and Historical Account, of the Places, Now the Theatre of War in the Low Countries of 1794*. Unsurprisingly, such histories found it difficult to reconcile the failures of the war with the kind of narrative resolution characteristic of the genre. Astley's text, for instance, described the events leading up to and including the siege of Valenciennes in detail, but its account of the latter stages of the campaign was marked by circumscription and abridgement. However, whilst it proved difficult for campaign histories to

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48 It is worth pointing out here, that Astley's work was published at the end of the campaign of 1794 and so at a time when at least some prospects of a revival in British fortunes might be seen. However, later works like Captain L.T. Jones, *An Historical Journal of the British Campaign on the Continent, In the Year 1794: with the Retreat Through Holland, In the Year 1795* (Birmingham, 1797), could not maintain any such hope.
satisfactorily resolve themselves, as Gillray had already demonstrated such ‘openness’
lent itself readily to satirical appropriation and play.

*An Accurate and Impartial Narrative of the War*, purportedly written by ‘an
Officer of the Guards’, was a subtle parody of a campaign history. An extended,
elaborate combination of literary and graphic satire, the publication mimicked the
established conventions of the standard war narrative. Along with a first-person account,
it incorporated diversions into topographical description and anecdotal incident, included
‘official’ campaign documents from the field, and was interleaved with plates illustrating
or explaining the text. Its comic narrative of the conflict in Flanders fell into two,
contrasting, but complimentary, halves: the first focusing upon the lot of the common
soldier and the second the experiences of the officer class. It opened with the embarkation
of troops at Greenwich, which it described in markedly pictorial patriotic terms:

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Had you witnes’d the scene, you’d have thought, I am sure,
Of HOGARTH’s, this march was, a caricature [sic].
Prim’d with WHITBREAD’s entire, and their bosom-friend gin,
A long time elaps’d ere they form’d to fall in.
As JOHN BULL to be idle soon finds a pretence,
Not GORDON himself had a crowd so immense.50
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49 *An Accurate and Impartial Narrative of the War, by an Officer of the Guards, . . . Comprising the
Campaigns of 1793, 1794, and the Retreat Through Holland to Westphalia, in 1795. Introducing also the
Original Poetic Epistles from Head-Quarters, 2 vols., 3rd ed. rev. (London, 1796). This was a greatly
expanded version of an earlier pamphlet entitled A Sketch of the Campaign of 1793. A Poem in Two Parts
(London, 1795).*

50 Ibid., p.1.
In these opening lines, through the summoning of a triumvirate of patriotic figures, real and imaginary – Hogarth, Gordon and Bull – the verse establishes the ways in which the ordinary soldier is seen throughout the narrative. He is a figure to be aligned with other embodiments of a national libertarian ideal.

Such references were not peculiar to this text. A coloured aquatint of c.1793 by Maria Catherina Prestel, after Robert Ker Porter, entitled *March to Greenwich*, is another contemporary appropriation of Hogarthian imagery yoked to the beginnings of the war in Flanders (fig. 101). Several prominent features and vignettes of Hogarth’s model image of the country’s soldiery *The March to Finchley* are here transposed to an early 1790s context: the drunken, prone soldier, the Grenadier torn between the wizened ballad seller and young mother, for example. Porter’s homage to Hogarth identifies the troops of 1793, their character and cause, with the similarly patriotic actions of the men of the ’45 in the same way as the *Impartial Narrative*. It is worth pointing out, however, that this image clearly dates from the period of the troops embarkation for the Continent. It is evidently an attempt to exploit the ‘patriotic’ fervour of that moment, along the lines of other hastily produced commemorative prints issued at the time (fig.102). In this, it is unsurprising that the Duke of York is at the apex of the compositional pyramid of Porter’s design. However, as the campaign went badly, and faith in the prince’s martial capabilities foundered, his ‘patriotic’ appeal was also questioned. It is noticeable, for instance, that the Duke is absent from the dockyard scene in the *Impartial Narrative*.

Balanced against the ‘patriotism’ of its account of the travails of the common soldier, the second part of the *Impartial Narrative* comprised ‘a Series of Letters from
One of His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief's Aid-de-Camps on the Continent, to Miss Lucy Lovegrove in England. In their depiction of louche, hedonistic behaviour amongst the officer class, the 'letters' echoed the imagery seen in Cruikshank and Gillray's graphic satires of the campaign:

What honour, dear Lucy, your hero will gain,
At the close of this brilliant and glorious campaign!
And be womanish fears to your bosom a stranger,
Our laurels are gather'd with scarce any danger.
At Head Quarters, we're living as warm and as snug,
To use an old phrase, as a bug in a rug.
We breakfast, ride out, and return home to dine,
And drown all our sorrows in bumpers of wine.51

For the Duke of York's aid-de-camp, the imagined author of the letters, battle is no more than a 'trifling digression'.52 Instead, he spends his war indulging in sybaritic pleasures, in a Head Quarters that provide a haven from the horrors of actual battle. The image of the officer in this verse epistle is reinforced by the visual elements of the *Impartial Narrative*. In place of the maps, plans and charts, usually interleaved into campaign histories, the *Impartial Narrative* was illustrated with prints lampooning the way in which the campaign was conducted. Drink and high jinks are the focus of *A Council of War Interrupted* and *Favourite Amusement at Head Quarters*, as they are the primary concern of the aid's letters (figs.103 and 104). The effects of these strategic, planning

51 Ibid., p.45.
52 Ibid., p.47.
sessions are then made apparent in two further prints: *How to Throw an Army into Confusion and Perils by Sea* (figs. 105 and 106). Here the army is thrown into confusion by the adverse weather, and struggles vainly against the rising waters.

Gillray's and Cruikshank's Duke, together with the image of his aid-de-camps constructed by the *Impartial Narrative*, belong to a long-established pictorial, literary and theatrical tradition of foppish, dissolute and incompetent officers. However, as we saw in discussion of the American War, this was a stereotype that in times of national crisis could assume a critical political valency. Unsurprisingly, it was also widely deployed in oppositionist critiques of the war with revolutionary France. Such contentions were inextricable from a further strain of critical discourse that focused on the idea of war as an élite sport. In 1795, for instance, the radical publisher Joseph Johnson published a lengthy poem by Joseph Fawcet entitled *The Art of War*, which focused upon the plainly outmoded, even grotesque, 'gentlemanly' conventions then governing warfare and its representation:

Civiliz'd war! – How strangely pair'd appear.

53 BM 8789-8791. The final image here does not appear in George's *Catalogue*.

54 It was employed by Mary Wollstonecraft, for instance, in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* of 1792. In a sustained analysis of the superficiality of distinctions between the sexes, Wollstonecraft had argued that officers were 'particularly attentive to their persons, fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures, and ridicule. Like the fair sex, the business of their lives is gallantry; they were taught to please, and they only live to please' (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* [1792], Miriam Brody (ed.) (Harmondsworth, 1985), p.106).

Those words in pensive Ruminations ear!
Civiliz'd war! - say, did the mouth of man,
Fanatic marrier of words, before,
Two so unmatch'd, so much each other's hate,
With force tyrannic, ere together yoke?
Civiliz'd war! - THANKS, gentle Europe! thanks,
For having dress'd the hideous monster out,
And hid his nature in so soft a name,
That weak, hysterical Humanity
Might hear with less of horror, he is loose.  

In its ludicrous dualism, Fawcet's refrain of 'Civiliz'd war' reinforces a sense of futility that runs throughout the poem. Fawcet's verse recognized that in the history of human conflict peace was merely an interlude, and that further conflict would be inevitable.

During each pause of intermittent Mars,
The courteous intercourse betwixt your chiefs,
Fair, interlusory civilities,
That deck and soften war's stern rigid state;
But serve its iron ugliness to point.  

Whilst Fawcet's verse concerns itself with the horrors of war in general, rather than specifically the war against France, it is difficult to escape the obvious contemporary resonance of its view of 'Civiliz'd war'. It offered a view of conflict that had a number of:

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57 Ibid., p.30.
echoes in contemporary commentary on the war with revolutionary France, generally, and – as we have seen already - the campaigns in Flanders, in particular.

In an anonymous pamphlet published by ‘Citizen’ Richard Lee entitled The Rights of Princes, it was claimed that the government had only entered into the war because the Duke of York had been ‘anxious to make a splendid parade of his great military talents’. That the nation’s élite looked upon war as an opportunity for self-display and self-aggrandizement, was a suggestion that – as we saw in chapter two – had long haunted the military establishment. That this was underwritten by the deaths of countless ordinary citizens was a point forcefully made by writers in the 1790s. Paine’s Rights of Man had maintained that ‘War is the Faro table of governments, and nations the dupes of the games’. This was an argument apparently reinforced by the events in the Low Countries. In The Blessings of War, a pamphlet probably published again by Lee towards the end of 1795, the author argued that ‘Despots delight in war, to them ’tis sport, / A Royal Game – their subjects lives the stake’. ‘Life’, according to this writer, was a ‘state of existence to be sacrificed by the lower orders of society whenever kings and ministers think proper – witness the reeking plains of Flanders’.

60 The Blessings of War, p.2. This was an extract from a verse also known as the Effects of War, and originally published in the Cambridge Intelligencer, 22 February 1794. Bennett suggests that the author, ‘Philanthropus’, was probably J. Hucks (see British War Poetry in the Age of Romanticism, pp.108-10).
61 Ibid., p.3.
These condemnations were, of course, part of a more general radical assault upon the ideological foundations of the existing establishment. In the following section I want to examine something of the ways in which loyalists sought to counter such attacks, actually through an elaboration of the same connections between war, monarchy and display examined critically by Paine and his followers. In particular the relationship of the monarchy to the armed forces will be examined, this time against the backdrop of a threatened French invasion brought about by the Duke’s defeat on the Continent. Whilst such setbacks might be seen to have lent support to the anti-war camp, paradoxically defeat in the Low Countries proved to have a galvanising effect on pro-war feeling and agitation.

‘Effigy and show’: the monarchy, the military and the threat of invasion.

Defeat in Flanders put Britain on an invasion footing. From 1796 onwards, Britain seemed increasingly vulnerable to the kind of attack that had been so graphically imagined by the loyalist pamphleteers from the beginnings of the war. Publications like Anthony Aufrère’s *A Warning to Britons Against French Perfidy and Cruelty* of 1798, which focused on ‘the treacherous and inhuman Conduct’ of the French army significantly against ‘peasants’ in its invasion of Germany, appeared to confirm the fearful, phantasmagorical visions of earlier writers in the Burkean mould.\(^{62}\) Aufrère


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warned that these forces were now targeting Britain, and predicted a horrific, hellish result unless the isles were adequately prepared. Such texts were instrumental in creating a climate of fear, alarm and apprehension that, as Favret has contended, 'perversely galvanized public support to extend the war effort' by introducing the fear that 'the war might become immediate, that it might come home'. Indeed, Britain's readiness to fight during this period, Mark Rawlinson has recently suggested, was largely produced by the actual prospect of conflict. For the majority, the horrors of war in the Low Countries had been, as Samuel Taylor Coleridge phrased it, experienced 'by the fire-side' at a 'safe distance'. With an invasion looming, however, that same fire-side was under threat.

Such hyperbole inevitably lent itself to satiric appropriation. It is the violent imaginings of such rhetoric which provided the theme, for instance, of Gillray's *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion, - or - Forcible Reasons for negotiating a Regicide Peace*, published by Humphrey on 20 October 1796 (fig.107). Gillray's typically ambivalent image is ostensibly a pretended warning, along the lines of, say, Aufrère's pamphlet, yet also demonstrates a perverse pleasure in the fantasized destruction of the English establishment and its leading figures. In this visionary invasion, French troops

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63 Favret, 'Coming home', p.541.

64 Mark Rawlinson, 'Invasion! Coleridge, the defence of Britain and the cultivation of the public's fear', in Shaw (ed.), *Romantic Wars*, pp.110-137.

are very much relegated to a secondary role. Instead, the attack is led by British Jacobins. Most prominent of these is Charles James Fox, who enthusiastically thrashes Pitt who is staked to a liberty pole. This attack on the English authorities also stretches to the royal family, with the divided corpse of Fox’s former ally the Prince of Wales shown swinging behind the Prime Minister. Such grim gallows humour is typical of political graphics of the mid-1790s. Here, Gillray finds it in the hysterical warnings of Burke and his followers, which had come to have a renewed resonance with the threat of invasion.

Gillray’s ironic title for this print, along with its citation of ‘The Authority of Edmund Burke’, is a reference to the recent moves towards a peaceful reconciliation with the French government, but also Burke’s vehement repudiation of such attempts. Loyalist propaganda, as we have already seen, made extensive use of the Burkean image of total war. However, it also utilized the statesman’s passionate defence of bastions of the establishment, most notably the monarchy. From this perspective the king represented everything of value in the state, and provided a point of focus for the wide cross-section of loyalist views around which they might all unite. For, as I have already suggested, the monarchy played a key role in animating loyalist feeling during the invasion crisis of the late 1790s, particularly through its close association with the country’s military. Indeed, these were affiliations that had already been made as early as 5 November 1793 in

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67 I am thinking here, for instance, of works like Thomas Spence’s radical tokens depicting swinging figures and decapitated heads. See Bindman, The Shadow of the Guillotine, cat. no.206, pp.198-201; Wood, Radical Satire, pp.80-82.
perhaps the earliest graphic response to an imagined invasion threat from across the
Channel, Gillray’s *The French Invasion; - or - John Bull Bombarding the Bum-Boats*
(fig. 108). In this startling print, the satirist draws George III as John Bull, and as a map
of England. He is clearly identifiable as the king in the relatively naturalistic profiled
head, but his body is composed of the geography of the country. His outstretched right
leg, for instance, is formed by Devon and Cornwall, whilst his drawn up left leg consists
of Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. This high-stepping march gives the king and his country a
distinctly military aspect. And he takes the war to the republican invaders by shitting on
their swarm of ‘Bum-Boats’. Maps, as we have seen in earlier chapters, played a critical
role in the waging of war, not least in enabling a domestic audience to envisage conflicts,
and Gillray’s cartographic merging of king and country parodies such campaign and
battle maps and plans. In this convergence of patriotic symbols – crown, people, land and
its defence - Gillray, with the artist’s usual ambivalence, ridicules what he is supposed to
be celebrating. However, it has been argued that the corporeal excesses and displays of
gross stupidity that mark an image like this were actually instrumental in cementing the

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68 BM 8346. This well-known work has been much discussed, without I would suggest entirely exhausting
its resonances. See Vincent Caretta, *George III and the Satirists from Hogarth to Byron* (Athens, Ga.,
p.178; Geoff Quilley, “‘All ocean is her own’: the image of the sea and the identity of the maritime nation
in eighteenth-century British art’, in Geoffrey Cubitt (ed.), *Imagining Nations* (Manchester 1998), pp.132-
52, 138.
affectionate identification of the people with the ‘father of the nation’. Following this suggestion, Gillray’s anthropomorphic image also serves to identify that paternalistic image of the monarch with the defence of the nation.

For by the final decade of the eighteenth century, war with the French revolutionary patria saw a distinct shift in the attitudes that had still been observable at the close of the Seven Years’ War and throughout the American War. Political rethinking wrought by war with revolutionary France allowed a degree of identification of monarch with the army (and so the defence of the nation) inconceivable to earlier writers like Samuel Johnson. During the course of the 1790s images of George III actively sought to identify him with the country’s armed forces, with the loyalist newspapers of metropolitan press frequently reporting his participation in the regular drills, reviews, and sham battles that took place in London’s parklands and environs. The monarch’s appearance at such public displays of military prowess was visually commemorated in William Beechey’s portrait of the king, alongside the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, exhibited at the Royal Academy in the summer of 1798 (fig.109). Beechey’s equestrian image of the king, presiding over the elaborate choreography of a large-scale:  

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69 This is the essential argument of Carretta’s George III and the Satirists from Hogarth to Byron. See also Lorna Rempel, ‘Carnal satire and the constitutional king: George III in James Gillray’s Monstrous Craws at a New Coalition Feast’, Art History, vol. 18, no.1 (March 1995), pp.4-23. It is a proposition usefully questioned in Donald, The Age of Caricature, esp. pp.146 passim.

70 Johnson’s attitudes towards the monarch’s maintenance of a standing army, and the wider debate of which these were a part, are discussed in chapter one above.

military review, together with the display of self-command and horsemanship in the midst of violent confusion, establishes the Hanoverian in a venerable pictorial tradition of warrior kings. Indeed, such references to past regimes pervaded George III’s court; the remnants of past majesty reinforcing the images of fortitude and legitimacy invoked by loyalist propaganda. Beechey’s painting looks back most immediately, for instance, to John Wootton’s 1743 work, *George II at the Battle of Dettingen* (fig. 110). This adaptation of Continental tradition had also been employed by artists still more recently, in commemorating the Duke of York’s success at Valenciennes. Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg and Mather Brown both produced rival large-scale works clearly indebted to the work of seventeenth-century artists; the former with considerable commercial success (figs. 111 and 112). Whilst this was a pictorial tradition which carried with it autocratic associations, and so little employed in Britain, the royal family clearly had few qualms about being depicted in this form at this moment. It connected them with the past, just when such tradition was under threat, but also shaped that link according to the imperatives of the present. For, as we shall see, such imagery might have a particularly effective symbolic force at this moment.

Exhibited at the height of an invasion crisis, Beechey’s painting attracted a number of favourable reviews that recognised the patriotic potency of the image. During

72 See the discussion of this tradition in chapter three above.


the 1790s, the imagery of such military spectacle and its appeal to a domestic civilian population was a crucial element in the constitution, promotion and dissemination of patriotic and martial values to a wider national constituency. The figure of George III was integral to such an ideology of patriotic militarism and, as nominal head of the nation’s armed forces, a focus for much of the pageantry. If, as I have already intimated, the period saw the construction of the king as an affective rhetorical figure, as a tender, vulnerable ‘father of his people’, this was an image complemented by more securely masculine martial display. What has been termed ‘the domestication of majesty’ was closely bound up with the militarization of the monarchy. In the context of the politics of the mid- to late-1790s, as David Bindman has suggested, the image of a warrior king and family man represented an effective antidote to the instabilities of the French republican governments. In Beechey’s painting the king is seen alongside his eldest sons, bringing these mutually supportive aspects of the monarchy together. Here, the

75 Linda Colley, ‘The apotheosis of George III: loyalty, royalty and the British nation 1760-1820’, Past and Present, no.102 (February 1984), pp.94-129 and idem., Britons, esp. pp.195-236 On the sentimental aspects of this imaging, see John Barrell, ‘Sad stories: Louis XIV, George III, and the language of sentiment’, in Kevin Sharpe & Steven N. Zwicker (eds.), Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics From the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution (Berkeley, Cal., 1998), pp.75-100. The identification of the monarchy with the armed forces, which I argue here was a necessary adjunct to the familial, domesticated image of kingship, is downplayed by both these writers.


monarch and his family are seen actively engaged in the defence of the nation, and by extension the domestic values that they were held to represent.

Before the outbreak of war, the king had long engaged in entertaining military spectacles before the royal family and fashionable society. Cruikshank’s *Amusement for John Bull or the Flying Camp* of 24 July 1792 satirized this vogue in terms that recall the images of camps established during the American War (fig. 113). In this print, the king and queen are spectators watching a fantastic display of flying cavalry, infantry and marching bands, winged marquees and decidedly phallic artillery. Encampments, reviews and manoeuvres, as they were in the late 1770s and early '80s, were still clearly sites of fashionable assembly. However, as the decade wore on and the threat of French invasion loomed larger, the state of emergency and climate of fear that attended it dispelled any such associations. After 1793, for instance, the identification of the monarchy with the army became ever closer and more elaborate. Besides the adoption of the dark blue with red trim of the so-called ‘Windsor’ uniform, royal princes and courtiers adopted full dress uniform at court in increasing numbers. At first, the adoption of this uniform might be seen as politically and socially disadvantageous in that as reflection of the wearer’s status it was a symbol of service and servitude. However, military dress indicated not social

78 BM 8116. See discussion of camp scenes in chapter two above.

79 For an account of the abandonment of formal court dress and the adoption of military dress as an alternative form of court attire, see the important article by Philip Mansel, ‘Monarchy, uniform and the rise of the *frac* 1760-1830’, *Past and Present*, no.96 (August 1982), pp.103-32.

80 See Colley, *Britons*, pp.183-88. For an extremely full consideration of uniform and its role in fostering solidarity, but also enforcing discipline, in this period and later, see Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars Through the Crimea* (Cambridge, Mass. 1996).
class but rank in the service of the state or the monarch. Uniforms were a living symbol of monarchical authority, and of the social order, connecting them through every stage of the official or military hierarchy with the lowest soldiers or officials. It was this ability to ‘connect’ with a broad range of social classes, through such shared imagery and its display, that proved the cornerstone of the monarchy’s successful revival in the 1790s.

The potency of such symbols was largely dependent upon the context of their display and cannot be understood apart from this. Royal occasions provided the elaborate backdrop against which monarchy was exhibited and from which their meaning as symbols was derived. Confronted by the spectre of liberty, equality and fraternity, British politicians became increasingly willing to subsidise royal display and celebration as a means of propping up the old order. Pitt’s government clearly recognised that the cult of monarchy might provide a safe outlet for ‘unified’ loyalist fervour. Royal public events, through their dramatisation of certain elements important to the nation, provided crucial points of collective focus for the nation.\textsuperscript{81} Paradoxically, however, they also carefully maintained and reinforced the threatened social hierarchy by keeping royalty at a distance. Such forms of display allowed a glimpse of privilege, a brief view of the social apex whose inhabitants were held as exemplars of British cultural ideals; however, the

conventions of public presentation also obscured that world, keeping it at a theatrical distance.

If such shows of strength were a crucial strategy in seducing a nation into counter-revolutionary activity, they might also be seen as an example of Georgian society's intimidating 'theatre of power'. The 1790s saw men drawn to such spectacle and rally to the loyalist cause, who in periods of civil unrest, would have faced the army as opponents. Exploiting the potential conflict in this situation, it became a stock theme of radical discourse to denounce military glory and spectacle and subject it ridicule. In the wake of 1789 the whole mystique of such theatrics, and particularly the place of the monarchy in that show, was in question. As Paine had written in The Rights of Man, 'The old idea was that man must be governed by effigy and show, and that a superstitious reverence was necessary to establish authority', but to now put 'any individual as a figure for a nation is improper'. Charges of empty authority could all but too easily be levelled...

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83 See Colley, Britons, pp.283-320; Peter Woodfire, 'Unjustifiable and illiberal: military patriotism and civilian values in the 1790s', in Bertrand Taithe & Timothy Thornton (eds.), War: Identities in Conflict 1300-2000 (Stroud, 1998), pp.73-94.
84 One form this might take was the counter-theatre of radical pageantry, which mimicked and lampooned the chivalric pretensions of much late Georgian civic and state ceremony. See Iain McCalman, Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries, and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840 (Oxford, 1988), pp.173-5. See also the satires of Burke as a chivalrous knight, discussed in David Bindman, "'Revolution-Soup, dished up with human flesh and French Pot-Herbs': Burke's Reflections and the visual culture of late eighteenth-century England', in Guilland Sutherland (ed.), British Art 1740-1820: Essays in Honor of Robert R. Wark (San Marino, California, 1992), pp.125-44.
85 Paine, The Rights of Man, p.228.
at the 'effigy and show' of the king's review of the troops, and Beechey's painting of those rehearsals. Its sham battle amounted to little more than a shallow simulacrum of warfare, to be reported in the papers and provide the 'best amusement for our morning meal' as Coleridge termed it.\textsuperscript{86} The conflict was stage-managed, the monarch's uniform a fabrication, and his place at the head of his troops symbolic rather than actual. It was all just 'the tinsel pomp of military parade', as one contemporary anti-war commentator described such ceremonials.\textsuperscript{87} However, whilst royalist rituals proved to be sites of conflict, as much as of unity, nevertheless the loyalist values they propagated proved difficult to undermine.

Royalist fervour gave a focus to the loyalist movement, it otherwise lacked. The more approachable image of monarchy fostered during the 1790s encouraged in the people a degree of protectiveness towards the king. It is significant, for instance, that at the king's birthday celebrations of 1799 a large body of voluntary troops were present as a form of armed guard. This kind of participatory loyalist activity was central to the success of conservative initiatives. However, its role was far more than merely symbolic. Direct voluntary endeavour, such as this, also constituted a major augmentation of power and resources. After the levée en masse, victory in the war would only be possible for those states, such as Britain, which maintained a radically anti-democratic stance, if they

\textsuperscript{86} Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Fears in Solitude' [1798], in E.H. Coleridge (ed.), \textit{Poetical Works} (Oxford, 1969), p.260. This phrase is also to be found in various other condemnations of the war. See \textit{Reflections on the Pernicious Custom of Recruiting by Crimps} (p.5), for instance.

\textsuperscript{87} \textit{The Lawfulness of Defensive War, upon Christian Principles, impartially considered} (London, 1798), unpaginated.
too mobilized the nation to take arms. Britain looked increasingly to supplementary
troops, of the voluntary kind and of a more traditional order.

‘Leagu’d with my friends’: volunteers and the militia

Throughout the eighteenth century, the militia forces represented the essential point of
contact between civilian and military culture.\(^8\) They owed their existence to the ancient
principle that the citizen owed a military obligation to the defence of the country. Indeed,
since a standing army posed a threat as a non-constitutional force, it was the militia that
was guarantor of the country’s liberty, virtue and stability. It was held to embody these
values, and its existence represented a crucial element of continuity with the nation’s
past. However, this was an essentially symbolic role and its actual utility was in some
doubt, representing - as John Brewer has put it - ‘the least important component of
Britain’s military effort’.\(^9\) Never actually involved in any decisive action, the militia
functioned more, in the eyes of theorists like Adam Ferguson and John Millar, as a
crucial moral supplement to the deformation of men caused by living in a peaceful,
commercial state.\(^9\) However, this traditional role underwent considerable reformulation

\(^8\) For a full discussion of the roles of the militia in British culture, see Ian F. W. Beckett, *The Amateur


\(^9\) See Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* [1767], Duncan Forbes (ed.) (Edinburgh,
in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and especially during the war with revolutionary France. Extensive reform of the militia system between 1757 and 1769 had shifted the burden of service from the propertied classes and on to the lower orders. Unsurprisingly, there was considerable resentment against this compulsion to spend twenty days a year in training. This distaste for the revised service was only compounded by the events of the 1790s. Raised as a precautionary and preventative measure against possible radical insurrection in late 1792, the loyalty of the militia itself was not necessarily apparent at this moment. Indeed, it was itself a breeding ground for subversion. Gillray articulated these shifting meanings, and the resultant uncertainties in the meaning of militia service, in visual form.

Images like Henry Bunbury’s 1773 *A Militia Meeting* had established the conventions for the pictorial representation of these part-time troops, where the tattered, makeshift uniforms of the gathering denote their enthusiastic, if also somewhat baleful, embrace of occasional military service (fig.114). Bunbury’s cast of mismatched grotesques was echoed over twenty years later in Gillray’s *Supplementary Militia, Turning-Out for Twenty-Days Amusement*, published by Humphrey on the 25 November 1792.

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92 Not in BM. Collection of the National Army Museum.
1796 (fig.115). Led by a short, stout butcher bearing a flag of St. George, the front rank of this motley corp consists of a cobbler, a brick-layer and an artist (probably John Hoppner, R.A.), a tailor and a hairdresser. Their ill-synchronized march is maintained by the beat of a veteran drummer: a mutilated, puppet-like figure straight from the final scene of Gillray’s own John Bull’s Progress. This reference back to his own earlier work suggests the likely effects of these ‘Twenty-Days Amusement’, and establishes a degree of sympathetic identification with the probably unwilling conscripts.

It is likely that Gillray’s print was a topical response to Pitt’s proposal the preceding month for a supplementary militia. This had demanded a further 60 000 men from England, and another 4 400 from Wales. Extended to Scotland the following year, this call eventually led to a series of sporadic anti-militia riots in 1797 amidst growing fears that it was becoming merely a drafting body for the regular forces. As Gillray’s image subtly suggests, in the face of the crisis of loyalty and patriotism of the late 1790s, the militia was perhaps no longer the symbolic embodiment of these virtues it once was. Meeting the Jacobin threat, particularly on the domestic front, would increasingly have to rely on other forms of supplementary force.

Volunteer companies had first been organised for home defence during the invasion crisis of the late 1770s and early ‘80s. However, this was never on the scale of organisation apparent in the 1790s. Self-organised auxiliary corps were established as

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93 BM 8840. For other satires on the militia in this period, see BMs 8541, 8836, 8941, 8977.

94 Colley, Britons, pp.287-88.

95 Beckett, ‘The militia and the king’s enemies’.

96 The fullest account of the volunteer phenomenon is J.E. Cookson, The British Armed Nation 1793-1815 (Oxford, 1997).
early as 1792 to defend their localities against the mounting threat of internal disorder sparked by events across the Channel. Pitt’s government actively encouraged the founding of such voluntary organisations in a series of legislative acts. These culminated in April 1798, with the Defence of the Realm Act’s authorisation of the raising of ‘Armed associations’. A wide cross-section of society, largely urban, was drawn to these corps. It is possible that patriotism was their primary motivation. Certainly, volunteer regiments had links with Reeves’s Association Movement to demonstrate loyalty to King and Constitution, and to counteract the propaganda of political radicals with French sympathies. Volunteer parades, for instance, were frequently the focus for loyal speeches and sermons, and presented an opportunity to intimidate local radicals. However, whilst historians like Robert Dozier have stressed the crucial role of voluntary defence forces in the prevention of rebellion, it has to be recognised that these men were also the targets of protest. They were not universally accepted as a legitimate force. It is also important not to underestimate the ideological ambiguities of loyalism, or exaggerate the uniformity, reliability and pervasiveness of popular patriotism.

By the late 1790s every county had its volunteer cavalry regiment, every town its own infantry volunteers, proudly parading their colourful, local design of uniform. However, their motives for enlistment varied, and might range from the immunity it granted from militia ballots, to the additional income it provided, or to increasing civic mindedness. Urban Volunteer units, for instance, have been seen as a reflection of:

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growing self-awareness and civic pride. Such local ties, however, also made the voluntary regiments unreliable as effective police forces. The uncertain loyalty or motivations of the volunteer informed the conflicts apparent in the visual imagery of volunteering.

Prints like the ironically titled *The Terror of France, or the Westminster Volunteers*, published 26 August 1779 during the midst of an earlier invasion crisis, established the pictorial view of these regiments (fig. 116). These were clearly troops who were more a danger to themselves than to the enemy. This pictorial image of voluntary regiments was renewed during the 1790s in numerous graphic satires like the anonymous *Essex-Calve-iry for Internal Defence*, published 12 May 1794 (fig. 117). In this vision of an imagined invasion, a ramshackle voluntary cavalry force flees a group of French troops. This makeshift cavalry, riding cattle instead of chargers, seem entirely unequipped to meet the threat they were assembled to deal with.

Displays of military ineptness such as this, was a theme common to a number of satirical representations of volunteers. However, Gillray's *St. George's Volunteers Charging Down Bond Street Clearing the Ring in Hyde Park, & Storming the Dunghill at Marybone*, published by Humphrey on 1 March 1797, articulated another pressing

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99 BM 5552.

100 BM 8459. Volunteers provided one of the period's most popular satirical themes. For other images of voluntary troops, see BMs 8459, 8476, 8492, 8503, 8513, 8597, 8731, 8732, 9833, 98734, 9738, 8840, 8991, 8993, 8994, 9056, 9221, 9238, 9247, 9324, 9582, 9596, 9597, 9598, 9599, 9600, 9601, 9602, 9603, 9639.
concern that attended mass mobilization and arming (fig. 118). 101 Here, three physically mismatched volunteers, at once ill dressed and overdressed, lead a troop of eerily blank-faced men in a charge upon their fellow citizens. In the legend beneath the design, ‘Bond Street’ has replaced ‘the French’ (which has been scribbled over). Gillray’s image visualizes an anxiety over the repercussions of mass mobilization that was keenly felt. In his Thoughts on the French Invasion of England of 1798, the emigrée General Dumourier worried about ‘the danger of arming the whole nation in the midst of the discord and innovation which agitates it’. 102 However, whilst there were considerable difficulties in coming to terms with plebeian patriotism, it was increasingly obvious that the security of the nation was dependent upon mass forms of military endeavour. Volunteering implicitly acknowledged the central importance of popular participation to the nation’s war effort. Without it the war on France and the campaign against subversion would become simply untenable.

In its issue for April 1799, The Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine, a political journal expressly aimed at combating the internal threat, published ‘Lines’ reputedly written by the ‘Commanding Officer of a Troop of Volunteers’:

Call’d to defend my injur’d country’s cause,
Advance her welfare, and maintain her laws,
While impious France insults Britannia’s coast,
Mark’d out for plunder by her ravenous host;

101 BM 8991.
While humbled nations groan beneath her sway,
Compell'd alike from rank rebellion's soil,
Spread like a pest from Paris to the Nile,
I take the sword with no unhallow'd views,
At such an hour what patriot can refuse?
Not smit with love of terror-breathing war,
The blood-stain'd laurel, and the conqueror's car;
Not with the Pagan hero's zeal inspir'd,
To deeds of death by mad ambition fir'd;
Not led in slaughter's desolating train,
By vengeance flush'd, to swell the heaps of slain;
Leagu'd with my friends, the glittering sword I wave,
Not to extend an empire, but to save;
To guard with steady front, my native land:
From foreign foes, and faction's desperate band;
To stop the march of democratic rage,
To shield forms of innocence & age,
To bid distrust, and fear, and discord, cease;
And shelter virtue in the arms of peace.103

In its litany of calls to arms, this verse echoed many a loyalist pamphleteer, conforming to the same polarized vision of the issues at stake established at the war's onset. It stressed the many threats an atheistic, republican enemy posed to British laws, religion, constitution, liberty and property, as they were embodied in the ideal of the family and in the land itself. Such attempts to set out the imaginary horrors of French invasion were

crucial to the production of a wider assent to military conduct. Britain’s soldiers were no longer viewed as operating for the benefit of the Court and its minions, but had come to be a necessary force for stability and order in dangerous times. ‘We begin now, though rather late, plainly to see’ wrote George Hanger, ‘that the safety of our country depends on a strong military force by land, and becoming an armed nation ourselves, and not to place our sole reliance on fleets, which imprudently we formerly trusted too much.’

Nevertheless, radicals like Major John Cartwright continued to register their frustration at the turn of events. In a confused, rambling pamphlet of 1799 entitled *An Appeal, Civil and Military, on the Subject of the English Constitution*, a bewildered Cartwright complained ‘Good God! can any rational man . . . be an advocate for the system of a standing army, as the proper system for national defence? – The bane of national morals; the bane of national oeconomy; the bane of national freedom; we find it at last, even in a military view, as inferior to an armed inhabitancy, as Hamlet to Hercules!’ However, despite these protestations, it was increasingly obvious that there was little political purchase in appealing to the long-established traditional fear of a permanent force, when its existence was so demonstrably necessary for the nation’s defence. Further, whilst the anxieties regarding the militarization of the nation, as articulated in Gillray’s work, for instance, persisted to a degree, these concerns were largely subsumed (at least for the duration of the conflict with France) by the needs to

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secure the nation’s territorial frontiers. Indeed, Britain in the late 1790s and early 1800s witnessed what Clive Emsley has termed a ‘militaristic nationalism’, profoundly at odds with the country’s traditional anti-militarism.106 Bearing arms in defence of country was now an established, integral part of what Colley has termed, an ‘active commitment to Great Britain’.107 And by way of a conclusion to this thesis, I want to now turn to the visualization of this ‘commitment’ in a series of images produced during the early years of the nineteenth century.


107 Colley, Britons, p.295.
Conclusion.

War with revolutionary France was as much a struggle over ideological as physical terrain. It was a discursive conflict in which the most sacred myths of British identity were deployed in a battle for political, moral and cultural sovereignty. Whilst British troops engaged the French on a global scale in many diverse theatres, pro- and anti-war factions at home each sought to appropriate the image of the nation's military in acrimonious debates over what now constituted loyalty and patriotism. Out of these feverish disputes a disinterested patriotic image of the nation's soldiery began to emerge.

By the time of the invasion scares of the late 1790s and early 1800s, it had become increasingly difficult to argue against the need for the nation's proper defence to come primarily from a more professional fighting force. This was, of course, supplemented by various kinds of voluntary service. Consequently, in the face of near continuous national crisis, the image of the military had come to assume a prominent cultural profile and be of highly charged symbolic significance. However, there was something of a gap between this image and the army's actual effectiveness. Despite Britain's forces being altogether better trained and more efficient, improved competence, proficiency and efficacy failed to translate itself into a victory on the land against the French. In this concluding chapter, however, I want to consider briefly the visual commemoration of a sudden turnaround in the fortunes of Britain's land forces. This will serve as a means of examining the transformation in the image of the military in the early years of the nineteenth century, and its implications given the somewhat changed nature of war with Napoleonic France.
In March 1801, fighting in Egypt saw the actual, but also symbolic, regeneration of the British army. During a single fortnight, a British expeditionary force under Sir Ralph Abercromby made good an assault landing, broke the French position in the offensive Battle of Mandara and won the counter-offensive in the Battle of Alexandria. Abercromby was killed in this final encounter, and was extensively eulogised in terms set out most forcefully by the official campaign historian as 'A man, highly distinguished for his probity, magnanimity, consummate courage, and military talents'. Somewhat inevitably, artists, who eagerly seized upon this still rare British victory, focused their works on Abercromby's exploits. However, after the signing of the preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens in October 1801 the commemoration of Alexandria and Abercromby's sacrifice became less urgent. With the collapse of the Amiens settlement in May 1803, however, this victory over the French had a renewed symbolic resonance.

Some three years after the Battle of Alexandria, Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg drew an imaginary sculptural monument in commemoration of the action (fig.119). It was eventually published as a print in 1806 when it was entitled *Soldiers, Sailors and Marines decorating an Egyptian Monument with Portraits of the Officers on the staff of Sir Ralph Abercromby at the Battle of Alexandria 1801.* Loutherbourg's

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2 It is possible that the print was intended to capitalize on the success of the artist's contemporary history paintings depicting the *Decisive Battle of Alexandria* (Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh) and *Landing of the British Troops in the Bay of Aboukir* (Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh); exhibited at the Royal Academy the previous year. For a discussion of the original drawing, see Rüdiger
design is an overtly theatrical, hallucinatory tribute to the British victory and the country's war dead. Its imagery is both commemorative and celebratory, and is composed of a complex bricolage of iconographic elements that link past and present. Whilst initially Loutherbourg's pyramidal monument appears to be located in an exotic locale stretching back into the distance, closer inspection reveals it is actually constructed on a piece of 'floating island turf'. Situated in this removed, imaginary landscape, Loutherbourg's towering structure makes several references to venerable ancient tradition. In addition to recalling Egyptian monuments, traces of commemorative Roman structures, such as Trajan's column, are apparent in the image, and Loutherbourg's composition also draws freely upon the antique tradition of the temporary field monument to the fallen. Such references neatly align British victory in Egypt with notable classical precedents. Loutherbourg's design is an image that - as Rüdiger Joppien


3 With regard to the 'theatrical' elements of this work it is plausible that the design originated either as part of a set design or as a transparency. Loutherbourg had been instrumental in the development of both in Britain. On the artist's stage designs, see Joppien, Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, R.A. and Sybil Rosenfield, Georgian Scene Painters and Scene Painting (Cambridge, 1981), pp.55-9. For an apposite discussion of the relationship between such imagery and the theatre, see Gillian Russell, The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society 1793-1815 (Oxford, 1995).


has pointed out – 'wishfully propagates the pleasing union of antiquity and modern times from which [Britain] derived her idealistic claims as an empire.'\(^6\) Loutherbourg’s fantastical tower is most clearly of ‘modern times’ in its being adorned with inscribed medallions featuring the portrait heads of officers involved in the battle. Abercromby’s plaque tops the pyramid, and is placed in position by an ordinary tar. Balanced precariously below, men of the Royal Artillery and Royal Marine decorate the emblem-hung column with laurels. Amongst the figures encircling the trophy-strewn base of the monument can be seen a Scottish Highlander gesturing to an Indian sepoy, and to the right a horseman of the Indian Cavalry. Before the monument these men, drawn from across the empire, all exhibit a range of emotions: some celebratory, some contemplative.

Loutherbourg’s image might be seen, in part, as an allegorical reflection upon the shifting make up and image of military service in the early years of the nineteenth century. Armed conflict waged on the scale of the French Wars, and in a variety of disparate war zones, had extended the supply of troops from Britain itself to their limits. Increasingly, the strength of the British military was dependent not just on the forms of mass mobilisation discussed in the previous chapter, but, as Loutherbourg’s image illustrates, also on troops drawn from the nation’s dependent territories. Whilst the loyalty of these men was frequently and inevitably uncertain, Loutherbourg’s design obviously elides any such problems. Rather, these diverse factions find a point of collective focus, affiliation and belonging in identification with, and contemplation of, those lost in the fight for empire. In Loutherbourg’s composition, difference is subsumed in meditation upon the heroic sacrifice of the fallen.

Loutherbourg’s monument was conceived and subsequently published at a moment when proposals and plans for such structures – whether imaginary or real - were very much current. If Loutherbourg’s work consciously recalls notable antique precedents for the commemoration of military victory, then it also aligned itself with a number of contemporary monuments to the nation’s war dead proposed and put in place around these years. Around the turn of the century many grandiose proposals were put forward advocating the founding of a pantheon to British military and naval glory. The decoration of St. Paul’s with monumental sculpture memorialising the country’s naval and military officer-heroes from 1798 onwards gave these desires palpable form. This programme of monuments for the national church was to eventually include its own commemoration of Alexandria, Richard Westmacott’s monument to Abercromby of c.1803-9 (fig.120).

Westmacott’s dramatic, spiraling composition depicts the General falling from his rearing horse, into the arms of an attending soldier of the Scots Greys. Below the horse lies a fallen enemy soldier, grasping vainly to a French standard. This figurative group is set on an engraved circular pedestal, flanked by two sphinxes. Through these antique:

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7 It is worth pointing out here that Loutherbourg’s design, particularly its central emblem strewn pyramidal structure, echoes existing commemorative monuments to Britain’s military such as Joseph Nollekens’s monument to the naval Captains Bayne, Blair and Lord Robert Manners in Westminster Abbey of 1793. This work is discussed and illustrated in John Physick, Designs for English Sculpture 1680-1860 exh. cat., Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 1969, pp.146-47.

fragments, as in Loutherbourg’s imaginary monument, contemporary events are affiliated with a venerable history. Both Loutherbourg’s and Westmacott’s icons of national mourning might also be seen as linking past and present to a hypothetical future. For these are graphic and sculptural monuments to posterity, which invite their putative viewers - whether in St. Paul’s hall of fame or in the shop window of the publisher Anthony Cardon – to remember, contemplate and ponder the virtue they commemorate.

In Loutherbourg’s print, the ordinary soldiers surrounding the pyramid are the surrogate viewers paying homage to those who had fallen in pursuit of a collective ideal of national glory. Whilst both Loutherbourg’s and Westmacott’s images privilege the individualized officer, nevertheless they also overtly acknowledge the key supportive role of the common soldier. Indeed, amongst the generic, ordinary soldiers and mariners of Loutherbourg’s design, their centrality to British success is also signalled by a degree of differentiation. Seated at the base of Loutherbourg’s pyramid is another portrait: Anthony Lutz, private of the 97th Regiment, who captured the French standard, which he holds in a prominent position before the pyramid. Private Lutz’s naming and portrayal in such a context, is somewhat anomalous in a period where, by and large, the common soldier’s role in war was ‘one not only of anonymity but of complete individual dissolution’.

Nevertheless, whilst unusual in itself, Lutz’s individualisation here was part of a more general elevation of the military apparent in various contemporary cultural productions.

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It is suggestive to read Loutherbourg’s visionary sepulchre in the context of the national pantheon then being created in the hallowed space of St. Paul’s. However, Loutherbourg’s design might also be related to another imaginary graphic monument to Britain’s war effort, William Henry Pyne’s *Microcosm*. The introduction to Pyne’s volume of prints described the motivations behind the project thus: ‘It is devoted to the domestic, rural and commercial scenery of Great Britain, and may be considered a monument, in the rustic style, raised to her glory’.\(^\text{11}\) In Pyne’s picturesque plates of soldiers on the march, resting and in action, such activities are integrated into the everyday business of a nation at war (figs. 1 and 121-123). Pictured alongside the agriculture and manufacture illustrated in the volume’s numerous other plates, the soldiers’ work is unproblematically of a part with the combined efforts of the nation in the war against France. That the common soldier might be memorialised ‘in the rustic style’, or indeed in allegory and public sculpture, suggests that there was a cultural recognition of their urgent value to the endangered nation and its empire. In Pyne’s small vignettes of troops training, marching and fighting, then resting alongside their women and children, the soldiers are identified with the land that they protect but also with the domestic values they safeguard. These scenes were intended for ‘the Embellishment of Landscape’, and so also seem to invite the assembly of imaginative patriotic narratives whether on British soil or abroad. In contrast, Loutherbourg’s and Westmacott’s

monuments to Alexandria reflect upon a then widely known narrative of patriotic action, victory and heroicism. Nevertheless, something of the same intention lies behind all these ‘monuments’ to the nation’s military. They are all fragments of a kind that encourage the viewer to make more general associations. They all offer up patriotic narratives for contemplation and emulation. Similarly, they couch their appeal in essentially emotional terms, and so invite this form of participation rather than compel it.

If such works testify to a more general cultural recognition of the eminence, worth and value of the military to the imperilled nation in the early years of the nineteenth century, then they also exemplify and encapsulate the reflexive nature of that relationship. Loutherbourg’s print, for instance, commemorated a victory that had taken place five years previously, but which had assumed a renewed cultural resonance with the end of the Peace of Amiens. Hence, the artist’s revival of the subject. It is only possible to speculate on the commercial motivations for the delay in this individual instance, given the lack of documentary evidence. However, it seems likely given the extent to which war had come to have a decisive, even determining, impact upon contemporary visual culture. It had, indeed, become of central concern to the consumption, patronage and production of artistic practice. War and visual culture – as I have maintained throughout this thesis – had a mutually sustaining relationship. For a domestic audience, distanced from the actuality of war, there was a clear need to envisage these conflicts. This was reflected in the evident eagerness to consume the wide variety of visual products available to late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century publics that focused upon the actions, personnel and mechanics of warfare. These images of the military and of war itself functioned in variously explicit, indirect or displaced ways, and in a diverse range
of contexts, to shape and give form to far off events, and the kinds of collective endeavour that they necessitated. Loutherbourg’s, Westmacott’s, and Pyne’s images, for instance, forged just the kinds of narrative around which forms of national belonging might develop. Such fictions of national unity and common purpose were crucial as Britain entered yet another extended period of conflict.

In concluding with a brief discussion of works being produced as Britain was about to embark upon a further decade or so of fighting, this thesis ends at a point of national uncertainty, crisis and irresolution. Space precludes a full discussion of the imagery of the events leading up to and including the Battle of Waterloo. Any discussion of the role of the visual in the mediation, shaping and formation of domestic perceptions of the Napoleonic Wars, would have to address issues such as the image of the French emperor in the British cultural imagination, the place of the Duke of Wellington in the national mythology, or the attempts to understand the events of Waterloo itself. These are clearly complex developments beyond the scope of this study. However, it is also important to note that there was a clear contrast between the war with revolutionary France and that against Napoleon. As Napoleon’s imperialist ambitions became ever more obvious, the divisions that had characterised the British response to the turbulent events of the 1790s were increasingly translated into solidarity against this new threat. Following the collapse of the Amiens settlement in May 1803, the British demonstrated a much greater degree of united hostility towards the French under

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Napoleon than had been elicited during the 1790s.\textsuperscript{13} Something of the changed nature of the conflict with France is apparent in a work like Major John Cartwright’s *England’s Aegis; or, the Military Energies of the Empire* (1806). In his dissertation upon ‘the present conflict for empire and existence’, Cartwright argued that the safeguarding of Britain’s imperial possessions demanded the proper maintenance of the country’s armed forces.\textsuperscript{14} Cartwright maintained that this should not be an unconstitutional standing army, but a more solidly militia-like, citizen force. Cartwright had been against the war with revolutionary France, and friendly in principle with the Revolution. Yet, in this pamphlet, he was anxious to frustrate the ‘gigantic schemes of the ruler of France’.\textsuperscript{15} It is also notable that if at times there was considerable dissatisfaction with the government of the day amongst radicals like Cartwright it did not extend to a general refusal to fight to maintain the British empire.\textsuperscript{16} This had been so during the 1790s, but became all the more the case with the rupture of the Amiens settlement. Whilst some clung to the idea of Napoleon as a son of the Revolution, for many others his imperialism, despotism and aggression was all too obvious.

\textsuperscript{13} For an invaluable analysis of these shifts, see Peter Spence, *The Birth of Romantic Radicalism: War, Popular Politics and English Radical Reformism, 1800-1815* (Aldershot, 1996).

\textsuperscript{14} John Cartwright, *England’s Aegis; or, the Military Energies of the Empire* (London, 1804), p.v. This was a revised version of Cartwright’s earlier *An Appeal, Civil and Military, on the Subject of the English Constitution* (London, 1799).

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.4.

British hostility towards Napoleonic France registered itself not just in military and political terms but also culturally and not least in the visual culture of the period. Patriotic feeling, for instance, found one focus in debates about the essential nature of British art, and in a way that was to have profound effects for the subsequent development of artistic practice in Britain. Long-standing demands for a national school of painting acquired a new urgency in the years before Waterloo, and were accompanied by the emergence of a British character marked by qualities of independence and naturalism. These were values that found their fullest expression in the depiction of the native countryside. It has become commonplace to argue that British landscape painting, especially that produced in the years after 1800, had a critical role to play in the articulation of national identity whether in terms of its subject matter or its bravura techniques.


development inextricably linked with the nation's war effort. These pictures frequently stressed the continuing mythic and practical importance of British agriculture to a nation at war. Like many works of the period focused on the depiction of the landscape, the plates of Pyne's *Microcosm* invest the rural scene with a special poignancy and strategic significance. The countless individual figures and vignettes of these plates constitute a pictorial inventory of the nation's agricultural and manufacturing self-sufficiency, self-reliance and independence in the face of the Napoleonic blockade. These virtues are reinforced at a formal level by self-conscious reference back to and identification with various patriotic pictorial exemplars. *Microcosm*'s first plate, entitled 'Army', for instance, recalls William Hogarth's crowd scenes but also the harvest wagons of Thomas Gainsborough (fig. 1). Such allusions locate Pyne's work in a pictorial tradition somewhat at odds with the values promulgated by the Royal Academy since its foundation in 1768. Under Joshua Reynolds's presidency the Academy had sought to promote a school of British painting that would bolster the country's international standing. Reynolds's nationalism has been characterised as a form of 'civic' nationalism that promoted 'the glory of a country in terms of universal values'. However, by the early years of the nineteenth century, and in the wake of the wars with revolutionary and Napoleonic France, a national art was increasingly seen as emerging out of the independent, 'natural' character of the British people and way of life. Informed by a kind of 'cultural' nationalism argued for most influentially in the political arena by Edmund Burke, these arguments were instrumental in forging a self-centred view of British art that mirrored an

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increasingly insular conception of the nation itself. In the first plate of Pyne’s volume of prints these values are apparent not just in its references to Hogarth and Gainsborough but also in its principal subject - the ordinary British soldier – who is presented as a ‘natural’ feature of the British landscape.

As this suggests, Cartwright’s contentions in England’s Aegis were now plainly outmoded. His argument, that anything other than a force composed of citizens was unconstitutional, carried distinct echoes of those commonly made some three decades earlier in opposition to the American War, not least by himself.\textsuperscript{21} However, by the early nineteenth century the fractious, divided opinions that had characterised that conflict and that against revolutionary France were clearly assuming a greater unity of purpose. They were increasingly being channelled into the waging of war and into ‘the Military Energies of the Empire’. Following the defeat of the Franco-Spanish fleet at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, the war against Napoleon was to be fought primarily on the land. It was now more than obvious that the fate of the nation’s imperial dependencies was largely dependent upon its chief agents: the military. This represents a significant shift in attitudes. For, as this thesis has demonstrated, the nation’s relationship with its armed forces had long been the subject of acrimonious, contentious debate. This was a dispute in which questions of liberty, loyalty and patriotism, and their ‘true’ nature, had been central. These were issues, of course, integral to the constitution of the image of the nation itself. It was therefore impossible to divorce the anxieties and concerns that

\textsuperscript{20} Vaughan, “David’s Brickdust”, p.137.

\textsuperscript{21} See [John Cartwright], Declaration of Those Rights of the Commonality of Great Britain Without Which They Cannot be Free (London, 1780). On Cartwright’s political views and affiliations, see John Osborne, John Cartwright (Cambridge, 1972).
attended the image of the military from those that haunted the country as a whole in the last three decades of the eighteenth century.

It is clear from the body of evidence amassed in this thesis that the distinct shift in the image of the country's military from representing a basic threat to civil liberties to being the very embodiment of such rights was underwritten by a number of diverse factors. In the wake of the victories of the Seven Years' War, whilst contemporaries eagerly celebrated the nation's military strength they were also critically alert to the potential dangers of imperial expansion. Writers like Richard Price, for instance, argued forcefully that the tyrannical actions of the British government in the American colonies were the direct result of overreaching imperial ambition. In the paradoxical image of the soldier contemporaries found a potent means of addressing the divisive effects of the American crisis on British society and the anxieties about empire it occasioned. Prints that focused on the lot of the common soldier, for example, were constantly concerned with the key question of liberty. Invariably, these images represent the ordinary trooper as a mere tool of ministerial privilege. That the military served as a prop in maintaining a privileged, self-serving ambitious élite was a recurrent feature of anti-war commentary. Individuals such as the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Worsley or Banastre Tarleton appeared to use the country's armed forces to cultivate a prominent public profile. For many contemporaries such conjunctions of war and fashion provided further instances of the iniquity into which the nation had fallen.

Following the loss of America, Britain's empire appeared in imminent danger of collapse. Its martial spirit weakened, the country looked back with nostalgia upon its
earlier imperial ascendancy and (imagined) national stability. In this climate, it is hardly surprising that images of the military in the 1780s either celebrated victories of the nation’s traditional enemies or presented harmonious visions of the soldier’s return home. Visual and textual commemoration of the siege of Gibraltar, like that of John Singleton Copley or John Drinkwater, for example, seized upon the opportunity it allowed to glory in stalwart British virtues of steadfastness, fortitude and benevolence. An incorporation of the events of the siege into national histories also demonstrated a clear desire to link the events and principal participants in the victory back to the nation’s glorious past. This nostalgic reverie for a former age of apparent resolve, constancy and stability also manifested itself in overtly sentimental images of the soldier. In particular, scenes of coming home, reintegration into domestic life and renewal of familial attachments offered reassuring narratives of peace, harmony and unity. In the aftermath of a divisive civil war, such images offered a degree of solace or at least some sense that the previous order might be reasserted.

Nevertheless, irrevocable damage had seemingly been done to the nation’s sense of itself as an imperial power. For, during the course of the 1780s further cracks began to appear in the image in the form of legal challenges to domestic commodification of Africans and allegations of corrupt practices in India. However, despite an inevitable pessimism regarding the nation’s imperial prospects in the wake of these threats, British expansion was of course to continue. Imperial interest were now largely directed towards India and were to be of a decidedly more authoritarian and disciplinary nature. This was

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apparent in the extensive survey of Mysore by engineers under the command of Lord Cornwallis in the early 1790s. Their systematic survey of this territory had played an instrumental role in subduing the rebel state and its ruler Tipú Sultán. However, this was a view of empire also tempered by a more humanitarian, benevolent vision of imperial conquest. Images of Cornwallis constructed him as a virtuous and proper symbol of identification with empire. Whilst misgivings about acts of acquisitive aggression were still aired these grievances were largely deflected by the focus on such an individual.

Such complaints as were voiced linked them with other equally pressing issues. Price’s *Discourse on the Love of Country* (1789) saw the imperial difficulties Britain faced as symptomatic of a larger political problem, one that stemmed from the nonaccountability and corruption of the British state. Price’s *Discourse* had argued for the citizen’s right to participate in the nation’s rule. However, for a writer like Burke, as Tom Furniss has recently argued, Britain could only be free, virtuous and united through engaging the imaginative identifications of each of its citizens or subjects. During the 1790s this kind of ‘cultural’ nationalism proved particularly seductive to people of property and many without as they rallied to protect king and country. In these dangerous times, the military began to be seen not as a potentially corrupt force operating for the benefit of the monarch and his government but as a necessary force for stability and order. The security of the nation and its empire was an issue that transcended the kinds of political allegiances that had coloured the representation of Britain’s armed forces.

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previously. 'In these times' wrote Colonel George Hanger in 1804, 'it is the duty of every man, whatever his politics may be, to join hand in hand in the defence of his country'.

This returns to the various attempts to commemorate the nation's soldiers and its war dead in the years around the turn of the century. Such acts of commemoration displace acknowledgement of war's horror and the radical effects and consequences of conflict and substitute it with rituals of remembrance. This denial of the actual effects of war and of its attendant horror works to justify the losses suffered by rendering the sacrifice transcendent. Death is raised above the level of the mundane in a way that deflects or denies any potential critique. Indeed, to put forward any criticism would be to dishonour the dead. Works like Loutherbourg’s and Westmacott’s monuments to Abercromby acknowledged the vulnerability of the nation but translated it into defiant shows of strength. They provided the kinds of images of inspirational and exemplary virtue, points of imaginative identification along Burkean lines, that would be essential to Britain in its continuing fight against the French.

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25 I am indebted here to recent discussions of the forms of commemoration that followed the First World War; most notably, Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge, 1995).

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Shows of strength: war and the military in British visual culture, circa 1775-1803

in two volumes:

Volume Two: illustrations

by

John Bonehill

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Fig.2: Anon., *The Fruits of Arbitrary Power; or the Bloody Massacre*, published by W. Bingley, 1770. Engraving, 23 x 21.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig.3: Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770. Oil on canvas, 153.7 x 312.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Fig.4: Jug printed with West's *The Death of General Wolfe*, c.1770s. Creamware. Liverpool Museum.
Fig. 5: Anon., *A View of the Custom House*, published by Edward Langley c.1780. Engraving, 42 x 27 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

Fig. 6: Francis Wheatley, *Lord Aldborough on Pomposo, A Review in Belan Park*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 155 x 265 cm. Waddesdon Manor.

Fig. 7: Joshua Reynolds, *Colonel George Coussmaker*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 238 x 146 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 8: John Singleton Copley, *The Death of Major Peirson*, 1782-84. Oil on canvas, 264.4 x 365.8 cm. Tate Gallery, London.

Fig. 9: *Description of the Picture of the Death of Major Peirson, and the Defeat of the French Troops in the Island of Jersey*, subscription notice (detail), 1781. Tate Gallery, London.

Fig. 10: Anon., *Hannah Snell*, from *The Gentleman’s Magazine, and Historical Chronicle*, vol.20 (July 1750). Birmingham Public Libraries.

Fig. 11: Anon., *Ass Upon Ass*, published by Hannah Humphrey, June 1780. Engraving, 19.4 x 13.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 12: James Gillray, *The American Rattle Snake*, published by William Humphrey, 12 April 1782. Engraving, 22.1 x 27.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 13: James Heath after Francis Wheatley, *The Riot in Broad Street*, 7 June 1780, published by John & Josiah Boydell, 29 September 1790. Engraving, 47.6 x 63.3 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 14: Anon., *The Scotch Butchery*, Boston 1775. Engraving, 17.8 x 32.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.


Fig. 18: Anon., *[England, France and Spain]*, published September 1779. Engraving, 12.1 x 21.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 19: Anon., *Count de Rochambeau*, published by Thomas Colley, 25 November 1780. Engraving, 21 x 33 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 20: Anon., *Full and Half-Pay Officers*, published by Samuel William Fores, 1 March 1786. Engraving, 26 x 41.6 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 21: Recruiting poster for the Sussex Light Dragoons, c. 1779-80. National Army Museum, London.


Fig. 23: Recruiting poster for His Majesty's 88th Regiment of Foot, c. 1779-80. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 24: James Gillray?, *The Recruiting Cuckolds. A Song*, published by William Humphrey, 4 February 1780. Engraving, 14.6 x 19.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 25: Anon., *Lady Gorget Raising Recruits for Coxheath*, published by Carrington Bowles, 1781. Coloured mezzotint, 32.7 x 24.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 26: William Humphrey?, *Six-Pence a Day*, published by William Humphrey, 26 October 1775. Engraving, 21 x 34 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 27: John Murphy after Francis Wheatley, *The Encampment at Brighton (Scene from a Camp with an Officer Buying Chickens)*, published by Paul Colnaghi & Co., 1 May 1796. Mezzotint, 53.5 x 65.5 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 28: William Ward after Francis Wheatley, *The Soldier’s Return*, published by John Raphael Smith, 14 June 1787. Mezzotint, 50 x 34.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 29: James Heath after Joseph Wright of Derby, *Dead Soldier*, published by James Heath, 4 May 1797. Engraving, 43 x 59.4 cm. Derby Museum and Art Gallery.

Fig. 30: George Keating after George Morland, *Recruit Deserted*, published by John Raphael Smith, 29 July 1791. Mezzotint, 54.8 x 44.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig.31: Anon., *A View of the Camp at Cox-heath, near Maidstone in Kent*, published by Carrington Bowles, 29 September, 1778. Coloured engraving, 39.2 x 53.1 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig.32: Anon., *The Political Raree-Show: Or a Picture of Parties and Politics During and at the Close of the Last Session of Parliament, June 1779*, from *The Westminster Magazine; or the Pantheon of Taste* (June 1779). Engraving. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig.33: Pages from *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* (August 1778). Birmingham Public Libraries.

Fig.34: Anon., *General Parker Exerciseing [sic] the Army at Warley-Camp*, published by Henry Fielding & John Walker, 1 August 1779. Engraving, 20 x 20.5 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig.35: John Mortimer?, *A Trip to Cock’s Heath*, published by William Humphrey?, 28 October 1778. Engraving, 23.4 x 33.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 36: *The Three Graces of Coxheath*, published by Matthew Darly, 4 March, 1779. Engraving, 20.4 x 31.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 37: Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Worsley*, 1780. Oil on canvas, 236 x 144 cm. Harewood House, London.

Fig. 38: Anon., *A Bath of the Moderns*, published by E. Darchery [sic], 4 March, 1782. Engraving, 18.3 x 25.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 39: Joshua Reynolds, *Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 236.2 x 145.4 cm. National Gallery, London.


Fig. 41: James Gillray?, *The Thunderer*, published by E. D’Achery, 20 August 1782. Engraving, 31.8 x 22.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 42: *Cincinnatus*, Roman copy after 3rd Century BC Greek original. Marble, height 154 cm. Paris, Louvre.

Fig. 43: Gainsborough Dupont after Thomas Gainsborough, *Colonel John Hayes St. Leger*, 1783. Coloured mezzotint, 62.9 x 45.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 44: Thomas Colley, *The Comforts – and – Curse of a Military Life*, published by E. Darchery [sic], 10 February 1783. Engraving, 21.8 x 34.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 45: Anon., *Veluti in Speculum*, frontispiece to [Francis Grose], *Advice. to Officers of the British Army: With the Addition of some Hints to the Drummer and Private Soldier* [1782], 6th ed. (London, 1783). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 46: Francis Hayman, *The Surrender of Montreal to General Amherst*, modello, 1760-61. Oil on canvas, 70.8 x 91.4 cm. Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Fig. 47: John Singleton Copley, *The Siege of Gibraltar*, 1783-91. Oil on canvas, 543 x 754 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.
Fig. 48: Proposals for Publishing by Subscription, An Engraving, from the historical Picture of the Siege and Relief of Gibraltar, painted by J.S. Copley, R.A. Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the King, for that Purpose, in the Green Park, subscription notice, 1791 (detail). British Library, London.

Fig. 49: Proposals for Publishing by Subscription, An Engraving from the historical Picture of the Siege and Relief of Gibraltar, painted by J.S. Copley, R.A. Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the King, for that Purpose, in the Green Park, subscription notice, 1791 (detail). British Library, London.

Fig. 50: George Carter, The Siege of Gibraltar, c. 1782-3. Oil on canvas, 151 x 258 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 51: John Trumbull, The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar, 1789. Oil on canvas, 151 x 258 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 52: William Faden, Plan of the Bay, Rock and Town of Gibraltar, published by William Faden, 26 January 1783. Engraving, 75.3 x 54.6 cm. Birmingham Public Libraries.

Fig. 53: Thomas Colley, The Bombardment of Gibraltar, or F_t_g against Thunder, published by William Holland, c. October 1783. Engraving, 13.8 x 22.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 54: Thomas Malton after G. F. Koehler, *General Elliot on King's Bastion Gibraltar*, September 13 1782, published by William Faden, 24 December 1788. Aquatint, 47.1 x 59.2 cm. National Army Museum.

Fig. 55: John Emes after James Jeffreys, *The Scene before Gibraltar on the Morning of the 14th of September 1782*, published by Elizabeth Woollett, William Jeffreys and John Emes, 1789. Engraving with etching, 49 x 68.8 cm. National Maritime Museum, London.

Fig. 56: John Keyse Sherwin, *A View of Gibraltar with the Spanish Battering Ships on Fire*, published by John Keyse Sherwin & W. Hinton, 14 September 1784. Engraving, 46 x 56.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 57: Titlepage, from John Drinkwater, *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar* (London, 1785). Birmingham Public Libraries.


Fig. 64: John Faber after John Wyck, *Siege of Namur 1695*, published by John Faber, 1743. Mezzotint, 36 x 51.9 cm. National Army Museum.


Fig. 68: John Singleton Copley, *Lord Cornwallis*, 1794. Oil on canvas, 145 x 114 cm. Guildhall Museum and Art Gallery.

Fig. 69: William Dent, *Rare News from India; or, Things going on Swimmingly in the East*, published by William Dent, 5 December 1791. Engraving, 23.5 x 34.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 70: James Gillray, *The coming-on of the Monsoons; - or – The Retreat from Seringapatam*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 6 December 1791. Coloured engraving, 21.9 x 34.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 71: Isaac Cruikshank, *How to Gain a Complete Victory, and Say You got Safe out of the Enemys reach*, published by Samuel William Fores, 15 December, 1791. Coloured
Fig. 72: James Gillray, *Scotch-Harry’s News; - or – Nincumpoop in high Glee*, published by John Aitken, 23 May 1792. Coloured engraving, 24.8 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 73: William Dent, *Flying News; Or, Seringapatam taken by Stratagem!*, published by William Dent, 21 May 1792. Engraving, 22.9 x 33.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 74: Richard Newton?, *Wonderful News from Seringapatam*, published by William Holland, 18 May 1792. Engraving, 34 x 52.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 75: Robert Home, *Lord Cornwallis Receiving the Sons of Tipu Sultan as Hostages, Seringapatam, 25 February 1792*, c.1793. Oil on canvas, 148 x 201 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 76: Francis Hayman, *Lord Clive Receiving the Homage of the Nabob*, modello, 1761-62. Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 127 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.
Fig. 77: Francesco Bartolozzi after Mather Brown, *The Departure of the Sons of Tippoo from the Zenana*, published by Daniel Orme, 21 December 1793. Coloured engraving, 52.7 x 69.6 cm. National Army Museum, London.


Fig. 79: John Hall after Edward Edwards, title cartouche to James Rennell, *Hindoostan* (London, 1782). Engraving, 26.7 x 18.4 cm. Department of Maps and Drawings, British Library, London.

Fig. 80: James Rennell compiled from the original maps drawn by Alexander Beatson & Alexander Allan, *The Marches of the British Armies in the Peninsula of India during the Campaigns of 1790 and 1791*, published by John Rennell, 21 February 1792. Engraving, 63 x 85 cm. Department of Maps and Drawings, British Library, London.

Fig. 81: James Rennell, *The Peninsula of India, from the Kistnah River to Cape Comorin; From the latest Authorities: Exhibiting its Political Division, according to the Partition Treaty made at Seringapatam, 1792*, published by James Rennell, 7 December 1792. Engraving, 53.2 x 45.2 cm. Department of Maps and Drawings, British Library, London.


Fig. 84: Colin McKenzie, *Sketch plan of the attack on Seringapatam (Mysore) 1791*. Pencil and ink. India Office Library, British Library, London.

Fig. 85: After Colin McKenzie, *View of Nandidroog, with the Batteries firing on the Place during the Siege, 1791*. Watercolour, 41.9 x 54.7 cm. India Office Library, British Library, London.

Fig. 86: J.G. Newman, *Distant View of Mulwalkull and of Earl Cornwallis's Army filing off towards that place on the March. February 26th, 1791*. Watercolour, 16.4 x 29.8 cm. India Office Library, British Library, London.

Fig. 88: James Fittler after Robert Home, *View of the Pettah Gateway, where Colonel Moorhouse fell*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 89: James Fittler after Robert Home, *South West View of Ootradroog*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 90: James Fittler after Robert Home, *North View of Seringapatam*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 91: James Fittler after Robert Home, *East View of Seringapatam*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 92: William Byrne after Robert Home, *View of Shevagunga from the road to Seringapatam*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.

Fig. 93: Robert Home, *The Death of Colonel Moorhouse, Madras Artillery, at the Siege of Bangalore, 8 March 1791*, 1793-4. Oil on canvas, 146.5 x 200 cm. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 94: Thomas Rowlandson after Lord George Murray, *The Contrast 1792/Which Is Best*, published on behalf of the Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers, December 1792. Coloured etching, 30.5 x 47 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 95: *An Address From the 105th and 113th Regiments to the Public, and their Brothers in Arms*, dated 4 September 1795. Printed handbill. National Army Museum, London.

Fig. 96: James Gillray, *John Bull's Progress*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 3 June, 1793. Coloured engraving, 14 x 19.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 97: Isaac Cruikshank, *He would be a Soldier, or the History of John Bull's warlike Expedition*, published by Samuel William Fores, 1 July, 1793. Engraving, 25.5 x 35.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 98: James Gillray, *Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 20 May 1793. Coloured engraving, 34.9 x 50.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 99: Isaac Cruikshank, *The Wet Party or the Bogs of Flanders*, published by Samuel William Fores, 7 December 1793. Coloured engraving, 21.7 x 33.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 100: James Gillray, *Pantagruel's victorious return to the court of Gargantua, after extirpating the Soup-Meagres of Bouille Land*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 10 February, 1794. Coloured engraving, 29.9 x 35.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.


Fig. 102: Thomas Wright?, *Light Infantry of Foot Guards*, published by Samuel William Fores, 12 August 1793. Coloured etching, 25.5 x 29 cm. National Army Museum, London.


Fig. 107: James Gillray, *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion, - or - Forcible Reasons for negotiating a Regicide Peace*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 20 October 1796. Coloured etching, 30.3 x 42.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 108: James Gillray, *The French Invasion; - Or - John Bull Bombarding the Bum-Boats*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 5 November 1793. Coloured engraving, 32.4 x 24.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.


Fig. 110: John Wootton, *George II at the Battle of Dettingen*, 1743. Oil on canvas, 165 x 173 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig.112: Daniel Orme after Mather Brown, *The Memorable Attack upon the French Camp on the Hills of Famars near Valenciennes by the Hanoverian Corp de Garde & Combined Armies under the Command of His Royal Highness on the 23 May 1793*, published by Daniel Orme, 1 February 1796. Engraving, 53.7 x 70.5 cm. National Army Museum, London.

Fig.113: Isaac Cruikshank, *Amusement for John Bull or the Flying Camp*, published by J. Aickin, 24 July 1792. Engraving, 31 x 39 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.


Fig.115: James Gillray, *Supplementary Militia, Turning-Out for Twenty-Days Amusement*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 25 November 1796. Coloured engraving, 35 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 117: Anon., *Essex-Calve-Iry for Internal Defence*, published 12 May 1794. Engraving, 23.5 x 27.6 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 118: James Gillray, *St. George's Volunteers Charging Down Bond Street Clearing the Ring in Hyde Park, & Storming the Dunghill at Marybone*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 1 March 1797. Coloured engraving, 24.1 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.

Fig. 119: Anthony Cardon after Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *Soldiers, Sailors and Mariners Decorating an Egyptian Monument with Portraits of the officers on the staff of Sir Ralph Abercromby at the battle of Alexandria 1801*, published and sold by Anthony Cardon, 1806. Coloured etching and aquatint, 79.4 x 64.7 cm. National Army Museum, London.


Fig. 121: John Hill after William Henry Pyne, *Army from Microcosm; or, a Picturesque Delineation of the Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures, & c. of Great Britain, in a Series of*


Fig. 123: John Hill after William Henry Pyne, Camp Scenes from Microcosm; or, a Picturesque Delineation of the Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures, & c. of Great Britain, in a Series of above a Thousand Groups of Small figures for the Embellishment of Landscape, . . . the Whole Accurately Drawn from Nature and Aquatinted by J. Hill; to Which are Added, Explanations of the Plates, and Essays Relating to Various Subjects by C. Gray, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1806). Coloured aquatint. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 1: John Hill after William Henry Pyne, *Army*, from *Microcosm; or, a Picturesque Delineation of the Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures, &c. of Great Britain* in a Series of above 1800 Wood and Copper Plates.
THE FRUITS OF ARBITRARY POWER; or the BLOODY MASSACRE,
Perpetrated in King-street, Boston, by a Party of the XXIXth Regt.
In which Mess. Sam. Gray, Sam. Maverick, James Caldwell, Crispus Attucks, Patrick Carr, were killed.
Six others were wounded, two of them [Christopher Monk and John Clark] mortally.
Fig. 3: Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770. Oil on canvas, 153.7 x 312.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.
Fig. 4: Jug printed with West's *The Death of General Wolfe*, c. 1770s. Creamware. Liverpool Museum.
Fig. 5: Anon., *A View of the Custom House*, published by Edward Langley c.1780. Engraving, 42 x 27 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.
Fig. 6: Francis Wheatley, *Lord Aldborough on Pomposo, A Review in Belan Park*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 155 x 265 cm. Waddesdon Manor.
Fig. 7: Joshua Reynolds, *Colonel George Coussmaker*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 238 x 146 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Fig. 8: John Singleton Copley, *The Death of Major Peirson*, 1782-84. Oil on canvas, 264.4 x 365.8 cm. Tate Gallery, London.
DESCRIPTON
OF THE
PICTURE
OF THE DEATH OF
MAJOR PEIRSON,
And the DEFEAT of the
French Troops in the Island of Jersey.
Painted by Mr. COPLEYS for Mr. BOYDLELL.

Fig. 9: Description of the Picture of the Death of Major Peirson, and the Defeat of the French Troops in the Island of Jersey, subscription notice (detail), 1781. Tate Gallery, London.
Some account of HANNAH S N E L L, the Female Soldier:

ANN S N E L L, was born in Fryer-street, Worcester, April 1733. Her father was a boiser and dyer; and son to lieut. Snell who was at the taking of Namur, in the reign of K. William, and afterwards served in Anne's wars. When her father and mother, who by their industry brought up 3 sons and 6 daughters, died, Hannah set out for London, where she arrived on Christmas Day, 1740, and relided some time with her sister, who had married one Gray, a carpenter, and lived in Wapping. Here she became acquainted with James Summe, a Dutch sailor, to whom she was married in 1745; but he treated her with great inhumanity, and left her when seven months with child, which dying at six months old, she decently buried it. She put on a suit of her brother-in-law's apparel, on Nov. 23, 1745, left her sister without communicating her design, and went to Coventry, where she enlisted herself in Giffe's regiment of foot, and march'd with it to Carlisle. Here her sergeant, whose name was Davis, having...
Fig. 11: Anon., *Ass Upon Ass*, published by Hannah Humphrey, June 1780. Engraving, 19.4 x 13.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 12: James Gillray, *The American Rattle Snake*, published by William Humphrey, 12 April 1782. Engraving, 22.1 x 27.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 13: James Heath after Francis Wheatley, The Riot in Broad Street, 7 June 1780, published by John & Joseph Bankart, 20 September 1780. Engraving, 47.6 x 63.3 cm. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 14: Anon., *The Scotch Butchery, Boston 1775*. Engraving, 17.8 x 32.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 18: Anon., [England, France and Spain], published September 1779. Engraving, 12.1 x 21.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 19: Anon., Count de Rochambeau, published by Thomas Colley, 25 November 1780. Engraving, 21 x 33 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 20: Anon., Full and Half-Pay Officers, published by Samuel William Fores, 1 March 1786. Engraving, 26 x 41.6 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
ALL those who prefer the Glory of bearing Arms to any servile mean Employ, and have Spirit to stand forth in Defence of their King and Country, against the treacherous Designs of France and Spain, in the

Sussex Light Dragoons,

Commanded by

Lt. Col. John Baker Holroyd,

Let them repair to

Where they shall be handsomely Cloathed, most compleatly Accoutred, mounted on noble Hunters, and treated with Kindness and Generosity.
Arouse Britons for the Honour and Glory of Old England!

Now is the Moment my noble-minded Countrymen, now is the Crisis of our Country's Fate!
Fly to the Standard of our Sovereign, hasten to man his Fleets and augment his Armies.
By acting thus, Britons, you shall restore the native Resplendence of our Beloved Country, chastise the Perfidious French and Spaniards, and be again united to our Brethren in America, who have been so falsely deluded from their Natural Allegiance by the sworn Enemies of All Englishmen.

ALL REAL VOLUNTEERS

Whole Hearts are filled with Loyalty for the best of Kings, and Love for the Noblest of Constitutions, and who are willing to maintain the Honour of Old England in Defiance of French and Spanish Treachery, have now a noble Opportunity of obtaining immortal Renown, by repairing to the Standard of

His Majesty's 88th Regiment of Foot,
or
BRITISH VOLUNTEERS,
Commanded by
Colonel THOMAS KEATING,
Now quartered in Sheffield, in Yorkshire.

The Sons of Freedom are alone worthy to support the Honour of Old England, and the Conduct of the Noble Regiment of BRITISH VOLUNTEERS, shall prove that Englishmen never wanted Courage to defend their Wives, their Sweethearts, or their Firesides.

Such Gentlemen as chuse to serve their King and Country in the above-mentioned Regiment are desired to repair to the Drum Head, or to

where they shall receive as large a Bounty as is given by any Regiment in his Majesty's Service (besides other Advantages) enter into immediate Pay and free Quarters, and be treated with every Attention that can be hoped for by a Prince who loves.

GOD save the King.

N. B. Bringers of Recruits may depend on being most liberally rewarded.

Printed by C. Foudrayres, Stationer, Charing-Croft.

Fig.23: Recruiting poster for His Majesty’s 88th Regiment of Foot, c.1779-80. National Army Museum, London.
Since the Foes of Old England so Searce appear,
And the Land is in danger, from Spain & Monsieur,
For each Subject is Arm'd in the Nation's defence,
Is the Language of Reason, the Language of Sense,
Like bold Volunteers, let each Cuckold attend,
For Cuckolds we know have their HORNs to defend!
Come Cuckolds, Come! Come!
At the Sound of the Drum!
These Bogyling Boasters, we soon will drive Home.

With Caps, Hats, or Feathers, delightfully Fine,
The Troops duly rais'd may amazingly shine,
But a Regimen of Cuckolds, if once they appear,
That Ants high-Branching, our Foes soon would scare,
So far in their Ranks, & so wide, they'd expand.
And the best in the Nation, might have the Command.
Come &c. &c.

Great Caesar they say was a Cuckold of Old,
And Pompey the same, as the Story is told,
They conquer each Foe, which they still hold in Scorn,
And the Laurel of Victory, with it round each Horn,
From our great Examples, ye Cuckolds arise,
For Cuckolds no one, can surely dispute,
Come &c. &c.

Ye Free-Hearted Ladies, are you now our Woes,
Send your Cuckolds abroad, with the looks of stern Mars,
Let their Tips be well gilt, & our Foes they will say,
"Here's the Dastard-dating Cuckolds, so let's run away."
The Land shall be saved by the Fortunes alone.
For in England, there's surely enough, we must own,
Come &c. &c.

Published Feb. 4th 1780 by W. Humphrey, No. 507 Strand.
Fig. 25: Anon., *Lady Gorget Raising Recruits for Coxheath*, published by Carrington Bowles, 1781. Coloured mezzotint, 32.7 x 24.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 26: William Humphrey?, Six-Pence a Day, published by William Humphrey, 26 October 1775. Engraving, 21 x 34 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 27: John Murphy after Francis Wheatley, The Encampment at Brighton (Scene from a Camp with an Officer Buying Chickens), published by Paul Delauney & Co., 1 May 1796. Mezzotint. 53.5 x 65.5 cm
Fig. 28. William Ward after Francis Wheatley, *The Soldier's Return*, published by John Raphael Smith, 14 June 1787. Mezzotint, 50 x 34.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 29: James Heath after Joseph Wright of Derby, *Dead Soldier*, published by James Heath, 4 May 1797. Engraving, 43 x 59.4 cm. Derby Museum and Art Gallery.
Fig. 30: George Keating after George Morland, *Recruit Deserted*, published by John Raphael Smith, 29 July 1791. Mezzotint, 54.8 x 44.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 31: Anon., *A View of the Camp at Cox-heath, near Maidstone in Kent*, published by Carrington Bowles, 29 September, 1778. Coloured engraving, 39.2 x 53.1 cm. National Army Museum, London.
"The Political Raree-show: or a Picture of Parties and Politics, during and at the close of the Last Session of Parliament, June 1779."

Published 15th July 1779, by Harding & Waller, Paternoster Row.

Fig. 32: Anon., The Political Raree-Show: Or a Picture of Parties and Politics During and at the Close of the Last Session of Parliament, June 1779, from The Westminster Magazine; or the Pantheon of Taste, June 1779. Engraving. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Admiral Keppel's Letter to Mr. S. verified.

SIR,

By the message I sent you before it appeared.

We were all in high spirits pursuing Monvere.

From that time to this I've been trying to appear

But the French seemed so cautious of coming to blows,

That, with all my fine tackling, I scarce could get near

To bring up my van with their center

You must know, with those fellow's, a notion prevails,

That a ship cannot fight without rigging or sail's

To dismât was their object, to it they fell,

And in truth to some, for they pleased us well,

So that I could scarce lead, and my ships could scarce follow.

(Which means, in plain English, they beat us all hollow)

Having done what they lik'd, at the close of the day,

They again form'd their fleet, and dolly up:

When I found in the evening they wish'd to retire,

I allow'd them to do it, and chose not to fire;

For I hop'd in the morning they would honestly fight.

So I thought 'twould be cruel to beat them that night.

But lo! in the morning the birds were all flown,

Our masts, all split, and our rigging gone,

So we derry'd it must prou'd to let them alone.

We have best them yet, and, to make it quite plain,

I have sent you a lift of the wounded and slain.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

CAMP ON COXHEATH.

Tho' the dog-star inflames, and the heat is intense,

Dull, rabble, and riot, confound ev'ry sense.

Let us fly to the camp—such a sight ne'er was seen,

Where Mars is the King, and Idalia* the Queen.

Away to the camp on Coxheath then repair,

For beauty and courage are certainly there:

Since the Church and Virginy's certainty there.

Go old, and go young, and the gay and the fair,

The lane and the blind, and the Beadle and May

The poor and the wealthy, the right and the wrong,

And Majesty, blest him! shall soon head the throng.

Away, to the camp on Coxheath then repair.

For your model of Monarchs soon will be there.

For camp, see the rustic reign his reply,

And awakens three in the morning his Roar;

As fresh as the morn the loud call she obeys,

And the guns, and the drums, and the tidings surveys;

Away, to the camp on Coxheath then repair.

Since Roger, and Roie, and rude Nature are there.

Come, tilt the new cart, and we'll furnish each bench

With Parian, fair Virgins, fat Bob and his Wench.

From the London Gazette Extraordinary.

Admiralty-Office, Aug. 2. 1778.
CAPTAIN PAULKNER, of his Majesty's ship the Victory, arrived at this Office yesterday in the afternoon, with a Letter from the Honourable Augustus Keppel, Admiral of the Blue, and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships employed to the Westward, to Mr. Stephens; of which the following is a Copy:

SIR, Victory, at Sea, July 30.

My letters of the 29th and 24th inst, from the Peggy and the Union cutters, acquainted you, for your Lordships information, that I was in pursuance of the King's fleet under my command, of a numerous fleet of French ships of war.

From that time till the 27th, the winds constantly in the S. W. and N. W. quarters, sometimes blowing fresbly, and the French fleet always to windward going off, I made use of every method to elude in with them that was possible, keeping then jovial jog on for this brave race—

Than these, that there's higher, there's many below;

Away, to the camp on Coxheath then repair.

* One of the names for Venus.

An Impromptu. Walking by Moonlight.

HAIL! silver moon—whole cheerful radiance warm;

The lover's breast to seek his Chloe's arms.

Who, by the light each other's vows exchange,

And feel those vows—while pleased by thee they range.

E. T.

Fig. 33: Pages from The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure. August 1778. Birmingham Public
Fig. 34: Anon., *General Parker Exerciseing [sic] the Army at Warley-Camp*, published by Henry Fielding & John Walker, 1 August 1779. Engraving, 20 x 20.5 cm. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 35: John Mortimer, A Trip to Cock's Heath, published by William Humphrey, 28 October 1778. Engraving, 23.4 x 33.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 36: The Three Graces of Coxheath, published by Matthew Darly, 4 March, 1779. Engraving, 20.4 x 31.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 37: Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Worsley*, 1780. Oil on canvas, 236 x 144 cm. Harewood House, London.
Fig. 38: Anon., *A Bath of the Moderns*, published by E. Darchery [sic], 4 March, 1782. Engraving, 18.3 x 25.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig 39: Joshua Reynolds, *Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 236.2 x 145.4 cm. National Gallery, London.
Fig. 40: Anon., Lieutenant-Colonel Tarleton, from *The Westminster Magazine; or the Pantheon of Taste* (March 1782) Engraving. British Library, London.
Fig 41: James Gillray?, *The Thunderer*, published by E. D'Achery, 20 August 1782. Engraving, 31.8 x 22.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig 42: *Cincinnatus*, Roman copy after 3rd Century BC Greek original. Marble, height 154cm. Paris, Louvre.
Fig 43: Gainsborough Dupont after Thomas Gainsborough, *Colonel John Hayes St. Leger*, 1783. Coloured mezzotint, 62.9 x 45.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 44: Thomas Colley, *The Comforts - and - Curse of a Military Life*, published by E. Darchery [sic], 10 February 1783. Engraving, 21.8 x 34.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 45: Anon., *Veluti in Speculum*, frontispiece to [Francis Grose], *Advice to Officers of the British Army: With the Addition of some Hints to the Drummer and Private Soldier* [1782], 6th ed. (London, 1783). Engraving. British Library, London.
Fig 46: Francis Hayman, *The Surrender of Montreal to General Amherst*, modello, 1760-61. Oil on canvas, 70.8 x 91.4 cm. Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, New Brunswick.
Fig 47: John Singleton Copley, *The Siege of Gibraltar*, 1783-91. Oil on canvas, 543 x 754 cm. Guildhall Art Gallery, London.
PROPOSALS
For PUBLISHING by SUBSCRIPTION,
AN ENGRAVING
FROM THE
HISTORICAL PICTURE
OF THE
SIEGE and RELIEF of GIBRALTAR,
PAINTED BY
JOHN SINGLETON COLEY, R. A.
Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the KING, for that Purpose,
IN THE GREEN PARK.
This Work, executed for the City of London, by Order of the Corporation, is to be placed in the Council Chamber of Guildhall,
AS A TESTIMONY OF RESPECT TO THE LATE
LORD HEATHFIELD, then Governor of Gibraltar;
EARL HOWE, Commander of the Fleet;
And the Rest of His Majesty’s Officers, Soldiers, and Sailors,
For their gallant Conduct displayed in the
DEFENCE and RELIEF of that IMPORTANT FORTRESS.
To be ENGRAVED by
FRANCIS BARTOLOZZI, R. A.
CONDITIONS.
I. The Dimensions of the Engraving, will be 30 Inches wide, by 28½ Inches high, and its size will render it a proper Centre Print to those of the late Earl of Chatham, and another of King Charles the First, demanding, in the House of Commons, A.D. 1641-2, the Delivery of the Five impeached Members.

II. The Price to Subscribers, Four Guineas, two to be paid at the time of subscribing, the other on delivery of the Prints.

III. The Prints to be delivered in the order they are subscribed for.

IV. The price to Non-subscribers will be advanced.

Subscriptions are received at the Place of Exhibition, and at Mr. Copley’s
George-Street, Hanover-Square.

Fig.48: Proposals for Publishing by Subscription, An Engraving, from the historical Picture of the Siege and Relief of Gibraltar, painted by J.S. Copley, R.A. Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the King, for that Purpose, in the Green Park, subscription notice, 1791 (detail). British Library, London.
The painting is 24 feet wide, by 22½ feet high, divided into two compartments; the upper describing the victory of the Garrison, and in the moment of their triumph, a display of humanity, that highly exalts the British character; it is composed of three large groups; that on the right contains the portraits of the principal British and Hanoverian Officers of the size of life, who are assembled on the rampart (the action being over) to view the dreadful scene which ensued from the buffeting ships being set on fire. Lord Howe, early on the morning of the 14th of September, is seen mounted on a white horse, (agreeably to historical facts) in conversation with Generals Boyd, de la Motte and Green; painting to Sir Roger Curtis, and a detachment of British seamen, who, at the hazard of their own lives, are rescuing their vanquished enemies from destruction. Several of the frames are seen at the stern of one of the battering ships, striking the Spanish Ensign; whilst others generously relieve a number of the unfortunate Spaniards from a sinking wreck: these form a second group, on the left. The third group occupy the centre, where a number of the enemy are represented in extreme distress, endeavouring to escape from a floating battery that is enveloped in flames. At a distance is a view of the Camp of the allied Army, and the head quarters of the Duke of Cumberland. In the under compartment is represented the relief of Gibraltar, by the British fleet, under the command of Earl Howe; on the right is seen the Rock of Gibraltar; and a number of rowing ships entering the bay, protected by a detachment of the fleet, which extends itself through the picture, to the left.

At a distance is a view of the Bay of Gibraltar; and the combined fleets of France and Spain appear at anchor. The Spanish coast terminates the view. Portraits of Earl Howe, and Admiral Barrington are placed on the sides of this compartment.

Fig. 49: Proposals for Publishing by Subscription, An Engraving from the historical Picture of the Siege and Relief of Gibraltar, painted by J.S. Copley, R.A. Now Exhibiting in a Pavilion, erected by the gracious Permission of the King, for that Purpose, in the Green Park, subscription notice, 1791 (detail). British Library, London.
Fig. 50: George Carter, *The Siege of Gibraltar*, c. 1782-3. Oil on canvas, 151 x 258 cm. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 51: John Trumbull, *The Sortie Made by the Garrison of Gibraltar*, 1789. Oil on canvas, 151 x 258 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Fig. 52: William Faden, *Plan of the Bay, Rock and Town of Gibraltar*, published by William Faden, 26 January 1783. Engraving, 75.3 x 54.6 cm. Birmingham Public Libraries.
Fig. 53: Thomas Colley, *The Bum-bardment of Gibraltar, or F_t_g against Thunder*, published by William Holland, c. October 1783. Engraving, 13.8 x 22.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 54: Thomas Malton after G. F. Koehler, *General Elliot on King's Bastion Gibraltar, September 13*. 
Fig. 56: John Keyse Sherwin, *A View of Gibraltar with the Spanish Battering Ships on Fire*, published by John Keyse Sherwin & W. Hinton, 14 September 1784. Engraving, 46 x 56.5 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
A
HISTORY
OF THE LATE
SIEGE of GIBRALTAR.
WITH
A DESCRIPTION and ACCOUNT of that GARRISON,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIODS.
BY
JOHN DRINKWATER,
CAPTAIN OF THE LATE SEVENTY-SECOND REGIMENT, OR ROYAL MANCHESTER VOLUNTEERS;
LONDON:
Printed by T. S PiLsBuRy, Snowhill;
And sold by J. joHnson, No 72, St. Paul's Church Yard; T. and J. EcERToN,
Charing-Crofs; and J. EdwaRds, No 102, Pall-Mall.
M,DCC,LXXXV.

Fig. 57: Titlepage, from John Drinkwater, A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar (London, 1785). Birmingham Public Libraries.
Fig. 62: Francesco Bartolozzi, Mr. Copley's Picture of the Siege of Gibraltar as Exhibited in the Green Park near St. James's Palace, admission ticket 1791. Engraving. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 64: John Faber after John Wyck, *Siege of Namur 1695*, published by John Faber, 1743. Mezzotint, 36 x 51.9 cm. National Army Museum.
Fig. 68: John Singleton Copley, *Lord Cornwallis*, 1794. Oil on canvas, 145 x 114 cm. Guildhall Museum and Art Gallery.
Fig. 69: William Dent, *Rare News from India; or, Things going on Swimmingly in the East*, published by William Dent, 5 December 1791. Engraving, 23.5 x 34.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 70: James Gillray, The coming-on of the Monsoons: or - The Retreat from Seringapatam, published by Hannah Humphrey, 6 December 1791. Coloured engraving. 21.9 x 34.3 cm. Department of Prints and
Fig 71: Isaac Cruikshank, *How to Gain a Complete Victory, and Say You got Safe out of the Enemy's reach*, published by Samuel William Fores, 15 December, 1791. Coloured engraving, 22.6 x 34.3 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London
Fig. 72: James Gillray, *Scotch-Harry's News; or Nincumpoop in high Glee*, published by John Aitken, 23 May 1792. Coloured engraving, 24.8 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 73: William Dent, *Flying News; Or, Seringapatam taken by Stratagem!*, published by William Dent, 21 May 1792. Engraving, 22.9 x 33.7 cm. Department of Prints and drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 74: Richard Newton?, Wonderful News from Seringapatam, published by William Holland, 18 May 1792. Engraving, 34 x 52.7 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 75: Robert Home, Lord Cornwallis Receiving the Sons of Tipu Sultan as Hostages, Seringapatam, 25 February 1792, c. 1793. Oil on canvas, 148 x 201 cm. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 76: Francis Hayman, *Lord Clive Receiving the Homage of the Nabob*, modello, 1761-62. Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 127 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London.
Fig. 77: Francesco Bartolozzi after Mather Brown, *The Departure of the Sons of Tippoo from the Zenana,* published by Upper & Bottom, 31 December 1785. Engraving, 41.7 x 60.4 cm, Municipal Library, Dublin.
Fig. 80: James Rennell compiled from the original maps drawn by Alexander Beatson & Alexander Allan. 
The Marches of the British Armies in the Peninsula of India during the Campaigns of 1790 and 1791.
Fig. 81: James Rennell, *The Peninsula of India, from the Kistnah River to Cape Comorin; From the latest Authorities: Exhibiting its Political Division, according to the Partition Treaty made at Seringapatam, 1792*, published by James Rennell, 7 December 1792. Engraving, 53.2 x 45.2 cm. Department of Maps and Drawings, British Library, London.
PLAN of the FORT of BANGALORE from SIGHTS, without Measurement.

All the Bastions are small, with 7 Embrasures. Wall about 17 Feet high, a double Rampart about 30 Feet broad.

A. Palace of Tipoo.
B. Column before the Hindu Pagoda.
C. Large Square with Buildings all round filled with Military Stores; the whole Length about 100 Yards, Breadth in proportion.

2 Gates.
A Flat of 30 Feet for hausschayye.
Ditch about 30 Feet deep.
Gawalters in the inner side.
Large Batteries outside.

Published by J. Jolliffe, 30 Cumberland St., 1792.

Fig. 82: After Claude Martin, Plan of the Fort of Bangalore from Sights, without Measurement, from The European Magazine, and London Review (May 1792). Engraving. Birmingham Public Libraries.
Fig. 84: Colin McKenzie, Sketch plan of the attack on Seringapatam (Mysore) 1791. Pencil and ink. India Office Library, British Library, London.
Fig. 85: After Colin McKenzie, *View of Nandurog, with the Batteries firing on the Place during the Siege*, 1791. Watercolour, 21.9 x 53.2 cm, held at the Board of Trustees, British Library, London.
Fig. 86: J.G. Newman, Distant View of Mulwalkull and of Earl Cornwallis's Army filing off towards that place on the March. February 26th, 1791. Watercolour, 16.4 x 29.8 cm. India Office Library, British Library, London.
Fig 88: James Fittler after Robert Home, View of the Pettah Gateway, where Colonel Moorhouse fell, from Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from drawings Taken on the Spot (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.
Fig. 90: James Fittler after Robert Home, *North View of Seringapatam*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.
Fig. 91: James Fittler after Robert Home, *East View of Seringapatam*, from *Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot* (London, 1794). Engraving. British Library, London.
Fig. 92: William Byrne after Robert Home, View of Shevagunga from the road to Seringapatam, from Select Views in Mysore, the Country of Tippoo Sultan; from Drawings Taken on the Spot (London, 1794).
Fig. 93: Robert Home, *The Death of Colonel Moorhouse, Madras Artillery, at the Siege of Bangalore, 8*
RELIGION, MORALITY, LOYALTY OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS INDEPENDENCE PERSONAL SECURITY JUSTICE INHERITANCE, PROTECTION PROPERTY, INDUSTRY, NATIONAL PROSPERITY HAPPINESS

ATHEISM, PERJURY, REBELLION, TREASON, ANARCHY, MURDER EQUITY, MADNESS, CRUELTY, INJUSTICE TREACHERY, INGRATITUDE, IDLENESS FAMINE, NATIONAL & PRIVATE RUIN, MISERY

WHICH IS BEST  

THE CONTRAST 1792

Fig 94: Thomas Rowlandson after Lord George Murray, The Contrast 1792: Which Is Best, published on behalf of the Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers, December 1792. Coloured etching, 30.5 x 47 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
AN ADDRESS
From the 105th and 113th Regiments
to the Public, and their Brothers in
Arms.

Citizens and Fellow Soldiers.

It is no longer time to sport with our Lives and trifle with
our Credulity—We, too, have been Indolent Citizens
till a dreadful and atrocious War had dried up the channels of
our Manufactures and caused us to Roam at large, Idle and
Dependent!—Necessity, dire necessity induced us to embark in
a cause which our souls abhorred; but hunger has no Law;
sooner than perish, we had been tempted by large Sums
(badly paid) to enrol ourselves—We did so, on condition of
returning to our homes at the approach of Peace; but what now
is the case? All faith is broken with us! We are led to be in-
corporated with Regiments that will never be reduced, except
by a formidable enemy and the more formidable climate of the
WEST-INDIES! And you, unfortunate and inflamed Natives
of Africa, are you to feel our Steel? Are we to be made fiends
your innocent blood with our Murderous Arms? Forbid it
Heaven! Forbid it Justice! No, no, perish first the man
who dare embark for so horrid a purpose; Generous Citizens
of Cork, do you not sympathize with us? Do you not pity
us thus Crimped and Sold by unfaithful Officers? You sullen
must; for you cannot be hardened to misfortunes.

As to our Brothers in Arms, they cannot, they will not un-
leash the Sword to enforce an Arbitrary and Unjust Measure.
Our Fellow Soldiers, are fellow men, and cannot forget what
they owe to themselves—they must think, and then we are all
right. Yes, we will defend our Country, our Homes, our
Wives and Children, to this we are pledged, and from this
we shall never Flinch.

CORK, SEPTEMBER 4, 1795.

Fig.95: An Address From the 105th and 113th Regiments to the Public, and their Brothers in Arms, dated 4 September 1795. Printed handbill. National Army Museum, London.
Fig. 96: James Gillray, *John Bull's Progress*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 3 June, 1793. Coloured engraving, 14 x 19.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
"He would be a Soldier? or the History of John Bull's warlike Expeditions"

Fig. 97: Isaac Cruikshank, *He would be a Soldier, or the History of John Bull's warlike Expedition*, published by Samuel William Fores, 1 July, 1793. Engraving, 25.5 x 35.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 98: James Gillray, *Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 20 May 1793. Coloured engraving, 34.9 x 50.2 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig.99: Isaac Cruikshank, *The Wet Party or the Bogs of Flanders*, published by Samuel William Fores, 7 December 1793. Coloured engraving, 21.7 x 33.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 100: James Gillray, *Pantagruel's victorious return to the court of Gargantua, after extirpating the Soup-Meagres of Bouille Land*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 10 February, 1794. Coloured engraving.
Fig. 101: Maria Catharina Prestel after Robert Ker Porter, *The March to Greenwich*, published by Robert.
Fig. 102: Thomas Wright?, Light Infantry of Foot Guards, published by Samuel William Fores, 12 August 1767.
Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion, or – Forcible Reasons for negotiating a Regicide Peace. Published by Hannah Humphrey, 20 October 1796. Coloured etching, 30.3 x 42.1 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 108: James Gillray, *The French Invasion; or - John Bull Bombarding the Bum-Boats*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 5 November 1793. Coloured engraving, 32.4 x 24.8 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 109: George Beechey after William Beechey. *George III with the Prince of Wales and Duke of York.*
Fig. 110: John Wootton, *George II at the Battle of Dettingen*, 1743. Oil on canvas. 165 x 173 cm. National
Fig. 111: William Bromley after Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *The Grand Attack on Valenciennes by the combined Armies Under the Command of H.R.H. the Duke of York on the Twenty-Fifth of July 1793*, published by Robert Cribb, 1 December 1801. Engraving, 64.8 x 91.8 cm. National Army Museum.
Fig. 112: Daniel Orme after Mather Brown, The Memorable Attack upon the French Camp on the Hills of Famars near Valenciennes by the Hanoverian Corp de Garde & Combined Armies under the Command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York.
Amusement for John Bull or the Flying Camp.

July 10, 1780, publ. by J. Aickin. No. 6, Castle St. Leadenhall.

Fig. 113: Isaac Cruikshank, Amusement for John Bull or the Flying Camp, published by J. Aickin, 24 July 1780. Responsibility: 21 x 20 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 114: James Bretherton after Henry Bunbury, *A Militia Meeting*, published by James Bretherton, 2
Fig. 115: James Gillray, *Supplementary Militia, Turning-Out for Twenty-Days Amusement*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 25 November 1796. Coloured engraving, 35 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 116: Anon., The Terror of France, or the Westminster Volunteers 1779, published 26 August 1779.
Engraving, 17.5 x 20.6 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 117: Anon., Essex-Calve-iry for Internal Defence, published 12 May 1794. Engraving, 23.5 x 27.6 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 118: James Gillray, *St. George's Volunteers Charging Down Bond Street Clearing the Ring in Hyde Park, & Storming the Dunghill at Marybone*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 1 March 1797. Coloured engraving, 24.1 x 34.9 cm. Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum, London.
Fig. 119: Anthony Cardon after Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *Soldiers, Sailors and Mariners: Decorating an Egyptian Monument with Portraits of the officers on the staff of Sir Ralph Abercromby at the battle of Alexandria 1801*, published and sold by Anthony Cardon, 1806. Coloured etching and aquatint, 79.4 x 64.7 cm. National Army Museum, London.