

**Anglo-French Encounters:  
The Integration of French Prisoners of War and Émigrés  
into British Society 1789-1815**

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## Abstract

At a time of hostility between Britain and France, émigrés and prisoners of war on parole were granted the opportunity, albeit restricted, to interact with people of a different social status within British communities. This dissertation aims to look beyond studies of national identities and perceived Anglo-French hostilities to determine whether Anglo-French encounters show that the French were given a genuine opportunity to settle into British life or whether the British, indoctrinated by messages from the government and the media, maintained their hostility towards the French as 'others'. This study comes at a time when immigration and the movement of refugees is a growing concern across the globe. The research aims to highlight the potential for people to show one another humanity, even in the context of two battling nations forced together. It examines the extent to which French visitors encountered a warm welcome and assistance from their social counterparts in British society. It looks at the differing social standings of the French and the impact of this in terms of acceptance on an individual basis. To determine the importance of rank when assessing overall success of French integration into British society, it asks to what extent the attitudes of the British may have been affected by judgements based on social status or Francophobia. This study is based on a range of sources, including diaries and individual contemporary accounts, to help determine the views of both the British and French of the mass arrival of French immigrants, some voluntary, some forced. The National Archives PRO ADM 103 Series, HO 42 Series and T 93 Series have been essential for looking at the scale of immigration into Britain at the time and obtaining accounts of interactions.

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## Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of French immigration on British society between 1789 and 1815 in terms of social and cultural integration. To do this, the dissertation will consider the experiences and encounters of two distinct types of immigration; the forced immigration of prisoners of war on parole, and the voluntary immigration of refugees from the French Revolution. Government attitudes and the media played a role in informing British views of the incoming Frenchmen. The dissertation will consider to what extent such preconceptions survived individual encounters or whether individual relationships overrode them. To determine whether high social status negated traditional Anglo-French barriers and ill feeling, it will look at how social status influenced the acceptance and treatment of French prisoners of war on parole and émigrés. The level of acceptance will also be addressed by considering the importance of the type of Frenchmen and the reasons why they were in Britain. Prisoners of war were mostly military men who had made war against the British, so they remained in Britain by force. In contrast, émigrés open up a humanitarian angle as they were political refugees. They were mostly civilians who were conservative in their politics and had a similar social status to Britons who were anti-Revolution. Émigrés also included many women and children who were considered less of a threat to British society. The dissertation will firstly provide a background to Anglo-French relations and encounters in the eighteenth-century. It will then look at the media perception of the French arriving in Britain from 1789 and the government reaction through legislation. It will go on to consider to what extent the media and legislation impacted on Anglo-French encounters and whether they affected the ability of the French to successfully settle in British communities. In conclusion, it will compare the treatment of prisoners

on parole and émigrés to suggest whether they successfully integrated and whether social status played a part<sup>1</sup>.

The French were not the only nationality to come to Britain. They have been chosen for the purpose of this study due to the complex nature of Anglo-French relations. In addition, the scale of incoming Frenchmen meant that the effects were felt in many parts of Britain. The study also focuses on a time of high political tension following the French Revolution and a war between the two nations. This dissertation has come at a particularly poignant time concerning the acceptance of immigrants and refugees, with Brexit and the US elections highlighting that immigration can be a dividing issue. Krishnan Kumar described England as a “nation linked by the horizontal ties of nationhood rising above the ties of class, region and religion”<sup>2</sup>. These sentiments will be challenged with the aim of demonstrating that, in some instances, class could supersede national hostility.

The dissertation will detail Anglo-French relations and encounters from earlier in the eighteenth-century to set the scene on historic judgements of the British and French and how they impacted on the media and legislation from 1789. It will then contrast these responses with feelings around Britain once French immigrants were settled in communities. The main primary accounts used will be individuals’ diaries and memoirs,

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<sup>1</sup> For a comparative study on how the French treated foreigners in revolutionary France, see Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship in Revolutionary France: The Treatment of Foreigners 1789-1799* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

<sup>2</sup> Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.103. For further discussion of the horizontal construction of relationships (the use of horizontal meaning those of a similar social standing, as opposed to vertical relationship between the upper and lower orders), see Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748 – 1815* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press Ltd, 2000) pp.157-8, John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) pp. 178–9

such as those from Fanny Burney, Hester Lynch Piozzi and Penelope Pennington. These will be supplemented by accounts held in the National Archives, including PRO ADM 105 Series and HO 42 Series. There were restrictions when researching both individual immigrant accounts and the scale of immigration. There were issues in finding surviving accounts of émigrés in terms of arrival data. For example, there were no surviving general policy documents from the Alien Office between 1783 and 1836, and the only list of British port arrivals is for between August 1810 and May 1811. Consequently, individual accounts will be relied upon to build a general picture. A major problem for the historian in accurately reflecting the feelings of French immigrants and the Britons that encountered them is that most surviving accounts belong to the educated and the elite, so it is hard to uncover feelings of the lower orders. Only so much can be done to offset this, but the individual accounts used in this dissertation aim to show as rounded a picture as possible. Statistics, government records and nationwide responses, such as fundraising, will also be used to try to compensate for this issue and to build the general picture by looking at the scale of incoming Frenchmen and the help given to them. For quantitative records of parolees and émigrés in Britain, PRO ADM 103 Series and T 93 Series will be used. Newspapers, such as *The Times*, along with Hansard will be used to show how the situation was presented in the media and by politicians.

The general context for Anglo-French relations and interactions will be taken from historians such as Linda Colley, Robin Eagles and Renaud Morieux<sup>3</sup>. To date, most research on the Napoleonic Wars has related to military topics, but this is starting to

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<sup>3</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), Eagles, *Francophilia*, Renaud Morieux, 'French Prisoners of War, Conflicts of Honour, and Social Inversions in England, 1744-1783', *Historical Journal*, 56.1 (2013) <<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8827345&fileId=S0018246X12000544>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

change. There has been growing momentum to look into the social aspects of war. Francis Abell recorded individual experiences of prisoners of war and has influenced the approach to this dissertation as he remains the key contributor for information on paroled prisoners between 1789 and 1815, and his approach will be built on by looking at individual experiences. Gavin Daly's article 'Napoleon's Lost Legions: French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803–1814' added a more social approach to the wars and highlighted the lack of knowledge of the lives of these men due to gaps in the research done up to the point of his publication in 2004. He took a more holistic approach to the topic than Abell and attempted to provide a greater depth of analysis. Kirsty Carpenter's work on émigrés, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789-1802*, was a thorough and impactful study of life in the capital for émigrés and their differing experiences, often due to finances and social status. The social aspects continue to be of interest, with pieces of work from Juliette Reboul and Tonya Moutray broadening the focus of Carpenter's work. Reboul looked at the varied response to French émigrés and how their involvement in British communities changed British perceptions long term. Moutray focused on French nuns and their reception from the British press and in literature. This dissertation aims to take previous research, alongside primary sources, to look at immigration throughout Britain from the perspective of social status being a prerequisite for success. Social status has been looked at within France and England separately, but the theme of encounters between the two nations through émigrés and parolees has not been investigated. This work will see how encounters and the status of immigrants could transcend traditional national boundaries and stereotypes.

The dissertation will summarise the existing framework of relations between the French and British in the eighteenth-century to provide context. It will then examine two themes. The first is official views and reactions to the French coming to, and remaining in, Britain. It will focus on the media and legislation, such as the 1793 Aliens Act, during a time of government fear of revolution and the impending threat of war with France. The other theme is how official reactions translated into the behaviour of British citizens towards the French through specific encounters. One chapter will focus on prisoners of war on parole – men who reached a high enough rank to be deemed honourable and so given the opportunity to live in British towns. It will look at how restrictions placed on them affected their ability to socialise and integrate and how the war affected British views and acceptance. Another chapter will focus on the opportunities available to émigrés fleeing the French Revolution and whether they were all treated equally. In the conclusion, the dissertation will look at whether the treatment of parolees and émigrés was the same and whether opinions of the French had changed by the end of the Napoleonic Wars. It will determine how successfully the British and French lived together and what social and cultural barriers remained. It will ask to what extent the social status of immigrants contributed to the success of integration and whether the bond between the elites of different nations was stronger than the bond of British nationalism.



## Background - Eighteenth-century Anglo-French Relations and Encounters

In order to provide a point of comparison, this study will start by placing the years 1789 to 1815 within the wider context. There is a long history of interactions and strained relations between France and Britain and this section will investigate these relations from the start of the eighteenth-century until 1789. By the eighteenth-century the two nations were linked by their imperial rivalry for trading posts and land, and France was Britain's "main contender for imperial and commercial primacy"<sup>4</sup>. Despite there being tension and suspicion between them at times, there was also respect and a level of diplomacy based on social and commercial encounters between the elites<sup>5</sup>. Colley and Eagles agreed that "national character in England was dependent upon France"<sup>6</sup>. However, Eagles felt that Colley overstated the reasons for this. Eagles claimed that there were varied and complex British perceptions of the French, and this dissertation will follow his argument. His thinking was that "English national character was... divided between those who hated France for its religion and its absolutism, those who admired it for these qualities, and those who adored it for its enlightenment, its fashion, and its potential as the successor of 1688"<sup>7</sup>. Eagles acknowledged that there were setbacks in positive relations during the eighteenth-century due to war. He described war as an issue that could not instantly be resolved, meaning that "Reservations remained about the old enemy", and there were doubts over the sincerity of Britain's rival<sup>8</sup>. Geoffrey Best described international relations during the eighteenth-century as being based on

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<sup>4</sup> Colley, *Britons*, p.56. For further information on commercial rivalry between the British and French, see Charles M. Andrews, 'Anglo-French Commercial Rivalry, 1700-1750: The Western Phase, I', *The American Historical Review*, 20.3 (1915) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1835856>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>5</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, pp.66-93

<sup>6</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p.176, Colley, *Britons*, pp.2-3

<sup>7</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p.177

<sup>8</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 67, p.163

similar socio-economic interests and “aristocratically-derived codes of conduct honourable and proper in officers and gentlemen”, with this chivalrous behaviour often being present during periods of war<sup>9</sup>. These variations in viewpoints will be taken into account when determining the reasons behind both positive and negative Anglo-French encounters.

Public perceptions of the French often did not correlate with the views of the British elite. Francophilia was rife amongst the British elite during the eighteenth-century, with Eagles describing it as “potent” and a “phenomenon”, as the British tried to emulate French customs and manners<sup>10</sup>. Informal relations were status-based, often due to the familiarity that came with having Anglo-French relatives and friends. Eagles claimed that, during the Anglo-French war, “it was deemed perfectly legitimate to wage rhetorical war in public, while in private social calls and errands remained a constant”<sup>11</sup>. This shows the inconsistency in eighteenth-century British society as those happily interacting with the French nobility were also the ones publicly dismissing them. In contrast, Colley, Jeremy Black and Gerald Newman argued that many people in eighteenth-century Britain remained strongly Francophobic. Black felt that this stemmed from the lack of political collaboration between Britain and France and the fact that they were “ideological rivals”, whereas Newman felt it was due to hostility towards the aristocracy<sup>12</sup>. However, Black did concede that “Anglo-French relations

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<sup>9</sup> Geoffrey Best, *Humanity in Warfare: The Modern History of the International Law of Armed Conflicts* (London: Methuen, 1983) p.60

<sup>10</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p.63. Also see pp.145-70

<sup>11</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p.63. Also see p.148

<sup>12</sup> Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Duckworth, 1986) pp.208-10, Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987) pp.123-48

were not a picture of constant antagonism”<sup>13</sup>. Colley concentrated on Britons viewing the French as their “opposites” in an attempt to villainise them, particularly under Napoleon, and to reassure themselves about their position in the world<sup>14</sup>. She also argued that tension was caused by differing religions in the two countries. English Protestants saw Catholicism as being “economically inept: wasteful, indolent and oppressive if powerful, poor and exploited if not”<sup>15</sup>.

Forced and voluntary encounters, particularly the arrival of the Huguenots and the Seven Years War, heavily influenced perceptions of the French. Both these events influenced the subsequent treatment of émigrés and prisoners of war between 1789 and 1815. The Huguenots are a useful example to look at when considering the opinions of the British on voluntary immigration. From 1685 onwards, around fifty thousand Huguenots, many of whom were members of the clergy, fled to Britain as religious refugees<sup>16</sup>. Not all of Britain was affected. Immigrants coming over wanted to settle in towns where their skills could be put to use and they could prosper economically. Soho and Spitalfields were examples of where Huguenots were deemed to have successfully settled<sup>17</sup>. Spitalfields, where the cost of living was cheaper than other parts of London, had nine Huguenot churches built in the area after a large influx of refugees in 1685. They brought production, banking and commerce skills and artistic expertise including weaving, tailoring, clock and gun making. This pleased many elite

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<sup>13</sup> Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies*, p.viii

<sup>14</sup> Colley, *Britons*, p.368, 312. For further information about Britain’s national identity and perceived position within Europe, see Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp.45-7

<sup>15</sup> Colley, *Britons*, p.35

<sup>16</sup> This was due to the Edict of Nantes being revoked by Louis XIV. For further information see John S. C. Abbott, *History of Louis XIV* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1871) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/historyoflouisxiabbott#page/n9/mode/2up/>> pp.302-29 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>17</sup> Jerry White, *A Great and Monstrous Thing: London in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Vintage, 2013) p.138

Englishmen and the more wealthy middle orders due to alternative fashion choices becoming available and the economic advantages that came with this new source of industry<sup>18</sup>.

The Huguenots were generally considered to have assimilated well into British society over the years<sup>19</sup>. However, there were concerns about the level of assimilation and also French immigrants taking housing and employment from the British. A pamphlet written in 1711 entitled 'A Letter to the French Refugees Concerning their Behaviour to the Government' questioned why, after fleeing their own country, they did not integrate within their chosen place of living and behave in the same way as English natives. It stated that refugees, by forming communities where only French was spoken and having separate Church services, made it appear that they were choosing not to accept British culture and society:

Yet be you are universally naturaliz'd, and thereby intituled to the same priviledges enjoy'd by the Native of this Land; there must be no distinction made between you and other Her Majesty's Subjects<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> For further information on Huguenot integration in Britain and the British response to their arrival, see Robin D. Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage: The History and Contribution of the Huguenots in Britain* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001), Robin D. Gwynn, *The Huguenots of London* (Sussex: The Alpha Press Ltd., 1998), Bernard Cottret, *The Huguenots in England: Immigration and Settlement c. 1550-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Samuel Smiles, *The Huguenots: Their Settlements, Churches and Industries in England and Ireland* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/huguenotstheirse00smil#page/n7/mode/2up/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain* (London: Abacus, 2005) pp.78-90, David Carnegie A. Agnew, *Protestant Exiles from France in the reign of Louis XIV: The Huguenot Refugees and their Descendants in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1871) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/details/frenchprotestant04agneuoft/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) p.374

<sup>20</sup> Multiple contributors, *A Letter to the French Refugees Concerning their Behaviour to the Government* (1711) (Hampshire: Gale ECCO, Print Editions, 2010) p.8

The authors appeared resentful that, despite the openness with which they were greeted, the Huguenots not only congregated together but also did not want to mingle and claimed that they were “hand in hand with the Enemies of our Church and Constitution”<sup>21</sup>. This was despite the fact that those coming over were Protestant, meaning there was less of a religious barrier to settlement in England. The publication was a cynical way of causing division. Daniel Statt felt that these issues came from a xenophobic atmosphere in Britain and a worry about jobs<sup>22</sup>. However, immigration appeared on the whole to be well received due to the cultural and economic skills brought to Britain. The Huguenots remained in Britain, enabling future refugees of the French Revolution to settle in pre-established communities.

Another set of encounters arose as a result of the Seven Years War between 1756 and 1763. This saw Frenchmen imprisoned in Britain, both in prisons and on parole. It was a conflict that Britain won comprehensively. During this time John Bull, a character epitomising British traits, emerged and became a symbol of patriotism<sup>23</sup>. Satirical prints, such as those from James Gillray in the 1760s, showed John Bull as a hefty man to signify prosperity in England and pride in the ‘balanced’ constitution in the country, qualities that were deemed not to be present in France, with the aim of inculcating a sense of superiority and Britishness. Colley argued that the Seven Years War was an overriding success, with significant victories in French territories. However, she claimed that the “success had been too great, the territory won at once was too vast and too

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<sup>21</sup> Multiple contributors, *A Letter to the French Refugees*, p.9

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen: Controversy Over Immigration and Population, 1660-1760* (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1995) p.173-177

<sup>23</sup> For the growth in popularity of John Bull from the mid eighteenth-century, what John Bull represented and the context of the growth in his representation, see Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (London: Routledge, 2003)

alien”, and that Britain was “wondering if [it] had overstretched [itself], made nervous and insecure by [its] colossal new dimensions”<sup>24</sup>. Daniel Baugh agreed that, despite an important victory, the British public “never ceased to consider France the more powerful country”<sup>25</sup>. Nicholas Rogers highlighted the issues for British high society and their shortfalls during the war, despite defeating the French<sup>26</sup>. He and Baugh showed that the war cemented the feeling of rivalry and the insecurity in Britain in the eighteenth-century.

During the Seven Years War, certain locations were designated as parole towns where French prisoners, principally officers, were allowed to live within a framework of rules which were replicated during the Napoleonic Wars and where Anglo-French encounters were commonplace<sup>27</sup>. A number of Churchwardens from the All Saints Church in Derby described their experience with French parolees. They claimed that “Their behaviour at first was impudent and insolent; at all times vain and effeminate; and their whole deportment light and unmanly”<sup>28</sup>. However, the Churchwardens did admit that, during their period of imprisonment on parole, “to their honour let it be remembered, that scarce one act of fraud or theft was committed by any of them”<sup>29</sup>. Morieux’s insightful research looked into accounts from Frenchmen on parole and this dissertation will show that there were apparent similarities between the parolees in the Seven Years

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<sup>24</sup> Colley, *Britons*, p.101

<sup>25</sup> Daniel A. Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (London: Routledge, 2011) p.xiii

<sup>26</sup> Nicholas Rogers, ‘Brave Wolfe: the making of a hero’, in Kathleen Wilson, *New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp.240-242

<sup>27</sup> Morieux, ‘French Prisoners of War’, p.73

<sup>28</sup> Robert Simpson, *A Collection of Fragments Illustrative of the History and Antiquities of Derby*, vol.I (Derby: Printed and Sold by G. Wilkins and Son, 1826) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/acollectionfrag01simpgoog#page/n12/mode/2up/>> p.272 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>29</sup> Simpson, *A Collection of Fragments*, vol. I, pp.272-3

War and the Revolutionary Wars<sup>30</sup>. At both times there were issues arising from cultural differences and the perception of the French as the enemy. These issues manifested themselves in the form of attacks, both verbal and physical, on the parolees<sup>31</sup>. Morieux also found that, when looking at the theme of honour in local communities amidst a time of conflict, “parole delineated social frontiers”, with elite Britons mainly respecting esteemed members of other nations<sup>32</sup>.

Another important factor was the changing representation of the French within the media. At the start of the eighteenth-century, it was common for animalistic comparisons to be drawn when describing the French. Caricatures often showed Frenchmen as cocks or monkeys – implying either vainness or inferiority in comparison with the British<sup>33</sup>. William Hogarth created a scene showing French soldiers who were malnourished, with a flag saying that the French would enjoy coming to Britain for the food available. The scene’s background indicated the poverty and slavery experienced in France, as symbolised by a wooden shoe. Effeminacy was another trait used to make the French appear inferior as the implication was that the British did not possess this weakness<sup>34</sup>. In John Andrews’ book, published in 1785, he acknowledged English inadequacies, such as the excessive drinking in London by lower ranking Britons in comparison to the French in Paris, and acknowledged commendable attributes of some

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<sup>30</sup> One example was the movement of paroled prisoners to more northern areas in Britain due to fear of invasion, which bears similarities to the Revolutionary Wars and will be discussed in chapter three. Morieux, ‘French Prisoners of War’, p.64

<sup>31</sup> Morieux, ‘French Prisoners of War’, pp.67-72. For further information on Anglo-French encounters based on individual account see Francis Abell, *Prisoners of war in Britain, 1756 to 1815; a record of their lives, their romance and their sufferings* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/prisonersofwarin00abeluoft#page/n5/mode/2up/>> pp. 284-441 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>32</sup> Morieux, ‘French Prisoners of War’, p.65

<sup>33</sup> John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints 1740-1832* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) p.39, pp.119-21

<sup>34</sup> Moores, *Representations of France*, pp.37-9, pp.48-9, Colley, *Britons*, pp.33-5

Frenchmen, such as generosity and kindness<sup>35</sup>. However, his key message was that the French showed a lack of morality, honesty and sincerity. He highlighted the excessive vanity, together with a superiority complex, that some Britons did not receive well. He argued that the French were arrogantly “undervaluing and insulting their neighbours”, and their persuasiveness meant that some Britons would “forget the superior ties that bind them to their own nation”<sup>36</sup>. During the eighteenth-century, satirical print grew in numbers and popularity, with the French being a frequent subject. Black found that, by 1780, the growth of newspapers had exceeded the growth in population. Fourteen million newspapers were printed each year, many of them local, meaning that they were accessible to readers<sup>37</sup>. Research has been undertaken by academics such as John Richard Moores to examine the growing culture of satirical prints, their reach and impact on the targeted audiences<sup>38</sup>. Popular views of the French were strongly influenced by the media, leading to the British view of the stereotypical Frenchmen changing during the century.

Perceptions of the French altered in the latter part of the eighteenth-century, with fear amongst the British elite building during the 1780s because of French influence in the country and the impact of revolutionary ideas. Writers such as Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin and Richard Price spoke about religious and political freedom and radical changes needed to make this happen and would describe the

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<sup>35</sup> John Andrews, *A Comparative View of the French and English Nations, in their Manners, Politics and Literature* (London: Printed for T. Longman, 1785) Accessed via <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x000464237;view=1up;seq=7> pp.169-75, 250 [accessed 20 September 2017]. He claimed impartiality in his writing, but actually described a somewhat unbalanced comparison on the two nations and the traits of their inhabitants.

<sup>36</sup> Andrews, *A Comparative View*, p104, p.463

<sup>37</sup> Jeremy Black, ‘Newspapers and Politics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century’, *History Today*, 36.10 (1986) <http://www.historytoday.com/jeremy-black/newspapers-and-politics-18th-century/> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>38</sup> Moores, *Representations of France*



benefits of the American Revolution. The government worried about the increase in radical thought and felt the need to ensure that there was no move for political reform in Britain<sup>39</sup>. In November 1786, Sir James Harris, an English diplomat, wrote to William Pitt to discuss his worries that French influence in Britain was increasing. He feared that the French would have too much influence in the political direction of Britain and that they posed a threat to the country<sup>40</sup>. There was fear amongst the British elite of a French inspired radicalism and perhaps the overthrowing of traditional social hierarchy. This was made worse in part by the emergence of increasing radical discourse where revolutionaries were deemed to be role models to the British lower orders<sup>41</sup>. As the French Revolution began, British dissenters intensified their efforts to highlight the benefits of revolution and radical political reform. An example of this was the speech made by Price in 1789 in favour of the French Revolution which was then published to increase the audience<sup>42</sup>. However, strong concerns emerged and Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* was written in reaction to Price's sermon, to highlight dangers of revolutionary ideas. With these concerns, portrayals of the French focused on showing them as dangerous beasts with tyrannical sentiments rather than comical figures that could be pitied. Satirical prints "portrayed the half-starved and tyrannical *sans-culotte* as a man who could not afford to eat roast beef – a hallmark of

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<sup>39</sup> For further details of radical ideas between the middle and end of the eighteenth-century, see H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1995) pp.190-254

<sup>40</sup> James Harris, Earl of Malmesbury, *Diaries and correspondence of James Harris, first Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. II (London: Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley, 1844) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/diariescorrespon02malm#page/n3/mode/2up/>> p.251 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>41</sup> For examples of the fears of radicalism, along with the emergence of radicalism in Britain, see John Rowland Dinwiddie, *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London: Hambledon Press, 1992), Michael T. Davis (ed.), *Radicalism and Revolution in Britain, 1775-1848: Essays in Honour of Malcolm I. Thomis* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000)

<sup>42</sup> Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country* (London: Printed by George Stafford, 1790) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/adiscourseonlov00pricgoog#page/n8/mode/2up/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

John Bull's independent manhood"<sup>43</sup>. It was hoped that by showing the French in this manner, it would lessen the inspiration taken from them by British dissenters and consequently reduce discontent in Britain.

This section has detailed how Anglo-French encounters were not a new concept in the eighteenth-century, but laid foundations for the treatment of French prisoners of war on parole and émigrés between 1789 and 1815. Eagles aptly summarised Anglo-French relations by saying that "French culture and society must be viewed as a central, dominant force in English cultural life, as important as the John Bull nationalism relied upon by historians such as Linda Colley"<sup>44</sup>. This dissertation will now focus on negative media portrayals of arriving Frenchmen from 1789 onwards. However, these portrayals were often not reflected in individual attitudes and encounters.

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<sup>43</sup> Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and Josh Tosh, *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004) p.29

<sup>44</sup> Eagles, *Francophilia*, p.176

## Chapter 1 - The Influence of Government Fear, the Media and Legislation in forming British Perceptions of Arriving Frenchmen

Throughout the eighteenth-century there were established stereotypes of both the British and the French. This chapter will focus on how these portrayals and stereotypes changed, if at all, from 1789, the start of the influx of French citizens fleeing the revolution, and the arrival of prisoners of war on parole during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. This will be achieved by looking at legislation and the media in order to demonstrate public responses to the French in Britain. It will look into the impact of the 1793 Aliens Act, a key piece of legislation concerning émigrés built upon government fear of an 'enemy within'. This Act will be used to analyse whether the legal framework was significant in moulding the public's view of French immigrants. The focus for prisoners of war will be decisions taken in government on the reasons behind permitting parole and the content of the forms drawn up surrounding parole conditions. Media, including newspapers, pamphlets and satirical prints, will be a key theme used to reflect on British perceptions of the French at the time. This will provide a context for the second and third chapters. These will look at the extent to which Anglo-French encounters changed the views of individual Britons as more French nationals were settled, forcibly or voluntarily, into British communities.

### **Fear of Revolution and Reaction to Arriving Frenchmen**

The French Revolution sparked differing emotions amongst the British. This was due to the Revolution invoking questions concerning the imbalance of class and power as

attacks were made against the propertied class and religion<sup>45</sup>. H. T. Dickinson has been a key contributor to the British response to the French Revolution and how Britain maintained the status quo in a time of war, fear and a growing idea of radicalism exacerbated by the Revolution. He argued that previous research claiming that reactions to the Revolution were clearly defined along lines of social status was too simplistic. Repression of radicals in Britain by the ruling elite was “neither as effective nor as ruthless as was previously thought” as the radical movement was not as prevalent as has been implied. Instead, the Revolution invoked a greater sense of conservatism as much of the British public saw the “benefits provided by the existing political and social order” in order to maintain prosperity<sup>46</sup>. Emma Macleod and Edward Royle agreed with Dickinson, claiming that there were changing opinions of the Revolution between 1789 and 1793 and that, even in parliament, there was no definitive attitude expressed concerning events in France.

Some, such as Charles Fox, thought that the French Revolution would be similar to the Glorious Revolution in bringing beneficial changes, but many others, such as Burke, saw a threat to national security and were concerned about the increasing level of violence<sup>47</sup>. Frenchmen coming to Britain in 1789 were amongst the highest nobles in

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<sup>45</sup> For further information on British attitudes towards the French Revolution, see Emma Macleod, ‘British Attitudes to the French Revolution’, *The Historical Journal*, 50.3 (2007) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20175117/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], Gregory Claeys, *French Revolution Debate in Britain: The Origins of Modern Politics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), H. T. Dickinson, (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution 1789-1815* (London: Macmillan Education, 1989), Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, pp.161-286

<sup>46</sup> H. T. Dickinson, ‘Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism 1789-1815’, in H. T. Dickinson, (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution*, pp.103-4

<sup>47</sup> Emma Macleod, ‘British spectators of the French Revolution: the view from across the Channel’, *Groniek*, 197 (2013) <[rjh.ub.rug.nl/groniek/article/download/18269/15744/](http://rjh.ub.rug.nl/groniek/article/download/18269/15744/)> pp.383-6 [accessed 20 September 2017], and Edward Royle, *Revolutionary Britannia?: Reflections on the Threat of Revolution in Britain, 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001) pp.13-5. For

France and were anti-Revolution. Many of the British elite had sympathy for the émigrés due to the terror inflicted upon them and there was a commonality in ideologies. They also heard about the extreme circumstances in which the French had to escape. One account from September 1792 concerned a French gentleman escaping dressed as a female maid after having to endure sights and stories of violence, oppression and murder<sup>48</sup>. However, the British elite and government were concerned about the Revolution inspiring some in the lower orders to defy the social status quo, leading to possible violence<sup>49</sup>. Opinions also changed with the arrival of lower ranking Frenchmen and the newspapers appearing more hostile to those fleeing to Britain. *The Times* claimed in 1792 that most French émigrés were not deserving of British sympathy as many were the reason for the fall of the Ancien Régime<sup>50</sup>.

Fear of an enemy within grew with the number of Frenchmen coming to Britain and the increase in British radicals. It required government propaganda and intervention to halt escalation. Baptist minister Robert Hall recalled how more periodicals in Britain appeared sympathetic to the Revolution and its ideas, which resulted in many of the lower orders meeting to discuss concepts that were, in his opinion, evil and

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further details on the events of the Glorious Revolution, see Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2013)

<sup>48</sup> *The Times*, 'France.', 12 September 1792, p.2, issue 2410. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>49</sup> This was seen in both unofficial actions by many of the lower-middle orders and the lower orders who were looking for political reform, or were radical dissenters. The French Revolution gave them hope that a different form of democracy could be formed in Britain. Societies such as the London Corresponding Society were formed with these aims, but the government was quick to halt these societies in the early 1790s, arresting key protagonists in the groups.

<sup>50</sup> *The Times*, 'People are surprised that the French who have taken refuge in this country are enabled, many of', 1 September 1792, p.2, issue 2401. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

dangerous<sup>51</sup>. The events in France were being heavily reported on in Britain, both in the papers and by commentators such as Burke, who condemned the Revolution and the ensuing violence. Anxiety was exacerbated by publications such as Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* which was seen by loyalists to propose seditious views as he claimed that government actions were oppressive acts of "usurpation"<sup>52</sup>. Politician John Courtenay claimed that he was:

not in the least surprised that some of the most enlightened men of the present age, equally distinguished by genius, science and taste, are furiously alarmed by the dangerous and rapid progress of democracy in France. We had indeed little to fear whilst they enjoyed... unlimited power of a monarch, and the feudal privileges of a numerous, polished and gallant nobelle<sup>53</sup>.

In September 1792, John Bland Burges, the Foreign Office Undersecretary, wrote to Lord Auckland saying that "French principles and even French men are daily becoming more unpopular"<sup>54</sup>. He felt sympathy for many women and clergymen who had been forced out of France, but felt that the majority of French actions were turning Englishmen against them to the point where they might turn hostile. His hope was that many Frenchmen would shortly return to their own country. In the same month,

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<sup>51</sup> Robert Hall, *The works of Robert Hall*, vol. VI (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1834) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/details/worksofrobhall04hallgoog/>> p.62 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>52</sup> Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (London: Printed for W. T. Sherwin, 1817) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/rightsofman00painiala#page/n5/mode/2up/>> pp.72, 95 and Part 2 p.15 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>53</sup> John Courtenay, *Philosophical Reflections on the Late Revolution in France, and the Conduct of the Dissenters in England, in a Letter to the Rev. Dr. Priestley* (London: Printed for T. Beckett, 1790) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/details/philosophicalref00couriala/>> pp.1-2 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>54</sup> Baron William Eden Auckland, *The Journal and Correspondence of William, Lord Auckland*, vol. II (London: Richard Bentley, 1861) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/journalandcorre00baroogoo#page/n16/mode/2up/>> pp.445-6 [accessed 20 September 2017]

Burges informed Lord Greville that the general consensus amongst Britons seeing vast numbers of Frenchmen arriving was that they were “unwelcome visitors”, the majority of whom were “of a suspicious description” and would either cause mayhem or help others do so<sup>55</sup>.

Anti-French sentiments intensified during the 1790s. Émigrés were still arriving, but the focus of concern shifted when Britain entered the Revolutionary War in February 1793<sup>56</sup>. It was thought that French export of revolution and aggression must be stopped for the safety of the British nation, and some Britons were willing to do hard work and provide additional taxes to ensure that this happened. One letter from 1798 sharing these views claimed that “Either you must creep to the French, as other nations do, or you must spend all your money to oppose them”<sup>57</sup>. Burke described France as a faction rather than a state. He claimed that this faction was an “evil spirit that possesses the body”<sup>58</sup>. He was critical of the radical change seen in France and, with his publications being read widely, he had far reaching influence on British opinions. However, Burke did acknowledge that he met with French clergymen and considered

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<sup>55</sup> Royal Commission of Historical Manuscripts, *The Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, Esq., Preserved at Dropmore*, vol. II (London: Printed for Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1894) p.315

<sup>56</sup> British attitudes towards the French Revolution changed between summer 1789 and 1793. At first there was more acceptance, but that changed as the Revolution grew more radical and violent. The overthrow of monarchy in August 1792, the execution of Louis XVI in January 1793, and then the declaration of war between Britain and France affected attitudes towards French émigrés and meant that Britain also had to deal with prisoners of war.

<sup>57</sup> Hester Lynch Piozzi and Penelope Pennington, *The Intimate Letters of Hester Piozzi and Penelope Pennington, 1788-1821* (London: John Lane, 1914) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/intimateletterso00piozuoft#page/n5/mode/2up/> p.160 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>58</sup> Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Prospect of a Regicide Peace, in a Series of Letters* (London: Printed for J. Owen, 1796) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/thoughtsonprospe00burkiala#page/n5/mode/2up/> p.84 [accessed 20 September 2017]

them well educated, even in English religious ways<sup>59</sup>. This may later have impacted on how fleeing French clergymen were treated upon arrival in Britain. Publications from the British elite and the government showed concern for British liberty as the main focal point and the need to halt revolutionary influence. These thoughts filtered into the media once French prisoners of war started to arrive.

### **The Media Post 1789**

Published works were a key tool in spreading fear in Britain and showing the shifting attitude towards the French. Macleod found that news of the Revolution was often reported in newspapers only once a political spin had been put on the story<sup>60</sup>. Moores claimed that there was a “dramatic change in the stereotype of the French” due to the French Revolution, with the main change being that the French were shown as “savages”<sup>61</sup>. The press also used John Bull to personify British loyalty and willingness to resist French hostility. Stephen Prickett described “an enormous increase in literacy” from 1790 onwards. One contributing factor to this was people becoming excited to read about events in France<sup>62</sup>. In *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke stated that previous French political issues were internal affairs, but that the Revolution was a plague that Britain could not help but be involved in. He claimed that the best solution would be for Britons to quarantine themselves against this plague<sup>63</sup>. Newspapers such as *The Times* were instrumental in reporting on events and the apparent dangers to

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<sup>59</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France, and on the Proceedings in Certain Societies in London Relative to that Event* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley, 1790) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/reflectionsonre04burkgoog#page/n6/mode/2up/>> pp.212-7 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>60</sup> Macleod, ‘British spectators’, pp.379-80

<sup>61</sup> Moores, *Representations of France*, p.151. For further details see pp.151-76.

<sup>62</sup> Stephen Prickett, *England and the French Revolution* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1989) p.26

<sup>63</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p.142



both French and British liberty. Describing the ‘total destruction’ of France in August 1792, the newspaper claimed that:

The man who is not struck with horror at the proceedings of the internal leaders of the rabble in France, must not pretend to be an enthusiast for truth, virtue, justice, peace and order. His mind must be entirely depraved, or else he is in a state of stupid apathy<sup>64</sup>.

There were also frequent updates about events in France, including the September massacres and the possible outcome of the Revolution<sup>65</sup>. Posters emerged from the Society of Loyal Britons describing the elevated morality and humanity seen in England in comparison to revolutionary France and detailing French atrocities against their countrymen, their monarchy and their God<sup>66</sup>. Another author who tried increase British worries about the French was barrister and loyalist John Bowles. He claimed that “numbers of desperate and blood-stained Frenchmen were daily flocking here for the most mischievous and horrid purposes”<sup>67</sup>. These views created a sense of fear and hostility amongst anti-revolutionaries that may have been heightened by the numbers of French émigrés, and the extent to which this impeded Frenchmen trying to settle in Britain will be discussed later in the dissertation.

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<sup>64</sup> *The Times*, ‘Nothing now can save FRANCE from total destruction, but the arrival of the Duke of Brunswick’, 23 August 1792, p.2, issue 2393. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>65</sup> For examples, see *The Times*, ‘Another Dreadful Massacre!’, p.1, issue 2407. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], and *The Times*, ‘The Probable Result of the French Revolution.’ 22 August 1792, p.3, issue 2392. Accessed via the Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>66</sup> TNA: HO 42/26, no. 701

<sup>67</sup> John Bowles, *The Real Grounds of the Present War with France*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn. (London: Printed for J. Debrett and T. N. Longman, 1794) p.55

Some publications focused on ensuring that Britons understood the faults and dangers of the French. The quantity of satirical prints vastly increased in 1803 with fears of invasion of Britain. Journalist William Cobbett's 1803 pamphlet, *Important Considerations for the People of this Kingdom*, tried to evoke a sense of fear within British communities. Although the focus was on the possible consequence of a successful French invasion of Britain, it must be taken into account that it would influence British thoughts about all French immigrants as well as just the military. It described the impact of the French invading countries such as Italy and Germany, with communities mistakenly opening their doors, only for all classes in society to be treated cruelly, subject to physical assault and their public and charitable funds being seized. Even the vulnerable in society were not exempt from French assault:

The deepest and most apparent poverty was no protection against their rapacity; grey hairs and lisping infancy; the sick, the dying, women in child-bed, were alike exposed to the most inhuman treatment; dragged from their beds, kicked, wounded, and frequently killed<sup>68</sup>.

The pamphlet was to be distributed to the minister in each parish in England, ensuring that the message of fearing the French was heard throughout the country. This could be seen as a method of discouraging the charity given to émigrés and prisoners of war and to ensure they could not integrate, lest they put British men and their families at danger, with no one exempt from being targeted. Other publications looked to invoke sympathy towards certain émigrés and their plight. Courtenay attempted to appeal to the elite by saying that the British peerage was fortunate to be growing and thriving, but that French nobles were not in the same advantageous situation due to the

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<sup>68</sup> William Cobbett, *Important Considerations for the People of this Kingdom* (London: J. Downes 1803) p.13

Revolution. He continued to defend their nature and the importance of social hierarchy for a well-functioning society<sup>69</sup>. This indicated the horizontal alliances. This suggests that the pre-established caricatures of the French could be put aside, recognising the needs of those of a similar social standing.

Two aspects of the media that highlighted the arrival of émigrés and prisoners of war were satirical prints and caricatures, both of which shaped British views of the French. Key caricaturists in this period were Isaac Cruikshank, James Gillray, Richard Newton and Thomas Rowlandson, all of whom covered the Revolution and Napoleon<sup>70</sup>. The cartoons appeared to appeal to all classes within society, having the advantage that they could engage with the illiterate. The popularity of these cartoons was noted in 1802 when a French émigré described the enthusiasm seen upon the release of a new print as “almost madness. People box their way through the crowd” in shops to view the pieces<sup>71</sup>. Cartoons, such as Cruikshank’s ‘Cartoon of the French aristocratic émigrés in England during the Revolution’ in 1791, Rowlandson’s ‘The Contrast’ in 1792 and Gillray’s ‘A Paris Beau, A Paris Belle’ in 1794, reinforced written works citing the differences between the French and British, including British superiority. However, as

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<sup>69</sup> Courtenay, *Philosophical Reflections*, pp.32-5

<sup>70</sup> For details of caricatures and the work of those mentioned see Mark Bryant, *Napoleonic Wars in Cartoons* (London: Grub Street, 2009), John Ashton, *English Caricature and Satire on Napoleon I* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1884) Accessed via <https://archive.org/details/englishcaricatur02ashtiala/> [accessed 20 September 2017], Alexander Meyrick Broadley, *Napoleon in Caricature, 1795-1821* (London: John Lane, 1911) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/napoleonincarc00rosegoog#page/n10/mode/2up/> [accessed 20 September 2017], Richard John Douglas, *The Works of George Cruikshank Classified and Arranged with References to Reid's Catalogue and Their Approximate Values* (Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010), David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English Caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)

<sup>71</sup> John Grand-Carteret, *Napoléon en images; estampes anglaises (portraits et caricatures) avec 130 reproductions d'après les originaux* (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie: 1895) Accessed via [https://archive.org/stream/gri\\_33125013853730#page/n9/mode/2up/](https://archive.org/stream/gri_33125013853730#page/n9/mode/2up/) p.42 [accessed 20 September 2017]

the two nations engaged in war, the topics became more focused on combat and the possibility of a French invasion. This can be seen in Gillray's 'Promised Horrors of the French Invasion, or Forcible Reasons for Negotiating a Regicide Peace – vide the Authority of Edmund Burke' in 1796 and 'Consequences of a Successful French Invasion – Plate No.1 'We come to recover your long lost liberties.' Scene: The House of Commons' in 1798. The same year he released 'Storm Rising, or the republican Flotilla in Danger'. It included flags that read "Liberty, Atheism, Blasphemy, Invasion, Requisitions, Plunder, Beggary, Murder, Destruction, Anarchy, and Slavery".

The emergence of Napoleon gave satirists an opportunity to use an individual to symbolise the qualities of France at the time. The British public was intrigued by Napoleon and he therefore became widely written about. Two opposing views of Napoleon as the emblem of France emerged. Stuart Semmel argued that Napoleon's ideologies and political discourse raised unwanted questions for the British government, "complicating the traditional dichotomies drawn between Britain and France"<sup>72</sup>. One portrayal was of a dangerous man, associated with evil and the Devil. Another aimed to appease British worries by showing Napoleon as a weak leader whose vision for France would never come to fruition. Alexandra Franklin analysed the work of Isaac Cruikshank, saying that, at the end of the seventeen-nineties, he tried to show Napoleon as "petulant" and a "flatulent Bonaparte spewing ineffectual invasion craft across the Channel"<sup>73</sup>. More generally, Franklin described the change in portrayals of Napoleon in satirical print. In 1797 he was shown as a "grotesque monster", but

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<sup>72</sup> Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (London: Yale University Press, 2004) p.16. For further details of this, see pp.38-71

<sup>73</sup> Alexandra Franklin, 'John Bull in a Dream: Fear and Fantasy in the Visual Satires of 1803', in *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797-1815*, ed. by Mark Philp (London: Routledge, 2006) p.133

around the brief time of peace at the turn of the nineteenth-century this characterisation softened and some media even portrayed enviable traits<sup>74</sup>. Once the Napoleonic Wars commenced, Napoleonic returned to being a dangerous villain.

Following the start of the Napoleonic Wars in 1803, Napoleon's predominant characteristics came to be shown in the British media as cruelty and villainy. Simon Burrows said that caricatures showed Napoleon as "a persistent enemy of Britain, a perfidious and habitual warmonger, a hypocritical schemer, a coarse, crass bully, and an ambitious military despot, prone to apoplectic fits and delusional grand schemes"<sup>75</sup>. Napoleon appeared in satirical print as the personification of the French and the dangers the nation posed. This can be seen in 1803 when Gillray released 'Manic ravings, or Little Boney in a Strong Fit', to demonstrate the volatile nature of Napoleon and his erratic disposition. However, his portrayals of Napoleon changed. For example, in 1806, he created 'Tiddy-doll, the great French-Gingerbread-Baker, drawing out a new batch of Kings'. This was clear propaganda to help British anxieties. By showing Napoleon as weak, in collusion with the Devil or losing battles, he represented how the French nation should be viewed in British eyes. Another example is his print of 'The Cesar of 1815' which depicted the notion of 'I came, I saw, I fled'.

### **Government Regulations during the 1790s**

The arrival of French refugees coincided with the possibility of war, but the British government was somewhat preoccupied with the spread of revolutionary ideas around

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<sup>74</sup> Franklin, 'John Bull in a Dream', in *Resisting Napoleon*, ed. by Philp, p.133

<sup>75</sup> Simon Burrows, 'The Genesis of the Anti-Napoleonic Myth', in *Resisting Napoleon*, ed. by Philp, p.144

Britain and the fear that these ideas could infect the minds of the British lower orders and turn into actions. There were cases of Englishmen toasting the French Republic who were arrested and found guilty of using seditious words. This could lead to fines and imprisonment, an example of which can be seen in the trial of William Hudson at the Old Bailey on 4 December 1793<sup>76</sup>. England became increasingly hostile to French activities and this translated into law, with acts being implemented from 1793 onwards. Acts of note were the Seditious Meetings Act and Treasonable Practices Act, both of which were implemented in 1795. There was also the suspension of habeas corpus a year previously. These government actions showed that the main motivation at the time was to suppress large groups of people gathering as they had the potential to spread seditious messages and stop any writing against the British government or crown. It was a suppression of British liberties where revolutionaries such as Paine were particularly targeted.

The key piece of legislation was the 1793 Aliens Act. This legislation was introduced following the second wave of immigration in the autumn of 1792 – one that saw members of all echelons of French society coming to Britain<sup>77</sup>. It was in direct response to this influx that the government wanted to look into immigration control by putting in place restrictions which had not been considered necessary when high ranking Frenchmen came in 1789. It suggests that legislation was only considered necessary because of a prejudice based on social status. This can be seen through legal

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<sup>76</sup> Trial of William Hudson, 4 December 1793, Old Bailey Online  
<<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=t17931204-54&div=t17931204-54&terms=french#highlight>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>77</sup> For a list of French ranks and occupations of those coming to Britain see Donald Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration During the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951) pp.132-8. Information and analysis of these benefits will be provided in chapter three.

documents and investigating the thoughts of law makers at the time. Lord Loughborough, the Lord Chancellor, claimed in a speech on 26 December 1792 that there were:

two classes of Frenchmen now in this country: one who came here by necessity to take refuge; they should of course be treated with tenderness and humanity:- another class who came hither for the purpose of, and who were active in doing all they could to create confusion; they of course were the proper objects of this Bill, and ought to be of much greater severity<sup>78</sup>.

The Aliens Act manifested government fears by imposing restrictions on the travel of French émigrés and closer monitoring of their lodgings. Aliens were required to have a passport in order to travel around the country, and there was an obligation on émigrés to register their address. These orders were published in national newspapers, meaning that the general public were aware of aliens' obligations. Details included the requirement of émigrés to keep agents informed of their place of residence within a specific time period<sup>79</sup>. To ensure that the Act was enforced, the government set up the Alien Office and this was a long term visible presence to remind the French that they were under supervision and any that break of the rules could result in punishment or expulsion from Britain<sup>80</sup>. One author, self-entitled as 'a lover of peace', felt that the government had created a sense of fear of the strange and dangerous character of

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<sup>78</sup> Multiple Contributors, *Publications Printed by Order of The Society for Preserving Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers*, no. VI (1793) (Hampshire: Gale ECCO, Print Editions, 2010) pp.14-5

<sup>79</sup> *The Times*, 'From the London Gazette, October 22', 24 October 1803, pg. 1; Issue 5848. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive  
<<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>80</sup> For further details of the running of the Alien Office, see Elizabeth Sparrow, 'The Alien Office, 1792-1806', *The Historical Journal*, 33.2 (1990)  
<<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/historical-journal/article/the-alien-office-17921806/102B9F0C9C22470CBFD192F67D5F99CA/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

Frenchmen coming to Britain as a justification of the Aliens Act, but did not agree with treatment of the émigrés and the government actions. Instead, he considered the Act a show to appease and manipulate the public<sup>81</sup>.

Prisoners of war were not subject to the Aliens Act. However, other pieces of legislation such as the Seditious Meetings Act were still applicable to them. The British government decided to enforce a rank based policy as to who would be sent to hulks or prisons and who would be granted parole. Those entitled to become parolees and receive subsistence payments were: admirals, *chefs de division*, captains, lieutenants, *enseignes de vaisseaux*, chief surgeons, *aides-commissaires* (pursers), chaplains, generals, *chefs de brigade* (colonels) and *chefs de bataillon* (lieutenant-colonels)<sup>82</sup>. These ranks were deemed to include men of sufficient honour that parole would be the only suitable option. The government assigned responsibility to the Transport Board to ensure prisoners of war were moved around the country, to take away weapons in the prisoners' possession and to ensure that parolees had passports that matched their description and detailed where in the country they were to be settled<sup>83</sup>. Despite the government allowing flexible levels of imprisonment, they imposed tight regulations on parolees concerning their movement and interactions with Britons and other Frenchmen in their parole towns. The government designed forms to make sure the

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<sup>81</sup> A Lover of Peace, *Comments on the Proposed War with France: On the State of Parties, and on the New Act Representing Aliens* (London: Sold by C Dilly, 1793) pp.83-4

<sup>82</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents under the Commission for Conducting H.M.'s Transport Service, for Taking Care of Sick and Wounded Seamen, and for the Care and Custody of Prisoners of War Respecting the Management of Sick Prisoners of War on Parole* (London: Printed by the Philanthropic Society, 1809) Accessed via <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433009406277;view=1up;seq=11/> Appendix no.4 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>83</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, p.2



French were aware of their restrictions and the implications of breaking their parole conditions<sup>84</sup>.

This chapter has examined fears about French émigrés and prisoners of war, finding that those fears were not really directed towards the immigrants; it was actually government fear about revolution and war. British governing bodies seemed to be happy to bring in the 'right type' of émigrés, for example the clergy and nobility. This lends itself to the suggestion that horizontal alliances were strong when deciding what restrictions to put on incoming Frenchmen. The media was used to reflect political ideologies during a tense period where Britain feared a war with France, so wanted to portray the French as an enemy and a danger in terms of British liberty. The next two chapters will build upon the framework of perceptions of the French from the media and government, to see whether these perceptions influenced encounters between the French immigrants and the British between 1789 and 1815. They will also show individual accounts confirming whether treatment of French immigrants was impacted by their status and the status of those they liaised with.

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<sup>84</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, Appendix no.2. Note that the form was written in both French and English to ensure that the language barrier was no excuse for breaking their word of honour.

## Chapter 2 - French Prisoners of War on Parole

With the commencement of war between Britain and France in 1793, the British press turned increasingly hostile towards the French. French prisoners of war on parole may have been subject to strong anti-French sentiments, particularly if British men from the relevant parole town were directly involved in the fighting. Patricia Crimmin argued that prisoners of war were “feared as traditional or ideological enemies” as a group, but that cases could be found where individuals would overcome the xenophobic attitudes expressed in the media to show compassion<sup>85</sup>. The validity of this will be investigated in this chapter through encounters between the French and British. It will show that some hostilities remained and that there was an uneven reaction to Frenchmen due to their varied social statuses but, in other cases, friendships were formed and there were amicable and prosperous communities co-existing by 1815. This chapter will study the theme of social status and rank as a clear division when it came to the attitude to, treatment of, and opportunities for parolees between 1789 and 1815. The British government implemented regulations for the eligibility for prisoners of war to be paroled based on rank and the guidelines they were honour bound to adhere to. This chapter will focus on how this was put into practice and whether the same effects were felt in different parts of the country. The treatment of parolees by official parties, such as the Transport Board, will be compared with their treatment by British civilians, using accounts of encounters. These will include how the French involved themselves in British communities and demonstrate the varied responses to the French.

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<sup>85</sup> Patricia K. Crimmin, ‘Prisoners of War and British Port Communities, 1793-1815’, *Northern Mariner*, 6.4 (1996) <[http://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern\\_mariner/vol06/tnm\\_6\\_4\\_17-27.pdf](http://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol06/tnm_6_4_17-27.pdf)> p.24 [accessed 20 September 2017]

The Napoleonic Wars saw a significant change in the way parolees were treated. Prior to this time, they were permitted to return to their home country on the agreed proviso that they would not fight in the current conflict. However, for practical and economic reasons, this was no longer considered appropriate. Trading of prisoners or releasing them stopped because there were significantly more French prisoners in Britain than vice-versa. An equal swap of prisoners was not possible, and the French did not have the funds to pay for their release<sup>86</sup>. This incident of forced immigration will be taken into account when determining the success of French settlement in British communities.

To date, there is no apparent comprehensive study of parolees across Britain between 1789 and 1815<sup>87</sup>. Trevor James, Ian MacDougall and Paul Chamberlain have undertaken projects to look at such prisoners but their research has been limited to a specific

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<sup>86</sup> National Archives documents show a vast increase in the number of prisoners of war in Britain between 1810 and 1813, although the nationalities of the prisoners are not specified. TNA: PRO ADM 98/252 claims there were 43,683 prisoners in 1810. TNA: WO 1/916 shows a letter to agents on 26 November 1813 saying that there were 72,000 prisoners. Daly estimates that in 1814, there were approximately 70,000 French prisoners in Britain, in contrast with approximately 16,000 British prisoners in France. Gavin Daly, 'Napoleon's Lost Legions: French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803–1814', *The Journal of the Historical Association*, 89.295 (2004) <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.kingston.ac.uk/doi/10.1111/j.1468-229X.2004.00304.x/abstract/>> p.363 [accessed 20 September 2017]. For other figures, see Crimmin, 'Prisoners of War', p.17

<sup>87</sup> Most research to date has focused on prisoners kept in hulks or land prisons. This dissertation has chosen parolees in order to investigate immigration in British society, but does not represent the all prisoners kept in Britain between 1789 and 1815. For information on hulks and land prisons see Louis Garneray and Richard Rose (translator), *The Floating Prison: An Account of Nine Years on a Prison Hulk During the Napoleonic Wars* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2003), Trevor James, *Prisoners of War at Dartmoor: American and French Soldiers and Sailors in an English Prison During the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2013), Clive Lloyd, *A History of Napoleonic and American Prisoners of War 1816: Historical Background v. 1: Hulk, Depot and Parole* (Woodbridge: ACC Art Books, 2007)

geographic region<sup>88</sup>. One noteworthy contribution was Francis Abell's 1914 publication *Prisoners of War in Britain, 1756 to 1815; A Record of Their Lives, Their Romance and Their Sufferings*. It started a dialogue about the Napoleonic Wars that moved away from predominantly military history and helped with the understanding of the treatment of French prisoners of war and their integration into British society. It provided abundant details of individual encounters between the French and British during the Napoleonic Wars and is extremely useful to read as a sourcebook. However, it has limitations as it is an early twentieth-century work with no referencing and provides very little analysis. This chapter hopes to build upon his research and provide an indication of how widespread encounters with parolees were. It will use the TNA: PRO ADM 103 Series to investigate the numbers and dispersion of incoming Frenchmen, newspapers for comments about Frenchmen in British communities and reactions from both the French and British taken from surviving diaries and NA documents.

### **The Placement of Parolees and their Restrictions**

Only certain ranks of Frenchmen (as listed in chapter one) were permitted parole after they had been captured<sup>89</sup>. These were supposedly men of honour, whose word could be trusted. It was deemed that gentlemen should not have to live in the desolate

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<sup>88</sup> See Trevor James, *Prisoners of War in Dartmoor Towns: French and American Officers on Parole 1803-1815* (Crediton: Orchard Publications, 2000) and Paul Chamberlain, *Hell Upon Water: Prisoners of War in Britain 1793-1815* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2008)

<sup>89</sup> Parolees made up only a small percentage of total prisoners. For example, an account to the House of Commons in June 1811 confirmed that there were 45,933 French prisoners in England and 2,710 parolees. House of Commons, 'French Prisoners of War', 14 June 1811, vol 20, cc634-9 <<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1811/jun/14/french-prisoners-of-war/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

conditions that were found in hulks or land prisons<sup>90</sup>. These men only made up a small number of the total of French prisoners during the Napoleonic Wars and not all were traditionally gentlemen<sup>91</sup>. Before the Revolution, French officers were from the nobility<sup>92</sup>. As a result of the Revolution, many lower ranking Frenchmen were promoted. Thousands of officers left the army, especially between September 1791 and December 1792 (2,160 alone left up to the beginning of December 1791), either by not showing up for duty, being arrested or fleeing France to become émigrés across Europe. Many army units were left without at least a third of their officers. The need to fill the gaps in officer roles gave opportunities to those who, before the Revolution, were not of the correct social status to become an officer. The change in the social status of captured officers who were granted parole may have had an effect on how they behaved and how the British viewed them. Many would not have traditionally have had the necessary degree of honour to be considered a gentleman or a suitable candidate for parole<sup>93</sup>.

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<sup>90</sup> Honour was a publicly displayed attribute that could be seen by the British. It was meant to separate true nobles from those attempting to be seen as nobles. For further information, see Marisa Linton, *The Politics of Virtue in Enlightenment France* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001) pp.31-7, 173-9

<sup>91</sup> Prisoners of war that were not deemed to have enough honour (rank based) to be granted parole were sent to the hulks or land prisoners. These were men who were not to be trusted. Those with enough honour were often gentlemen and based on this, it was considered inappropriate to submit them to prison conditions and have to undertake manual labour.

<sup>92</sup> Julia Osman, 'The Citizen Army of Old Regime France' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of North Carolina, 2010) <<https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:bfe80470-378b-47e4-bbf0-6c0af8a772bc/>> pp.12-25 [accessed 20 September 2017]. Note that the Ségur Ordinance of 1781 was passed to ensure that to become an officer in the French army, the person must have a minimum of four generations of nobility in their family.

<sup>93</sup> For details on the revised composition of the French army due to the French Revolution, see Bailey Stone, *Reinterpreting the French Revolution: A Global-Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) From ProQuest Ebook Central <<http://www.proquest.com/products-services/ebooks-main.html/>> pp.190-2 [accessed 20 September 2017], Frederick Schneid, 'The French Army', in Frederick C. Schneid (ed.), *European Armies of the French Revolution, 1789-1802* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015) pp.28-30, Samuel Scott, *The Response of the Royal Army to the French Revolution* (Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1978) pp.109-10, John A. Lynn, 'Toward an Army of Honor: The Moral Evolution of the French Army, 1789-1815', *French Historical Studies*, 16. 1 (1989) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/286437/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

Parolees were entitled to subsistence payments and were also permitted to bring family and servants with them, and many chose to do so. Prisoners were permitted to be paroled by giving their word of honour that they would follow the designated rules. In return, lodgings were meant to be arranged for them and they were paid one shilling and six pence a day in advance on Tuesdays and Saturdays<sup>94</sup>. One rule was the distance parolees could travel. They were only permitted to go within a one mile radius of the town, and markers were placed to ensure they were aware of their boundaries. Another rule was the hours that parolees were permitted out of their homes. They were permitted to stay out until different times, dependent on the time of year. Year round, they could go out from 6am. The evening curfew was: 5pm for November, December and January; 7pm for February, March, April, September and October; 8pm for August; 9pm for May, June and July<sup>95</sup>. This added a restrictive layer to their ability to integrate into their community as evening events would be missed. Agents were instructed to hang up rules in prominent places, in order to inform parolees of the conduct expected of them in relation to disorderly behaviour and their encounters with the British inhabitants of the town<sup>96</sup>.

Parolees were kept in their designated parole towns and therefore much of Britain did not feel the effects of them first-hand. In addition, only parts of the country were affected at any one time due to the opening and closing of parole towns in different regions. To identify the impact on different parts of the country, information was sought on the number and locations of parolees. To date, little systematic research into parole towns and the number of parolees has been carried out. Previous studies

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<sup>94</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, pp.3-5

<sup>95</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, pp.8-9

<sup>96</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, p.7

incorporate largely anecdotal or local references, with the result that there are inconsistencies, even in the number of parole towns. There appears also to have been no comprehensive study of the numbers of parolees. For this dissertation, the National Archives have been searched to come up with a definitive list of parole towns. For this purpose, the definition of an open parole town is where the TNA: PRO ADM 103 Series shows the parole town's agent recording at least one prisoner of war arriving in that given year. The data extracted from the NA was the number and names of parole towns open in any year and the number of arriving parolees and their families. This data has been used to populate maps 2.1 and 2.2 and table 2.3 (see appendix), which have then been used to provide context for the impact of parolees in certain areas.

The maps and table show when parole towns were first opened, in addition to the duration of their open periods. The maps show that the effect of French forced immigration was not felt at all in some regions, particularly in the north of England. In addition, Wales and Scotland did not have significant contact with French prisoners of war on parole until 1811. Table 2.3 shows the scale of parolees arriving at parole towns<sup>97</sup>. The table only shows the number of parolees arriving in a given year. The number of arrivals should not be confused with the total number of parolees in a town at any given time<sup>98</sup>. The latter will differ because of the some parolees stayed in one town for a number of years, whereas others were frequently moved. Additionally, the

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<sup>97</sup> There were no parolees for two years as there was peace declared between Britain and France at this time, although this period has been described as just an interlude in their conflict. For further information about this period see John D. Grainger, *The Amiens Truce: Britain and Bonaparte, 1801–1803* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2004)

<sup>98</sup> For example, the government recorded in 1811 that there were 2,710 French prisoners on parole, whereas table 2.3 shows a minimum of 1,530 arriving parolees (see the notes for table 2.3 in the appendix, as this figure was most probably higher). House of Commons, 'French Prisoners of War', 14 June 1811, vol 20, cc634-9 <<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1811/jun/14/french-prisoners-of-war/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

records used for this table showed that many parolees brought servants and their families who were permitted to stay with them. These were often omitted from the official figures of parolees. Using Selkirk as an example; National Archives data shows 113 total prisoners of war on parole between 1811 and 1814. However, French parolee Adelbert Doisy de Villargennes recalled that there were around 190 men in total in Selkirk<sup>99</sup>. The implication from this is that either the numbers of arrivals were under-recorded or that not all data survived. In spite of these caveats, the table and maps give a good indication of the scope and location of forced immigration. The results of this research have therefore been used in the rest of this chapter to provide context to the potential impact of parolees by comparison with local population size.

Usually parolees would arrive in large groups, sometimes over one hundred at a time, resulting in a large impact on the parole town in question. To take one example, 239 French prisoners arrived in Bishops Waltham in 1811. The total population at the time was 1,830, meaning an increase of 13.1%<sup>100</sup>. In contrast, some towns, such as Alresford, would have been less impacted. Based on population figures for 1811, the arrival of 134 Frenchmen only increased the population by 2.6%<sup>101</sup>. Most parolees did not stay in their parole town for the duration of their parole. Some were sent to prisons as a result of breaking their parole conditions, going on the run or engaging in illegal activities such as stealing. Others were moved around. This could be because some towns closed,

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<sup>99</sup> Adelbert J. Doisy de Villargennes, *Reminiscences of Army Life under Napoleon Bonaparte* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co, 1884) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/reminiscencesofa00dois#page/n5/mode/2up/> p.75 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>100</sup> 'Bishops Waltham CP/AP', *Vision of Britain* (2017) [http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10050686/cube/TOT\\_POP/](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10050686/cube/TOT_POP/) [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>101</sup> 'Alresford PLU/RegD', *Vision of Britain* (2017) [http://visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10056070/cube/TOT\\_POP/](http://visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10056070/cube/TOT_POP/) [accessed 20 September 2017]



or there were cases of overcrowding or government security fears<sup>102</sup>. In these instances, parolees had less time and opportunity to integrate and settle. For example, those in South Molton had less than a year mixing with the locals and building relationships as the parole town was only open for a period in 1803. It is not always clear how many parolees were moved around because official records of parolees were not updated to show what happened to them after arrival.

Table 2.3 shows a significant difference in the numbers of parolees up to 1800, compared to 1803 to 1815. Up to 1800 there were 2,681 recorded arrivals. Between 1803 and 1815 there were 14,148 recorded arrivals<sup>103</sup>. The reason for the dramatic increase from 1803 was due to the start of the Napoleonic Wars and the fact that prisoners were no longer permitted to return to France. Increased movement of parolees between towns came from government fears of possible French invasion and the potential for prisoner escapes if they stayed near the coast. The general trend appears to be that, initially, parole towns were based in southern England, many near port towns, in the Revolutionary War but, from 1803, they were moved further north and particularly into Wales and Scotland. Evidence of this can be seen in a letter from the Transport Board, dated 31 October 1803, stating that “in the present circumstances it has been judged expedient to remove all Prisoners of War on Parole from places near the Coast to Inland towns”<sup>104</sup>. Maps 2.1 and 2.2 and table 2.3 show that a few Welsh and Scottish parole towns were open from 1803, but that the majority of parolees were

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<sup>102</sup> For example, many people arriving in Wincanton in 1805 remained until the parole town closed in December 1811, so had time to settle into the community. TNA: PRO ADM 103/610. However, other parole towns were open less than a year, for example South Molton.

<sup>103</sup> To get to the total of 14,148, see table 2.3 and notes for table 2.3 in appendix.

<sup>104</sup> William Cobbett, *Cobbett's Political Register*, vol. IV (London: Printed by Cox and Baylis, 1803) Accessed via <[https://archive.org/stream/cobbettpolitica\\_b04cobb#page/n5/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/cobbettpolitica_b04cobb#page/n5/mode/2up)> p.758 [accessed 20 September 2017]

transferred to them later in the decade following instructions from the Transport Board to move prisoners further north. Scotland received the vast majority of its parolees from 1811 onwards, following an upsurge of concerns about plans of mass escape of prisoners and overcrowding in the South of England<sup>105</sup>.

The mass movement of parolees was not solely due to fearmongering government propaganda. Escape attempts became more common in the latter part of the period being studied as it became more apparent to all that there was no end in sight to the war or confinement for prisoners of war. Although the government may have induced fear by making blanket statements implying a large scale of escape attempts, there were numerous examples in local papers of French parolees attempting to escape. It was noted that they were mainly officers belonging to the lower orders<sup>106</sup>. One example of an unsuccessful escape attempt occurred in 1811 when six Frenchmen went on the run from their parole town, Okehampton, with the help of a British guide. Local residents were notified and went after them, but one pursuer was stabbed by the guide. Three escapees surrendered and the others were caught and put in local jails. Three of the Frenchmen were also convicted of wilful murder, alongside the Briton<sup>107</sup>. It was not uncommon for parolees to run, although there was usually no associated violence. Based on the Transport Office Return of June 1812 it has been possible to get

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<sup>105</sup> Ian MacDougall, *All Men Are Brethren: Prisoners of War in Scotland, 1803-1814* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 2008) pp.38-58. Parole town official log books recorded when their parolees attempted to run. The scale of the issue was not the same around the country, but in some instances was a real issue for the British government. For example, of the 289 French parolees that arrived in Wantage in 1809, 68 ran from the town. TNA: PRO ADM 103/608

<sup>106</sup> TNA: PRO ADM 105/44, 26 July 1808

<sup>107</sup> *The Times*, 'We learn from unquestionable authority, that the baggage of the Prince of ORANGE was not taken in', 2 November 1811, pg. 3, issue 8437. Accessed via the Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]. For another example, see *The Salopian Journal*, 24 March 1813, issue no.1000. Accessed via <<http://www.lastchancetoread.com/docs/1813-03-24-the-salopian-journal.aspx/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

a glimpse into the total number of French parolees and how many men chose to break their parole. This is shown in table 2.4.

Table 2.4 - shows the total figures ending 5<sup>th</sup> June of each year<sup>108</sup>:

Year	Total Number of Commissioned Officers on Parole	Number that broke their Parole	% of Officers that broke their Parole
1810	1,685	104	6.2%
1811	2,087	118	5.7%
1812	2,142	242	11.3%

Those attempting to escape were often not alone in their efforts. Many Frenchmen missed their home country or did not embrace parole conditions and some Britons wanted to help them, despite the ongoing war and the fact that those they were helping had fought against British men. People smuggling became an issue in Britain at this time, usually coinciding with a financial agreement between the smuggler and the parolees trying to escape. Daly found that British smugglers could charge up to three hundred guineas per officer smuggled<sup>109</sup>. This shows that there was an economic value to collaborating with parolees as well as a sense of compassion towards others in an unfortunate situation, but there is no clear evidence as to which motivation was more

<sup>108</sup> House of Commons, *Estimates and Accounts, Army Returns, Session 7 January – 30 July 1812* (London, Rarebooksclub, 2012) p.293. Note that these figures did not include the families of prisoners of war, so expect the total number of parolees in Britain during those years to be higher. This is also reflected in table 2.3, and an example of this can be seen in arriving parolees in 1810 numbers in the table. In fact, p.301 of the same House of Commons book shows that the Report detailed 3,231 total French parolees in 1812 that included family members.

<sup>109</sup> Gavin Daly, 'Napoleon and the 'City of Smugglers', 1810-1814', *The Historical Journal*, 50.2 (2007) <<https://core.ac.uk/download/files/455/12179254.pdf/>> p.346 [accessed 20 September 2017]. For further details of smuggling incidents see Gavin Daly, 'English Smugglers, the Channel, and the Napoleonic Wars, 1800–1814', *Journal of British Studies*, 46.1 (2007) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/508397/>> [accessed 20 September 2017] and John Rattenbury, *Memoirs of a Smuggler: Compiled from His Diary and Journal* (Sidmouth: J Harvey, 1837) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/details/memoirsasmuggle00rattgoog/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

common. At other times, offers to help would simply be from British locals who were trying to do what they felt was best for the individual parolees with whom they had built up a rapport. One parolee in Tiverton described his experience as “monotonous” but pleasant enough, with the locals being “generally kindly disposed” towards parolees<sup>110</sup>. He claimed that the sympathy and camaraderie between parolees and the town’s inhabitants extended to some locals offering to help prisoners escape, which some did, but that others were conflicted after giving their word of honour to adhere to the regulations.

### **French Parolees’ Encounters with British officials and Britons in Parole Towns**

The Transport Board was put in charge of the administration of parolees, which included allowances, rules and care and protection of prisoners. In each parole town an agent was appointed to deal directly with the parolees to ensure their whereabouts, check that their health was satisfactory and give out money owed to them. He was also under orders to listen to any complaints made by the parolees in their towns, showing respect for these men, possibly due to their social status. However, many Frenchmen felt these instructions were not followed and that they did not receive suitable care and financial assistance. René Martin Pillet, a Frenchman who spent ten years in England, six of them as a prisoner of war, felt that the British government wanted to appear to be acting honourably to prisoners, but did not actually care about their welfare<sup>111</sup>. He described the misfortune of parolees resulting from the meagre allowances and noted that the amounts handed out were insufficient for daily expenses in an “extravagantly

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<sup>110</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.299

<sup>111</sup> René Martin Pillet, *Views of England: During a Residence of Ten Years; Six of Them as a Prisoner of War* (Boston: Parmenter and Norton, 1818) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/viewsofenglanddur00pillgoog#page/n5/mode/2up/> p.246 [accessed 20 September 2017]

dear" country<sup>112</sup>. The government also instructed Transport Board agents to act with a certain degree of suspicion when dealing with parolees. They were to monitor all letters sent and received, and descriptions of parolees' physical appearances were recorded to avoid men switching identities in the hope of escape. The enforcement of parole curfews and punishments handed out to offenders depended on the particular parole town. In many towns, agents were more lenient, but some had local inhabitants who deliberately looked out for anyone breaking parole curfew conditions and returned them to the agents, sometimes with force, as an extra source of income. This was due to the fact that agents were instructed to tell the British locals in parole towns that there would be a reward of up to one guinea plus expenses for any person helping to capture a parolee breaking their parole conditions<sup>113</sup>. Despite official requests to the British public to help detain prisoners breaking their parole and many people using this to their advantage to claim rewards, not all went about it fairly. Some Britons were condemned for this. A number of men capturing French parolees out after curfew or beyond mile boundaries were found to be unnecessarily rough and sometimes violent. One account in 1812 in the *Salopian Journal* detailed how M. Le Combe was out after the permitted hours in Leek and was tracked down and stoned to death after a fight broke out<sup>114</sup>. Other captors were simply unpopular due to the rapport built up between the public and parolees. Such a case arose when five parolees were caught outside Blyth trying to escape, but had been halted when men overheard them and they were

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<sup>112</sup> Pillet, *Views of England*, p.253

<sup>113</sup> Transport Service Commission, *Instructions for Agents*, p.10. Other official notifications show differing amounts as rewards, such as ten shillings, as seen in Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.287. The actual amounts given to Britons returning the Frenchmen on parole often varied from these official amounts. One boy in Thame would regularly return Frenchmen breaking their parole and received one shilling each time. See J. Howard Brown and W. Guest, *A History of Thame* (Thame: F.H. Castle, 1935).

<sup>114</sup> The *Salopian Journal*, 11 November 1812, issue no.981. Accessed via <http://www.lastchancetoread.com/docs/1812-11-11-the-salopian-journal.aspx/> [accessed 20 September 2017]

recaptured. However, the public turned against the captors rather than the Frenchmen as the event evoked sympathy with “rich and poor vieing with each other in showing kindness”<sup>115</sup>. In this instance, similar attitudes were seen from the entire community for the kind and honourable foreigners.

Many Commissioners of the Transport Board were determined to show fair and just treatment of prisoners under their care, even those trying to escape, despite the ongoing war with France. This was demonstrated in their punishment of locals mistreating the parolees in their towns. On 15 July 1813 in Welshpool, three men were found guilty of assaulting two parolees. Two were sentenced to six months imprisonment and the third to two months. In addition to this, they were forced to keep the peace with the Frenchmen they had assaulted for a specific period<sup>116</sup>. There were further reports of assaults in Welshpool in 1805, 1813 and 1814. Some offenders were fined and ordered to keep the peace, but there were also instances of imprisonment<sup>117</sup>. The Board made it clear that parolees “shall be protected by Government from insult while they remain in their unfortunate situation”<sup>118</sup>. This could be either the enforcement of legal protection or possibly compassion felt on an

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<sup>115</sup> John Wallace, *The History of Blyth*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Blyth: John Robinson, 1869) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/historyblyth00wallgoog#page/n4/mode/2up/>> pp.65-6 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>116</sup> National Library of Wales, *Crime and Punishment* (2017) <[https://www.llgc.org.uk/php\\_ffeiliau/sf\\_results.php?co=All&from=1795&off\\_cat=1&off\\_co=All&to=1830&off=850&off=900/](https://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?co=All&from=1795&off_cat=1&off_co=All&to=1830&off=850&off=900/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>117</sup> Montgomeryshire Quarter Sessions, session rolls, 1810-1819 (ref: M/QS/SR) Accessed via <[http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/TranslatedDocs/Archives/Mont\\_QS\\_1810-1819\\_bi.pdf/](http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/TranslatedDocs/Archives/Mont_QS_1810-1819_bi.pdf/)> [accessed 20 September 2017], and Montgomeryshire Quarter Sessions, session rolls, 1800-1809 (ref: M/QS/SR) Accessed via <[http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/TranslatedDocs/Archives/Mont\\_QS\\_1800-1809\\_bi.pdf/](http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/TranslatedDocs/Archives/Mont_QS_1800-1809_bi.pdf/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>118</sup> Murray Chapman, ‘Napoleonic prisoners of war in Llanfyllin’, *Montgomery Collections Relating to Montgomeryshire and its Borders*, 71 (1983) <<http://welshjournals.llgc.org.uk/browse/viewobject/llgc-id:1269366/article/000088587/>> p.71 [accessed 20 September 2017]

individual level towards parolees. This also shows that legislation and rules were not solely used as a barrier to Anglo-French relations.

In exceptional circumstances, the government was occasionally willing to waive some restrictions for parolees of a significant social standing. One case was Admiral Villeneuve, who was captured at Trafalgar and sent on parole to Bishops Waltham. Captain Henry Blackwood met Villeneuve in 1805 and, in a letter to J.D. Thomson, expressed his shock that the same restrictions were imposed on him as on lower ranking officers<sup>119</sup>. Following correspondence concerning his situation and a visit to the agent at Bishops Waltham from Lord Clanricarde, Villeneuve was permitted to go three miles outside of his parole town instead of one. He could also visit Lord Clanricarde on occasions in addition to any other noblemen he received an invitation from. He was permitted to leave Bishops Waltham and stay at a parole town of his choosing as long as it was not too close to London or ports<sup>120</sup>. Another more extreme example of the leniencies seen for those considered to be of the highest status was Lucien Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, who was brought to Britain in December 1810. Reflecting his social standing and the number of females in his family, he was put up in a comfortable residence in Ludlow, not a designated parole town, and was permitted to travel within a ten mile radius. His arrival attracted attention from the media and locals, and many gentlemen were keen to offer their hospitality to him<sup>121</sup>. Although the government

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<sup>119</sup> Charles Middleton Barham and John Know Laughton (ed.), *Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham: Admiral of the Red Squadron, 1758-1813*, vol.III (London: Printed for the Navy Records Society, 1907) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/hists59543411#page/n9/mode/2up/>> pp.360-1 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>120</sup> Barham and Laughton (ed.), *Letters and Papers of Charles*, pp.364-5. Other instances of exceptions made for French prisoners based on their status can be found in Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.291

<sup>121</sup> Barney Rolfe-Smith, *A Gilded Cage Lucien Bonaparte Prisoner of War, 1810-14 at Ludlow and Worcester* (Ludlow: Stonebrook Publishing 2012) pp.24-121, Hester Lynch Piozzi, Edward Alan Bloom

wanted to show there were restrictions put in place, on the whole Bonaparte and his family could lead the life of the gentry.

Abell's research found considerable acceptance of parolees. He noted that, due to the respectable social standing of most of the parolees, the British in parole towns were sad to see them leave as they had contributed both economically and socially to their communities<sup>122</sup>. Exceptions to these welcoming attitudes appear to be due to the character and actions of individual Frenchmen rather than propaganda and legislation causing barriers. John Marsh recalled how a parolee was said to have been treated well during his time in England, but, despite this, he chose to ridicule the British national anthem. This provides an example of how the attitude of individual parolees may have affected how well they blended into British society<sup>123</sup>. Another relevant factor was the rank of parolees and the honour they supposedly possessed. Although being on parole meant the French soldiers had reached a certain rank, after the Revolution, it did not mean they belonged to the nobility. Therefore, commonality of rank was not necessarily reflected in commonality in status, and British attitudes sometimes reflected the perception of lack of status and, by extension, honour. One example can

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and Lillian D. Bloom, *The Piozzi Letters: 1811-1816* (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1999) p.76, Mark Hilsden, *Home in the Country* (London: Blurb, 2015) pp.87-120. For just some articles on the arrival, movement and settlement of Lucien Bonaparte and his family in the newspapers, see 'Arrival of Lucien Bonaparte', *Kentish Weekly Post or Canterbury Journal*, 18 December 1810. Accessed via The British Newspaper Archive <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], 'Lucien Bonaparte, with his family and suite has arrived Plymouth in the President frigate', *Kentish Gazette*, 18 December 1810. Accessed via The British Newspaper Archive <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> [accessed 20 September 2017] 'Lucien Bonaparte', *Morning Post*, 31 December 1810. Accessed via The British Newspaper Archive <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], 'Lucien Bonaparte', *Leicester Journal*, 23 August 1811. Accessed via The British Newspaper Archive <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>122</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.393

<sup>123</sup> John Marsh and Brian Robins (ed.), *The John Marsh Journals: The Life and Times of a Gentleman Composer (1752-1828)* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1998) p.575



be seen in 1796 when Sir William Pitt described parolees who had risen in rank despite being from a more humble background as “from the meanest extraction, void of education and principles”. He expressed the view that men like this should not have been granted parole<sup>124</sup>. These parolees were not like the old style elite. They were men who had gained status due to the Revolution, so Pitt’s statement suggests anti-Revolution sentiment when it came to the honour and respect of men. When parolees were deemed not to have acted honourably, and by extension not gentlemanly, regulations enabled agents to take action. They could remove parolees from their towns and relocate them or, if the infraction was severe enough, jail them or suggest extradition from the country. Two French generals, Rochambeau and Boyer, had to be relocated to other parole towns several times and, at one point, were even jailed due to their rude and insulting behaviour and violent interactions with British men<sup>125</sup>.

Attitudes displayed during encounters were not uniform and often depended on social status. The British elite sought commonality of principles and honourable behaviour. Even those supposedly in place to enforce government regulations made friendships with those they were responsible for, and were willing to flout certain restrictions. One example was in 1810 when parolees got together at the Swan Inn in Alresford to celebrate Napoleon’s wedding. With them were the town’s parole agent, the local magistrate and the town’s surgeon and they were said to have had an extremely enjoyable evening, indicating friendships on a local level. However, government officials were not keen on these interactions. In this case the Transport Board sent a

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<sup>124</sup> TNA: WO 40/8, 20 October 1796

<sup>125</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp.144, 425

letter forbidding the event to take place<sup>126</sup>. There were other instances of amicable interactions between the British and French. One daughter of a parolee in Alresford recalled a ball happily attended by both French and Englishmen to help celebrate her parents' wedding anniversary<sup>127</sup>. In contrast, there were instances of lower ranking Britons refusing to accept the parolees and wanting to express their opinions. In 1807, parolees in Thame made a complaint to the Transport Board that they were receiving insults, specifying that they were directed from the lower orders in town<sup>128</sup>. It meant that there was no definitive ally for French parolees to turn to, and, with many having to change parole towns during their confinement, they repeatedly had to deal with British attitudes on an individual basis rather than just relying on commonalities in social status.

Parolees could only contribute a limited amount to the communities they were held in due to the restrictions in the distance they could travel and the length of time they had to remain in their lodgings. Culturally, they could expose the British they came into contact with to some of their cuisine, language and artistic skills. One story was that Ashbourne gingerbread came from General Rochambeau's cook who cooked it for locals and provided the recipe which is still in use today. Other communities saw that the French included frogs or snails in their diet. This remained a somewhat foreign concept that was not widely taken up by the British<sup>129</sup>. What does seem to have impressed the British was the French love of theatre and the lengths they went to in order to find suitable spaces to put on performances. The English gentry would often

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<sup>126</sup> TNA: PRO ADM 98/201

<sup>127</sup> TNA: PRO ADM 105/61

<sup>128</sup> TNA: PRO ADM 105/44, 12 Sept. 1807

<sup>129</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp.319, 340-1, 419

attend these performances, whilst other locals would help provide props and costumes. This was despite the government often trying to ban theatres and other events that brought the British and French together in fear of “familiarity between the two peoples and corrupted morals”<sup>130</sup>. These encounters may not have been detrimental to a person’s morals but did soften attitudes. This not only helped assimilate the French into British communities but also could encourage more dangerous flouting of government rules, such as helping the French to escape. Another instance of intermingling was that, in spite of government concerns, interpersonal relationships inevitably developed during prisoners’ time on parole, and there were numerous incidents of relationships and marriages being recorded. Although many marriages were met with rejoicing, there remained concerns that a Frenchman’s honour was not to be trusted, and therefore that any unions should either be approached with trepidation or deterred and avoided. This was even formalised in writing by the Transport Board, which was concerned for the virtue of British women. It warned against Frenchmen, particularly because France would not recognise the marriage, and many Frenchmen were abandoning their British wives (and any children they had together) as soon as they were permitted to return to France<sup>131</sup>. Warnings about the invalidity of marriages were also placed in newspapers, such as the *Bristol Mirror* in 1810. It made clear that marriages in Britain would not be recognised in France and that it considered it:

proper to give publicity to this fact, in order to put our fair countrywomen on their guard against the snares which may be laid for them by men who are perfectly aware of the nullity of such marriages, and who have too

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<sup>130</sup>Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.310, 319-20, 335-7, 423

<sup>131</sup>Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.307-9, 414, 434

much leisure to exercise their artifices on the credulity of unsuspecting innocence<sup>132</sup>.

These warnings suggest that marriages between parolees and British women were fairly common, and in many communities this seems to be the case. Although it is difficult to determine the true scale of Anglo-French marriages during this period, there are some surviving registers, indicating that, in many parole towns, there were multiple marriages. For example, in Ashby-de-la-Zouch between 1806 and 1814, there were fifteen registered marriages between parolees and British women<sup>133</sup>. There is little evidence to conclude whether they were controversial affairs or were greeted with celebrations, but the fact that British families allowed their daughters to marry parolees suggests a level of respect and friendship.

One problem was that even parolees who had wealth back in France had to live off the subsistence granted to them by the British government, blurring the lines of social status as they were no longer able to lead the comfortable lives to which many were accustomed. One parolee complained about the lack of accommodation available in Sanquhar, saying that most of the available space was in kitchens or barns which were not comfortable or suitable for the Frenchmen living there<sup>134</sup>. Parolees had to rely on their skills, so they tried to earn extra wages by, amongst other things, teaching dancing and French to locals. The aim was to make their lives more comfortable, but, regardless of income, this usually depended upon the availability of accommodation in their designated parole town or the hospitality and kindness shown by individual Britons.

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<sup>132</sup> 'Marriage with French Prisoners of War', *Bristol Mirror*, 10 December 1810. Accessed via The British Newspaper Archive <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>133</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp.429-30

<sup>134</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p.338

Financially, many Britons could take advantage of parolees in their towns as they could rent out buildings or spare rooms. This was particularly favoured by lower ranking Britons as a significant supplement to their usual wages. Many took advantage of the numbers of parolees seeking accommodation and charged based on a captive market. Lieutenant Garneray, who was stationed at Bishops Waltham, commented that the rent for the “miserable and decayed” accommodation available was so excessive that “a year’s rent was fully equal to the value of the house itself”<sup>135</sup>. In his experience, he had to pay ten shillings a week in order to be provided a bed in a hut where five other parolees already resided<sup>136</sup>. The overall result of the jobs held by parolees and the rents charged for accommodation was that parolees contributed to the economy of a town. This suggests that it is questionable whether these parolees were welcomed as individuals or purely viewed as valuable commodities due to the money they brought in.

### **Life in specific Parole Towns**

Not all parolees had the same experience. It not only depended on how the individual tried to integrate and the amount of time they stayed in one town; it also depended on what town they were kept in, the total length of time they were imprisoned and the resources available in the town. An example of the situation in the south-west of England during the earlier part of the period being studied can be seen by looking at Ashburton, which was open between 1795 and 1797. One issue that became apparent with the arrival of large numbers of parolees was the strain on resources. Ashburton’s magistrate wrote to the local MP as he had heard that there was a possibility that there

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<sup>135</sup> Garneray and Rose (translator), *The Floating Prison*, p.183

<sup>136</sup> Garneray and Rose (translator), *The Floating Prison*, p.183

might be two hundred more parolees coming, and he considered that there would be a potential for rioting. He claimed that the bad hay harvest and scarcity of cattle, intensified by the lack of provisions brought to the market, meant that inhabitants were showing resentment rather than compassion. This was shown when he was threatened by townsfolk for trying to reduce the price of a bushel (a measurement for agricultural products such as corn or wheat) for soldiers and the poor in the town. He asked that, due to the economic issues, prisoners be sent to other parole towns as well, ideally further from the coast<sup>137</sup>. Despite this, over three hundred prisoners were sent to Ashburton and were forced on the locals. John Manners, the fifth duke of Rutland, wrote about his experience of Ashburton's parolees in August 1795. According to Manners, the parolees, many of whom he considered boys, stationed in the town gave it a predominantly French feel. He commended the parolees for their fitness, but found some of their features odd. He appeared to be critical of the government for providing them with such a substantial allowance that they could afford to be so well dressed<sup>138</sup>. Another man recalled how his family members described Frenchmen favourably and as more gentlemanly in comparison to prisoners of war of other nationalities. They also brought their skills to the town by leading dance classes and French lessons<sup>139</sup>. Regardless of the reservations expressed by its MP, parolees seemed to integrate well in Ashburton, and their time there was relatively uneventful.

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<sup>137</sup> TNA: HO 42/34/160

<sup>138</sup> John Henry Manner, *Journal of a Tour Round the Southern Coasts of England (1805)* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2010) pp.100-1. Note that the number of parolees exceeds the number found from the National Archives documents of French arrivals, showing that again the official number of prisoners of war on parole could exceed current assumed figures.

<sup>139</sup> Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp.432-3

Scotland is useful to illustrate the treatment of parolees in the latter part of the period being studied. Many of these parolees had previously been housed in more southerly parts of Britain, but were part of the large scale movement of parolees by the government. Adelbert Doisy is a useful case study for the life of parolees in Scotland. He was transferred from Odiham to Selkirk in May 1811 and remained there until April 1814 when he was released along with all the other parolees in the town. He claimed that the government had not made adequate arrangements concerning the parolees' living arrangements, so they had to organise it themselves. It appears that the money the Frenchmen could offer locals for accommodation was a significant contribution to the town's economy, particularly due to the lack of industry found in Selkirk. The cost of accommodation was cheaper than in England, and the French seemed happy to pay the amounts set by Scottish locals who flocked to have paying guests. In his view, the scenery was more pleasant than in Odiham, and he was pleasantly surprised by the cheaper cost of living. However, his opinion was that he, and many other parolees, became bored by their confinement. They chose to use their time and money to find new hobbies such as fishing and setting up bands, theatres and coffee rooms. However, much of their socialising was amongst themselves, by choice. This was the case with the coffee room that they set up where admittance was strictly for Frenchmen only. He claimed that they would occasionally permit some of their British acquaintances to enter, but it appears, in this instance at least, that the limited success of integration in Selkirk was more to do with French choice than British prejudice.

In Selkirk social status did not appear to be a connecting factor between parolees and the local gentry. In fact, Doisy learned that the local gentry had actively decided not to

associate with or accept the French parolees into their ranks. Despite this, friendship and generosity was seen from the lower ranks in the town, with a couple of farmers mentioned as being particularly welcoming. He also provided proof that the laws parolees were meant to adhere to were not always followed, and that the British were happy to turn a blind eye to some misdemeanours, particularly when the breaches of law were to enable them to participate in local activities. Financial incentives were given to Britons to report when Frenchmen deliberately exceeded their permitted boundaries. However, the locals in Selkirk were happy not to take the guinea rewards in order to let the Frenchmen go fishing and even found it amusing when parolees moved the one mile town limit pillar to a mile further out.

Doisy did note that there were individual instances of confrontation and violence. One occasion was in 1813 when the French were holding a feast in their coffee room. They had excess food which they agreed to share with the locals, but only if the Scots shouted "Vive l'Empereur Napoleon"<sup>140</sup>. Most Scots did not agree to this and a mob formed, with rocks thrown by both sides, and it seemed that violence was likely to escalate. However, the situation ultimately resolved itself fairly easily when the town's agent warned the Frenchmen that they were out after agreed hours and that a further mob was approaching. Doisy's account states that it was reasonable to expect the Frenchmen to return to their dwelling and that there were no lingering bad feelings between the parolees and the townsmen. Although there was ill feeling towards the war with France and Napoleon, individuals were able to live relatively harmoniously together despite the conflicting nationalities. In fact, when peace was declared and the parolees were permitted to return to France, locals assisted them in obtaining

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<sup>140</sup> Doisy de Villargennes, *Reminiscences*, p.88



transport to the port as the parolees were not able to afford this<sup>141</sup>. This case study in Scotland shows that, although the war between Britain and France had intensified, prisoners sent on parole to Scotland (predominantly from 1810 onwards) were financially better off and received a warm welcome<sup>142</sup>.

This chapter considered the interactions between French parolees and the British. From looking at data on parole towns and individual accounts, it can be seen that there were differing levels of integration and acceptance. After the fall of the Ancien Régime, officers in the French army were made up of varying social statuses. This impacted on the way the British viewed them and how they chose to interact with them. Not all Britons of a higher social status were overly willing to accept or mingle with parolees which may have been influenced by that varying status and the associated honour. Some in the British gentry touched on this, and their interactions showed that former French nobles were given additional advantages. Britons belonging to the lower orders seemed more willing to accept parolees in their communities, but relationships were often started or helped by financial incentives, such as the higher levels of rent paid, which enabled them to be seen as useful commodities. National barriers still appeared to be a factor in initial British attitudes towards the parolees but not so much in practical matters once they started to interact. There were incidents of criminal activities, hostility and poor character shown by both the British and French, but overall

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<sup>141</sup> Doisy de Villargennes, *Reminiscences*, pp.74-96

<sup>142</sup> Further research on French prisoners on parole in Scotland and British attitudes towards them can be found in Andrew Lang and John Lang, *Highways and Byways in the Border* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1913) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/highwaysbywaysin00languoft#page/n7/mode/2up/> pp.258-70 [accessed 20 September 2017], Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp.316-56, MacDougall, *All Men Are Brethren*, pp.1-588, Margaret Tait, 'French Prisoners of War on Parole at Selkirk in 1811', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 32.113, Part 1 (1953) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25526184/> [accessed 20 September 2017]

there appeared to be relatively little disruptive behaviour, and the French were frequently cultural net contributors to the communities they were in. The overriding sense of encounters was that acts of kindness and acceptance were seen from individuals and some groups in parole towns. It must be noted that, when talking about this success of Anglo-French encounters, it was limited due to the confines of the legislation that held them back from carrying out everyday life and the mundane existence they were subjected to. Monotony sometimes drove parolees to resent those around them for keeping them captive, but in many instances they chose to interact more in their communities and to take up hobbies or jobs that enhanced relationships and the economies in parole towns. This research has shown that Crimmin's statement at the beginning of the chapter was an accurate description of the treatment of parolees. Despite media and government attacks on the French that intensified during the war, hatred was not universal amongst the British public. However, her research did not emphasise sufficiently the economic factors underlying the acceptance of parolees, particularly by the lower orders. Evidence shows that the British were interested in exploiting economic opportunities amongst the French parolees.

### Chapter 3 - The Assimilation of French Émigrés

This chapter aims to show the varied interactions between French émigrés and the British and the extent to which willingness was shown on both sides to enable émigrés to integrate socially and culturally into British society. It will look at the level of immigration and the reactions of individual Britons to the French. Those coming to Britain were political refugees fleeing the French Revolution, but not all were of the same social order. The aspect of horizontal relationships and the role of politeness and honour will be investigated to see whether there was a difference in the extent to which different French classes integrated. There are few recorded interactions between lower class French émigrés and lower class Britons, meaning that there is insufficient evidence to draw any solid conclusions. Therefore, this chapter will largely look at elite opinions, legal cases and media coverage. Cultural differences, which were commented on by both the British and French, will be included to see whether they were heightened or reduced by the mixing of the two nationalities. The chapter will examine the motivations for help given to émigrés by the British public, organisations and government. It will also look at the economic impact of a large number of Frenchmen entering the country in a short period.

Margery Weiner has provided a general overview of émigrés in Britain. However, she focused on the story of an individual which therefore does not represent all émigrés' experiences. Kirsty Carpenter has undertaken in-depth research into the topic of émigrés in London in this period. Her research showed that émigrés brought social diversity to England's capital, with personal interactions separating from political

discourse. Additional research from academics such as Juliette Reboul, whose PhD research will be made public in 2018, is amongst those further contributing to making this a current topic of discussion<sup>143</sup>. This chapter will reference Carpenter's excellent work on the experience of émigrés in London and build upon this by looking at the different aspect of how the British interacted with émigrés throughout Britain through encounters, together with the importance of social status. Studies into French emigration should also acknowledge Donald Greer's *The Incidence of the Emigration during the French Revolution*, first published in 1951, which included important data analysing the widespread movement of émigrés, although the accuracy of his research has since been brought into question, for example by Simon Burrows<sup>144</sup>. First-hand accounts will be used to establish responses to French émigrés, with focus on individual diaries and case studies such as those of English novelist Fanny Burney. The chapter will show that, by the end of the wars, French émigrés were the recipients of a substantial level of philanthropy and sympathy from the British. Despite some issues such as fear and economic worries, French émigrés were able to successfully integrate socially and culturally into British communities. The main aspects that held them back were money and, in some instances, their lack of desire to mingle with the British.

### **Arrival and Dispersion of Émigrés in Britain**

French émigrés arrived in two significant waves, with social status being a determining factor for when many Frenchmen chose to flee. The first wave in 1789 included the

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<sup>143</sup> Attempts have been made to contact Reboul to request access to her PhD, but unfortunately these attempts were unsuccessful.

<sup>144</sup> Donald Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration During the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), Simon Burrows, *French Exile Journalism and European Politics, 1792-1814* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2000) p.11

highest nobles who were most in harm's way following the French Revolution<sup>145</sup>. Those of great privilege or in the highest court circles were often opposed to what they saw as a disagreeable political climate and wanted to see the Revolution overturned, so were the first targets of revolutionaries. The second wave occurred in the autumn of 1792 as a result of the overthrow of the monarchy, growing violence and the September Massacres. The majority of incoming émigrés in 1792 were comprised of the lower ranks and the clergy<sup>146</sup>. Priests in France felt they had been made to choose between their Catholic faith and the Revolution. Many were unwilling to take the oaths asked of them and consequently were in danger of losing their parishes and, in some instances, their lives<sup>147</sup>. Émigrés became unable to return to France even if they wished to as the National Assembly banned them as enemies of the country if they returned after the start of 1792, threatening death as a consequence. Not all Frenchmen had the financial means to leave France. For example, the 1,020 servants who came to Britain were only able to do so as part of an entourage<sup>148</sup>. Those who were wealthy enough to move and

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<sup>145</sup> For further details on the French Revolution and the September massacres and responses to it in Britain, see D. G. Wright, *Revolution & Terror in France 1789-1795*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Routledge, 1991), Neal Ascherson (ed.), *"The Times" Reports the French Revolution: Extracts from "The Times", 1789-1794* (London: Times Books, 1975), William Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies in the Age of Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Colin Jones, *The Longman Companion to the French Revolution* (London: Longman, 1988), Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Thomas Philip Schofield, 'Conservative Political Thought In Britain in Response to the French Revolution', *The Historical Journal*, 29.3 (1986) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2639050/>> [accessed 20 September 2017], J. Dinwiddy, 'Interpretations of Anti-Jacobinism', in *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, ed. by Mark Philp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

<sup>146</sup> For a breakdown of the number of the French clergy coming to Britain, the dates and their dispersal around Britain can be found in Dominic Aidan Bellenger, 'Fearless resting place': the Exiled French Clergy in Great Britain, 1789-1815', in *The French Émigrés in Europe and the Struggle against Revolution, 1789-1814*, ed. by Kirsty Carpenter and Philip Mansel (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999) pp.214-7 and pp.222-4

<sup>147</sup> This action taken against the clergy in 1790 was called as the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. For details surrounding this event, see Joan Lenardon, 'The Civil Constitution of the Clergy as seen by the Journal encyclopédique', *CCHA Study Sessions*, 39 (1972) <[http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st\\_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA1972/Lenardon.pdf/](http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA1972/Lenardon.pdf/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>148</sup> Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration*, pp.132-8 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the jobs formerly held by French émigrés before fleeing.

set up in places like London could only bring their portable wealth and therefore lived in relative poverty in relation to their previous lives.

The total number of émigrés arriving in Britain is hard to report on accurately due to the lack of surviving documents. Much official recording of arrivals at ports was inadequate. One example was at Dover where a delay in official documentation meant that the Collector of Customs did not have the necessary clearance to employ customs officers to implement the Aliens Act<sup>149</sup>. It means that there may have been French émigrés that did not receive the correct paperwork and therefore were not recorded properly<sup>150</sup>. Many official records were based on yearly reports from the government. Greer's research concluded that, because of these deficiencies, it was difficult to provide a definitive figure for the number of émigrés in Britain. He gave a figure of 109,720 known émigrés, but said that it may have been as high as about 130,000 from 1789 to 1815. However, to get to these figures, some of the regional immigration was estimated<sup>151</sup>. Carpenter thought that Greer's research had opened up questions about the status of émigrés which could lead the way usefully to further research, but that, as the immigration figures had been estimated, they should be viewed with caution, and particularly in the capital, the statistics for social diversity may not be entirely accurate<sup>152</sup>. She undertook further research to provide statistics of those coming to Britain, where they were located and what assistance they received<sup>153</sup>. Greer analysed

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<sup>149</sup> TNA: HO 42/64/43. Further details on the office in charge of implementing the Aliens Act can be found in Sparrow, 'The Alien Office', pp.361-84

<sup>150</sup> Paperwork included licences and passports that émigrés required to travel around Britain, examples of which can be seen in Plymouth Archives 1/674/1/23, 1/674/1/35, 1/674/2/14 and 1/674/2/15 and Hampshire Archives W/D3/328/1-162

<sup>151</sup> Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration*, pp.18-20

<sup>152</sup> Carpenter, 'London: Capital of the Emigration', in *The French Émigrés*, ed. by Carpenter and Mansel, p.44

<sup>153</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, pp.191-205

the social status of those entering Britain, separating people out into the first, second and third estates<sup>154</sup>. Of those with a recorded status he found that the third estate made up 55%, the clergy 27% and the nobility only 18%<sup>155</sup>. Social status was a determining factor in the treatment of French émigrés. Respect and sycophancy to the social elite may no longer have been present in France, but this was not the case in Britain. The social hierarchy remained firmly in place and extended to attitudes shown towards foreigners. La Marquise de La Tour du Pin Gouvernet recalled that, when she came to England in 1797, she found that English customs officers were brutal in their treatment of those arriving. However, she was asked to name people she knew in England as a reference and named her uncles, Lord Dillon, Lord Kenmare and Sir William Jerningham. She claimed that “the tone and manner of these employees changed very quickly” and her reception became far more amenable<sup>156</sup>.

The Laity Descriptive Register compiled by the French Refugees Relief Committee from 1798 makes it possible to look at the dispersion of émigrés at a snapshot in time. It holds the names of 1,310 lay émigrés and shows that the majority of people chose to live in London. The most popular areas were Somerstown and Soho, with many others settling in Tottenham Court Road, Chelsea, Marylebone, Kensington and Lambeth. The most popular area was north of the river where émigrés could mingle with the elite, both British and other Frenchmen from existing Huguenot communities. Somerstown

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<sup>154</sup> The three estates were made up as follows: the first estate was the clergy, the second estate was the nobility, the third estate made up the rest of society (comprising of about 98% of the population).

<sup>155</sup> Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration*, p.127. 7% of émigrés did not have a status entered so have been excluded for these statistics. Included in the third estate was 1,295 servants.

<sup>156</sup> La Marquise de La Tour du Pin Gouvernet, *Recollections of the Revolution and the Empire* (New York: Bretano's, 1920) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/recollectionsofr00latouoft#page/n5/mode/2up/> p.279 [accessed 20 September 2017]

and St. George’s Fields appear to be popular amongst those who were not able to bring their wealth with them, but still wanted to live in the capital due to the growing community and greater opportunities to earn a living. Most other émigrés lived in south east England, for example Middlesex and Kent. There were a couple of exceptions to this as significant numbers settled in Manchester and Bath<sup>157</sup>. Trevor Fawcett explained that the reason for so many émigrés flocking to Bath was that “aristocratic refugees might encounter their social equals” and there was appreciation of French culture<sup>158</sup>. From 1793, the Aliens Act increased the monitoring of émigrés and restricted their movement around Britain. It became mandatory to inform officials of personal and residency details. Until then, émigrés could move around freely which helped with them integrate into communities of their choice.

Table 3.1 – 1797 French Refugees Relief Committee List<sup>159</sup>:

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Male Servants</b>	<b>Female Servants</b>	<b>British servants</b>
Number	628	479	268	311	105	227	79
Percentage of total	30.0%	22.8%	12.8%	14.8%	5.0%	10.8%	3.8%

The majority of émigrés came to Britain as part of a family unit and were able to bring servants and children with them. To take an example, table 3.1 summarises a French Refugees Relief Committee list of immigrants from 1797. This list gave details of 2,097

<sup>157</sup> TNA: T 93/28. Note that there were approximately thirty more names that could not be analysed due to damage to the original document. Carpenter also analysed émigrés centres and made a map showing the main locations. Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, p.191

<sup>158</sup> Trevor Fawcett, ‘French Émigrés at Bath, 1789-1815’, *Somerset Archaeology & Natural History* (1997) <<http://www.sanhs.org/Documents/141/12fawcett.pdf>> p.161 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>159</sup> TNA: T 93/57. It was interesting to note that the ages for boys and girls went well into what we would now describe as adulthood, but if they came with a parent they were still considered children. For boys, the oldest age recorded was 22. For girls, the oldest age recorded was 34.



people, most of whom had fled from north and north west France. Social status was a distinguishing feature when describing these émigrés. The only status shown in the list was when a person was described as being from the *bourgeoisie*<sup>160</sup>. Obviously, as this is only a snapshot in time, it may not truly represent the split between genders, servants or children, but it is useful to determine the social dynamic of those coming to Britain<sup>161</sup>. The records detailed the family name, but for those not considered the head of the household, no first names were recorded. This meant that many people, for example children and servants, would have gone undocumented, and therefore it would be harder for the British government to trace them. If women came over without a man they were usually with either their children or another female companion. Having a large number of female and child émigrés evoked a different reaction from the British in comparison with parolees. Children were more likely to evoke a sense of pity, and women were deemed less likely to be spies. Therefore, although there was a great number of émigrés, many were not seen as a threat to Britain. The experience of women and children émigrés has yet to be researched in any depth, so there has been little evidence found to date to quantify their influence on integration. This would be a valid topic for further investigation.

### **Social and Cultural Interactions**

The next part of this chapter will look at encounters to see how, and with whom, émigrés chose to interact during their time in Britain, whether they truly wanted to be assimilated into British society and if the British were willing to accept them. Some

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<sup>160</sup> TNA: T 93/57

<sup>161</sup> Greer's research showed that women made up 14.5% of all total émigrés and gave a useful breakdown of the gender divide within the difference social statuses of those coming into Britain. It must however be taken into account that there is no specific timeframe in reference to the data collected. Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration*, p.113

émigrés did not believe that they would remain in Britain long term as they thought that events in France would be resolved before long. This may have curbed their enthusiasm and motivation to get involved in British life, culture and activities<sup>162</sup>. In addition to individual encounters, there were examples of communities of French émigrés settling in towns, both inside and outside London, and leaving cultural, economic and social footprints. Many Frenchmen were appreciative of what the country had to offer and chose to engage with British life and pastimes. In describing Britain, one émigré said “tout s’y trouve réuni, et tout y est plein de vie et d’originalité” [it has everything and everything is full of life and originality]<sup>163</sup>. What will be seen is that this sentiment was true for the majority of Britons, and that, overall interactions between French émigrés and the British were positive and helped form a stronger relationship between them.

Juniper Hall, in Mickleham, Surrey, is a useful case study to look at the interactions between the British and émigrés. Between 1792 and 1793 both émigrés and local residents, including Fanny Burney and her sister, lived there and interacted. The English and French inhabitants were of similar status, and characteristics such as honour and politeness brought them closer together. Politeness is important as it constituted a mode of thought. It reflected a person’s demeanour and social interaction. Fanny’s sister, Mrs Phillips, wrote letters to Fanny in 1792 describing some of the new French inhabitants of Juniper Hall. There did not appear to be any hostility as she described

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<sup>162</sup> E. M. Wilkinson, ‘The French Emigres in England 1789-1802: Their Reception and Impact on English Life’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, 1952)

<sup>163</sup> Auguste Louis Staël-Holstein, *Oeuvres Diverses De M. Le Baron Auguste De Staël: Précédées D'une Notice Sur Sa Vie, Et Suivies De Quelques Lettres Inédits Sur L'angleterre*, vol.III (Charleston: Nabu Press, 2012) p.iii

them as polite and of good character<sup>164</sup>. Mrs Phillips described one visitor, Madame de la Châtre, as “very well read... lively and charming” and showing “great politeness”<sup>165</sup>. One French character that Burney described was General Lafayette, saying that he was a “high-minded man, full of sincerity, of enthusiasm”<sup>166</sup>. Other high ranking émigrés staying at Juniper Hall included General Alexandre D’Arblay, writer Anne Louise Germaine de Staël and King Louis XV’s grandson. Mrs Phillips described her first encounter with D’Arblay, an artillery officer, saying that he was sincere, amusing and loyal<sup>167</sup>. This indicates that a certain class of émigré was well received in the upper echelons of British society.

D’Arblay is a useful example when looking at the difference between British reservations about the French and how these translated into individual encounters. D’Arblay met and married Burney during his time at Juniper Hall. They continued to live in Surrey before moving to France where they had to remain due to the commencement of the Napoleonic Wars. Although there appeared to be an acceptance of the French at Juniper Hall, the personal relationship between D’Arblay and Burney was not as welcomed. Burney’s father did not approve because D’Arblay was a Catholic émigré who could not bring in money. He was also suspicious, as were many Britons, that émigrés were secretly revolutionaries. Burney herself appeared surprised by her connection with a Frenchman. She wrote to her father to explain that he had “a sincerity, a frankness, an ingenuous openness of nature, that I had been unjust enough

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<sup>164</sup> Frances Burney, *The Diary and Letters of Madame D’Arblay (Frances Burney)* vol. III (London: Frederick Warne and Co., 1892) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/diaryandletters01macagoog#page/n7/mode/2up/> pp.28-30 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>165</sup> Burney, *The Diary and Letters*, p.29

<sup>166</sup> Burney, *The Diary and Letters*, p.12

<sup>167</sup> Burney, *The Diary and Letters*, p.31

to think could not belong to a Frenchman”<sup>168</sup>. Once married, she admitted that the prejudices faced for being with a French émigré were not only from her friends and family but also herself. She said that it was “a prejudice certainly, impertinent and very John Bullish, and very arrogant; but I only share it with all my countrymen, and therefore must needs forgive both them and myself”<sup>169</sup>.

Many British gentlemen did not share the government’s fear of the French, despite the ongoing war. Thomas Hansard recalled opinions when the Aliens Act was enacted. He was critical of the government’s motivation in putting in place restrictive legislation when the overriding sense was that the French had brought commercial opportunities. He specifically mentioned Edmund Burke, saying that Burke had claimed that the aliens were of no danger to the nation. Since Hansard considered Burke to be an honourable gentleman, he considered that this view should be acknowledged and people should be “perfectly at ease”<sup>170</sup>. Influential people, such as Burke, speaking out in defence of émigrés, indicates that the public were not being indoctrinated by government propaganda and may have been getting a more balanced view. Carpenter argued that “The dignity of the refugees and their willingness to make the most of their situation... increased British admiration for them”<sup>171</sup>. Social status again played a role in the comments made about French émigrés and how they were received by British society. One example seemed to endorse their arrival and company, saying “Our emigrant friends... formed much the best part of our society, for most of them were

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<sup>168</sup> Burney, *The Diary and Letters*, p.48

<sup>169</sup> Burney, *The Diary and Letters*, p.82. Her encounters with émigrés also inspired her 1814 novel *The Wanderer*.

<sup>170</sup> Great Britain Parliament, *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, Volume 30 (London: Printed by T. C. Hansard, 1817) p.225

<sup>171</sup> Carpenter, ‘London: Capital of the Emigration’, in *The French Émigrés*, ed. by Carpenter and Mansel, p.61

distinguished men”<sup>172</sup>. Not all agreed with this view. Some felt that the government was advocating compassion when they should have been more contemptuous and suspicious of the French in Britain. Writer Josiah Dornford felt émigrés were made up of “emissaries, and agents... infected the streets of the metropolis” with an “infectious breath of sedition”<sup>173</sup>. Barrister John Bowles agreed with the sentiment, saying that “desperate and blood stained Frenchmen were daily flocking here for the most mischievous and horrid purposes”<sup>174</sup>.

Although many émigrés described British companionship and the way of life in Britain as a pleasurable experience, not all seemed to share this opinion. Some did not consider the accommodation available sufficient for those of their social status. The Duchesse de Gontaut received assistance from the British upon her arrival in Edinburgh in 1796 where she was due to be staying at Holyroodhouse. She claimed it was in the “worst and most unhealthy quarter of Edinburgh. This palace, dark and gloomy and guarded like a citadel, seemed to me like a prison”<sup>175</sup>. Others were confused by British traits and found the way of life stiff and dull. Émigré painter Madame Vigée-Lebrun claimed that it was due to a lack of artistic promotion in London in comparison to Paris and Italy. She did admire some of London’s architecture, but said that it had “no picture

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<sup>172</sup> Bernard Mallet du Pan, *Mallet du Pan and the French Revolution* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902) Access via <https://archive.org/stream/malletdupanfrenc00malluoft#page/n7/mode/2up/> p.301 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>173</sup> Josiah Dornford, *The Motives and Consequences of the Present War Impartially Considered* (Hampshire: Gale ECCO, Print Editions, 2010) p.39

<sup>174</sup> John Bowles, *The Real Grounds of the Present War with France*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn. (London: Printed for J. Debrett and T. N. Longman, 1794) p.55

<sup>175</sup> Marie Joséphine Louise de Montaut de Navailles Gontaut-Biron (translated by J. W. Davis), *Memoirs of the Duchesse de Gontaut, Gouvernante to the Children of France during the Restoration, 1773-1836*, vol. I (London: Chatto and Windus, 1894) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsduchesse00unkngoog#page/n10/mode/2up/> pp.87-8 [accessed 20 September 2017]

gallery” and described Sundays in the capital as “dismal” due to the lack of open shops and “no plays, nor balls, nor concerts”<sup>176</sup>. She went on to say that she found social gatherings dull and walks were the only way to pass the time which she did not find enjoyable. She considered that the behaviour of both women and men was very different than in France. She described British women as “taciturn” and “so perfectly placid, that they might be taken for perambulating ghosts”, with men behaving “just as solemnly”<sup>177</sup>. Overall, she was not enamoured of London’s social life and culture, entitling the chapter of her memoirs about her stay “An Unmerry England”<sup>178</sup>. When she did go out in London, she expressed her displeasure at having to view public brawls that were encouraged by drinkers nearby. In this instance, it appears that the lack of social integration was down to personal choice rather than British unwillingness.

Some émigrés were bemused by elements of British life. The Comtesse de Boigne analysed the cultural differences between the two nationalities, saying that, with regard to the British:

In spite of their devoted love for their country... They show no regret at leaving the place which their parents or they themselves have inhabited for years, and moving to a residence more in harmony with their immediate

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<sup>176</sup> Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, (translated by Lionel Strachey), *Memoirs of Madame Vigée Lebrun* (London: Grant Richards, 1904) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsmadamevi00viggoog#page/n10/mode/2up/> pp.183-4 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>177</sup> Vigée-Lebrun, *Memoirs of Madame Vigée Lebrun*. Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsmadamevi00viggoog#page/n10/mode/2up/> p.185 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>178</sup> Vigée-Lebrun, *Memoirs of Madame Vigée Lebrun*. Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsmadamevi00viggoog#page/n10/mode/2up/> p.182 [accessed 20 September 2017]

tastes, whether they be devoted to hunting, fishing, horse-racing, boat-racing, agriculture, or any other whim which they call a pursuit<sup>179</sup>.

Others did not feel that there were adequate activities for émigrés. La Marquise de La Tour du Pin Gouvernet commented on the troubles of young émigrés in England. She said that they had little to do and, in the case of her family, there was not enough education to occupy their time<sup>180</sup>. Robert Winder claimed that French émigrés of a high social status were provided with an easy life but, despite this, were intent on complaining about food and fashion and any assistance they got. They also felt too superior to take up jobs that were below their social station. These people were, for the most part, of a very high social status and were familiar with the court at Versailles. Their arrogance was linked to their status and probable resentment of having lost what they had taken for granted in their old lives in France. Therefore, French complaints were partly down to their own conceited attitudes rather than the lack of generosity of the British or the British way of life<sup>181</sup>.

There were practical issues for all émigrés to address when arriving in Britain. Many Frenchmen found it almost impossible to reconcile themselves to how much they had lost as a result of having to flee their comfortable lives and losing their land and possessions. Those who had led affluent lives in France often had to settle in poorer communities where they could find cheaper housing. Despite this, there was still a lack of finances, particularly for those who arrived in 1789 as this was several years before

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<sup>179</sup> Louise-Eléonore-Charlotte-Adélaïde d'Osmond Boigne, comtesse de, Nicoulaud, Charles (ed.), *Memoirs of the Comtesse de Boigne (1781-1814)* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/memoirsofcomtess00boigrich#page/n9/mode/2up/>> p.110 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>180</sup> Tour du Pin Gouvernet, *Recollections of the Revolution*, pp.280-1

<sup>181</sup> Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, pp.149-50

official relief committees were established. Lack of hygienic and safe living conditions made life tough and there were many casualties<sup>182</sup>. In spite of this, the French were able to impose their cultural stamp on Britain with their fashion, religious architecture and successful schools, for example the Roman Catholic Church of St. Aloysius and schools in Somerstown built by Abbé Carron. This provides evidence of British acceptance of émigrés, since Catholicism was not generally tolerated. There was a trend of émigrés moving in bulk to similar areas, such as Soho, to form their own communities and French cultural districts. There was already an established Huguenot community in Soho, and it had the advantage of being in the centre of London, with theatres and restaurants readily available. Soho had established French societies and economic opportunities. Many of these catered predominantly to émigrés, so provided a chance for the French to only mingle with fellow émigrés should they choose to<sup>183</sup>.

### **Economics, Employment and Status Based Opportunities**

There were restrictions placed on émigrés by the British government due to fears about the social and economic impact of large numbers arriving within such a short time. However, within the Aliens Act, there was a clause allowing those with sufficient funds to become a denizen or be naturalised, meaning that the privileged few received positive discrimination from the British government. William Shaw found that, between 1789 and 1800, there were only twenty-seven successful naturalisation applications and twenty-two successful denization applications made by former French nationals<sup>184</sup>.

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<sup>182</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, pp.87-9

<sup>183</sup> For further material on Soho, see Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, pp.49-61

<sup>184</sup> William A. Shaw (ed.) *Letters of Denization and Acts of Naturalization for Aliens in England and Ireland, 1701-1800*, vol.27 (Printed by Sherratt and Hughes, Manchester, 1923). Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/lettersofdenizat2717hugu#page/n11/mode/2up/>> pp.193-215 [accessed 20 September 2017]



Denization was the cheaper of the two options. Applicants had to pay for letters patent to become an English subject and would be protected by the Crown and English law. However, they could not vote or inherit land and still had to pay alien tax rates<sup>185</sup>. There was no set legal process for those applying for naturalisation. Instead, applicants had to be approved in a private parliamentary act. This process was expensive, but successful applicants would become fully naturalised British citizens<sup>186</sup>. Due to the substantial cost, these opportunities were a realistic option only for higher ranking French émigrés.

A lot of Britons saw economic advantages deriving from the arrival of émigrés. Money came into the local economy from two sources, government assistance and the émigrés' own funds. Jobs were created to enforce the Aliens Act and keep agents around the country where émigrés settled. John Reeves, the superintendent for aliens, estimated Alien Office expenses for 1805. Over 63% of the total of £7,260 related to wages, including agents at ports and secret agents<sup>187</sup>. With a captive market, rents could be set at an inflated level by anyone who decided to let out rooms or houses to émigrés. Émigrés also were subject to alien rates of tax which provided income for the government. However, the fiscal impact was not all positive. The costs involved were considerable. For example, Claude-Antoine Rey estimated that policing aliens would

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<sup>185</sup> For examples of denization papers between 1807 and 1811, see TNA: HO 1/6/36, TNA: HO 1/6/49, TNA: HO: 1/6/53. Not all were successful; see TNA: HO 1/6/6 for a refused application.

<sup>186</sup> For the registers of applications for naturalisation, see TNA: HO 5/35

<sup>187</sup> TNA: HO 42/77/83. Note - John Reeves was a magistrate and conservative activist, with a John Bullish attitude. He was vocally anti-Revolution and in 1792 founded the Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers in order to pursue the suppression of British seditious writing of the French Revolution. For further information, see A. N. Beedell, 'John Reeves's Prosecutin for a Seditious Libel, 1795-6: A Study in Political Cynicism', *The Historical Journal*, 36.4 (1993) <<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X00014515>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

cost £5.5.0 each day<sup>188</sup>. For 1814, the government granted financial assistance of £119,500 to French émigrés<sup>189</sup>. However, taking the 1813 GDP figure, financial assistance to French émigrés was 0.4% of GDP which was not a significant burden on the British budget<sup>190</sup>.

The influx of émigrés led to strains on resources. In 1792, the same year that a large number of émigrés came to Britain, there had been a bad harvest. Having additional mouths to feed created tension. This was noted by Lord Sheffield in 1793 when he wrote to Lord Auckland to explain how he had been helping settle incoming French clergy. He stated that all classes in society were remarking about the extra mouths to feed despite the poor harvest, and felt that it would create an undeserved hostility towards the émigrés, even though his perception was that locals had been accommodating to date<sup>191</sup>. In addition to competition over limited resources, the increased cost of living and a higher number of working-age people in Britain made jobs a source of contention<sup>192</sup>. Conflict over jobs is an important consideration when looking at the acceptance of émigrés by the British and remains topical. Most émigrés coming to Britain had to leave behind their possessions and, in order to afford housing, they had to find jobs. Those higher status émigrés that arrived in 1789 were particularly affected by, and resentful of, the loss of their comforts and a reduction in living

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<sup>188</sup> TNA: HO 42/27/285

<sup>189</sup> House of Commons, 'Miscellaneous Estimates', 15 November 1813, vol 27, cc105-7 <[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1813/nov/15/miscellaneous-estimates#S1V0027P0\\_18131115\\_HOC\\_1/](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1813/nov/15/miscellaneous-estimates#S1V0027P0_18131115_HOC_1/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>190</sup> This is based on the 1813 estimate of British GDP of £331.56million, 'Time Series Chart of Public Spending', *UK Public Spending* <[http://www.ukpublicspending.co.uk/spending\\_chart\\_1813\\_1837UKm\\_15s1li111mcn\\_10t/](http://www.ukpublicspending.co.uk/spending_chart_1813_1837UKm_15s1li111mcn_10t/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]. For a further example of British spending on French refugees at a snapshot in time, in this instance 1806, see TNA: AO 3/904

<sup>191</sup> Auckland, *The Journal and Correspondence*, vol. II, p.448

<sup>192</sup> Elizabeth Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth Century England', *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 18.3 (1936) <<http://piketty.pse.ens.fr/files/Gilboy1936.pdf/>> p.137 [accessed 20 September 2017]

standards. Callum Whittaker found newspaper articles recalling how many in Britain feared that the influx of French émigrés would put further strain on jobs<sup>193</sup>. In addition to this, due to their precarious situation, the French were willing to take up work at a lower wage. This appeared to be a significant issue to the British, causing further strain on Anglo-French relations. Carpenter found that British domestic servants were resentful that their jobs were being taken and took the matter to Parliament twice, but to no avail. French personal valets had become “an affordable commodity and one which had considerable advantages and a certain prestige”<sup>194</sup>. To gain jobs, émigrés sometimes took out adverts to promote their services. In *The Times*, a French lady advertised that she was looking to find accommodation to live with a lady as a “confidential Companion”, saying that she was fluent in English and able to work for the family in raising the children<sup>195</sup>. It was fashionable to have a *valet de chambre* and these servants had the added benefit of being able to teach French. It is unclear how the servant class tried to integrate outside the context of jobs, therefore it is hard to determine how they truly integrated into British society.

### Troubles for Émigrés

Britain and France being at war with one another had an impact on how Britons viewed the French. Carlos de la Huerta thought that “The Home Office was not being overly suspicious; there was good reason to believe that as war with revolutionary France

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<sup>193</sup> Callum Whittaker, “‘La Génèreuse Nation!’ Britain and the French Emigration 1792 – 1802’, *Adademia.edu* (2012)  
<[https://www.academia.edu/2909048/La\\_G%C3%A9n%C3%A9reuse\\_Nation\\_Britain\\_and\\_the\\_French\\_Emigration\\_1792\\_1802/](https://www.academia.edu/2909048/La_G%C3%A9n%C3%A9reuse_Nation_Britain_and_the_French_Emigration_1792_1802/)> p.47 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>194</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, p.162

<sup>195</sup> *The Times*, ‘To the Magistrates of the County of Surrey. My Lords And Gentlemen’, 1 November 1811, pg. 1, issue 8436. Accessed via the Times Digital Archive  
<<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

intensified, the republican government would employ rogue elements amongst the émigré community in order to exploit leftist radicalism in Britain” and try to undermine Britain from within<sup>196</sup>. The Aliens Act and the restriction on the movement of émigrés were a direct result of government generated fear. De La Huerta said that the advantage of the Aliens Act was that “the government was under no obligation to provide any explanation” when deporting émigrés<sup>197</sup>. The experience of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand as an émigré between 1793 and 1794 demonstrates the difference in reception between British citizens and the British government. Talleyrand had been one of the leaders of the French Revolution but later fled when it became too radical. During his time in England he was treated graciously by the Marquis of Lansdowne and was considered highly enough that he was introduced to distinguished Englishmen such as George Canning, Jeremy Bentham, Samuel Romilly and Charles Fox. Talleyrand appeared happy to be invited to functions to meet influential men and live in England, despite hoping it was on a short term basis. However, Talleyrand was seen as a threat by the government. He was deported in 1794 as it was said that he did not adhere to regulations put in place to become a legal émigré. Talleyrand described the decision as one made as a result of the British foreign minister’s hatred of émigrés which had been formalised and legitimised through the Aliens Act<sup>198</sup>. Some Frenchmen were subject to restrictions that did not appear lawful. This was the case for the French émigré priest Monsieur D’Allais. He had to get a request made by William Huskisson in 1794 to enable him to perform ceremonies in Forton prison as he was currently not

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<sup>196</sup> Carlos De La Huerta, *The Great Conspiracy: Britain’s Secret War against Revolutionary France 1794-1805* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2016) prologue

<sup>197</sup> De La Huerta, *The Great Conspiracy*, prologue

<sup>198</sup> Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, prince de Bénévent, *Memoirs of the Prince de Talleyrand*, vol. I (London : Griffith Farran Okeden and Welsh, 1891) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/memoirsofprince01tall#page/n11/mode/2up/>> p.173 [accessed 20 September 2017]

allowed access and there was a threat that he would be deported<sup>199</sup>. This is just one example of individual British men showing sympathy towards émigrés and trying to ensure their rights were not withheld.

Government mistrust of émigrés such as Talleyrand was partially due to fear of espionage. It was easy for émigrés to enter Britain and, at a time of fear of spreading revolution and a war between the two nations, it was thought that not only could radicalism be spread but that military secrets could be taken back to France. Despite this anxiety and mistrust, no official action was taken regarding most claims of spying, to the annoyance of some Britons. In 1803, politician George Rose recalled how the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Hawkesbury, was informed that there was a dangerous Frenchman in England who was acting as a spy and was in breach of the Aliens Act. Lord Hawkesbury said that it was no business of his to investigate these matters and that it should be left to the Alien Office. Rose appeared appalled by the lack of seriousness with which the matter was handled. His view was that the Alien Office could not be trusted to do its duty as there were foreigners in the office. He also recalled another case where he felt that matters were not correctly dealt with when a proven Jacobin was allowed to remain in country, and this was just one of many examples<sup>200</sup>. The perceived leniency and complacency of government officials could have increased British worry about how troublesome Frenchmen were dealt with and led to hostility.

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<sup>199</sup> TNA: HO 42/29/1

<sup>200</sup> George Rose, (ed. Rev. Leveson Vernon Harcourt), *The Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose Containing Original Letters of the Most Distinguished Statesmen of His Day*, vol. II (London: Richard Bentley, 1860) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/diariescorrespond02rose#page/n9/mode/2up/> pp.49-51 [accessed 20 September 2017]

Hostility would sometimes take the shape of violence or crimes committed against émigrés<sup>201</sup>. An example of this was the alleged assault and robbery of the servant of M de Baillainvillier in 1795. In this instance, nothing could be done and Baillainvillier sent a letter of complaint to the Home Office about the outcome of this targeted violence<sup>202</sup>. However, often there was sympathy shown towards émigrés who were targeted by British civilians when it was felt that such actions were unjust. This sympathy was sometimes reflected in the media. In 1792, William Holland published the satirical print by Richard Newton 'A Frenchman Plundered' showing Frenchmen being attacked. This is an example of balance and fairness in reporting about émigrés. It should be noted that émigrés were not always the victims of hostility or crime. Sometimes they were the perpetrators. In addition to cases where émigrés would not follow the laws laid down in the Aliens Act, as with any large group of people there were those who committed crimes, either due to their nature or the desperation of their situation. In September 1794, a French maid was tried at the Old Bailey for stealing belongings from her master's household. She was found guilty and sentenced to transportation<sup>203</sup>. In January 1795, Jacques Simon de Montreal was accused of stealing three guineas. However, the jury stated that he was not guilty as there seemed to be no definitive proof of the amount of money that had supposedly disappeared<sup>204</sup>. It suggests that juries could be impartial and there was no assumption of guilt just because they were foreigners.

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<sup>201</sup> For some examples of this, see Whittaker, "La Génèreuse Nation!", pp.46-7

<sup>202</sup> TNA: HO 42/34/62

<sup>203</sup> Trial of Louisa Lesage, 17th September 1794, Old Bailey Online  
<<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=t17940917-75&div=t17940917-75&terms=french#highlight> /> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>204</sup> Trial of Jacques Simon de Montreal, 14 January 1795, Old Bailey Online  
<<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=t17950114-39&div=t17950114-39&terms=french#highlight> /> [accessed 20 September 2017]

## British Sympathy and Philanthropic Efforts

Many French émigrés struggled financially and socially. The British public learned of the émigrés' troubles through encounters with them which resulted in a surge in philanthropic support for them. Soon after the émigrés arrived in Britain it appears that a sense of British duty emerged. Carpenter considered the reason behind philanthropic efforts was that "the émigrés had the sympathy of the British élite behind them which, reinforced by their generally honourable behaviour, was sufficient to impress upon the government the need to support them"<sup>205</sup>. There was some resentment within Britain that émigrés were receiving assistance when many Britons were living in poverty and were not subject to charitable efforts. However, many saw that the troubled times for émigrés were not self-inflicted and they were deserving of help<sup>206</sup>. Sympathy was directed particularly towards the French clergy. High profile figures such as Burke quickly expressed their public support for exiled clergymen. Dominic Aidan Bellenger considered Burke a key activist in helping the clergy due to their perceived "cause of honour, virtue, loyalty and religion"<sup>207</sup>. There were separate streams of philanthropy from the general public, official committees and government. Key committees were set up to provide relief funds, including the Wilmot Committee and the Lay Committee. They had influential backers such as politicians, lawyers, the clergy and the social elite. The first was set up in 1792 and focused its attention on helping the French Catholic clergy, only extending this to lay émigrés in 1794. An influential factor in the creation of the Wilmot Committee was the help of Burke who increased his relief efforts after the

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<sup>205</sup> Carpenter, 'London: Capital of the Emigration', in *The French Émigrés*, ed. by Carpenter and Mansel, p.60

<sup>206</sup> Whittaker, "'La Généreuse Nation!'", pp.37-9

<sup>207</sup> Dominic Aidan Bellenger, *The French Exiled Clergy in the British Isles after 1789, An Historical Introduction and Working List* (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1986) p.13

September Massacres by placing appeals in the *Evening Mail* in September 1792<sup>208</sup>. It is an important point that the clergy were prioritised, despite the fact that they were Catholic, as it shows a sense of benevolence that transcended differing views of religion, in addition to Anglo-French barriers. The Lay Committee focused their attention on the elderly, women and children. It suggests that there was a lack of sympathy towards working age men. However, it shows that different areas of British society were willing to come together to ensure that others were provided for, even during a time of war.

Donations usually came in the form of money<sup>209</sup>. Requests could be seen in national newspapers. In May 1793, *The Times* described the honourable effort of Britons raising money for “unhappy French emigrants”<sup>210</sup>. This was echoed two months later when *The Times* wrote about the generosity shown towards émigrés, amounting to £12,000. In the article, émigré Le Comte de Botherel quoted that the help received had “wipe[d] away their tears”<sup>211</sup>. Despite this, the Committee for Relieving the French Laity and Clergy was quickly using up all donated money and *The Times* included an appeal from Botherel to indicate the possible fatal consequences of not raising further funds. It was an opportunity for Britons to show publicly their generosity. An example of this was

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<sup>208</sup> For details of members of the Wilmot Committee and their relief efforts, both financial and practical, see Dominic Aidan Bellenger, ‘Fearless resting place’: the Exiled French Clergy in Great Britain, 1789-1815’, in *The French Émigrés*, ed. by Carpenter and Mansel, pp.217-22, and Margery Weiner, *The French Exiles, 1789-1815* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975) pp.54-69

<sup>208</sup> Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration*, p.127

<sup>209</sup> For details of money given out and the types of people most in receipt of help, see Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, p.192, p.199, p.200, p.201, p.202, p.205

<sup>210</sup> *The Times*, ‘French Refugees both Laity and Clergy’, 16 May 1793; pg. 1, issue 2612. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive

<<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>211</sup> *The Times*, ‘Marine Society’s Office’, 11 July 1793, pg. 1, Issue 2723. Accessed via The Times Digital Archive <<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=king/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]



that everyone who had already donated was listed in *The Times* article. Public appeals and fundraising efforts were also made by wealthy women, such as Charlotte Smith, Hannah More and Fanny Burney<sup>212</sup>. Hannah More donated the profits of her 1793 publication, *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont*, to the relief campaign and Burney appealed for funding by asking the public “Must their dreadful hardships, their meek endurance, their violated rights, terminate in the death of hunger?”<sup>213</sup>. These were echoed in letters between Hester Lynch Piozzi and Penelope Pennington, claiming:

the little sheds about St. George’s Fields are full of Emigrée French dying of actual want; having exhausted the Charity so much – indeded (*sic*) so justly admired in our beneficent nation. Poor things! They expire quietly now, and say nothing... Countesses and children of high quality in French, thus lost amidst the crowds of thieves and blackguards that infest the environs of London. How very dreadful!<sup>214</sup>.

There were examples of Britons trying to help through more than just money, Burke providing a useful example. In 1796 he asked for assistance from the Duke of Buckingham to set up a school for the children of French émigrés. However, this was not for the benefit of all. It focused on the children of the nobility. He claimed that these children were:

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<sup>212</sup> For further details of female relief efforts, see Tonya J. Moutray, *Refugee Nuns, the French Revolution, and British Literature and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2016) pp.126-44

<sup>213</sup> Frances Burney, *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy: Earnestly Submitted to the Humane Consideration of the Ladies of Great Britain* (London: Printed by T. Davison, 1793) Accessed via <<http://archive.org/stream/briefreflections29125gut/29125-8.txt/>> [accessed 20 September 2017]. For further examples see Hannah More, *Remarks on the Speech of M. Dupont* (London: Printed for T. Cadell, 1793) Accessed via <[https://archive.org/details/cihm\\_20787/](https://archive.org/details/cihm_20787/)> [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>214</sup> Piozzi and Pennington, *The Intimate Letters*, p.127

growing up in poverty and wretchedness; inevitably mixed with children of the lowest of the people... From the wretchedness and bad company, the transition is easy to desperate vice and wretchedness. In this bad society they grow up without any sort of education<sup>215</sup>.

This philanthropic effort appears to be centred more on the horror that the upper classes had to mingle with those in poverty rather than trying to assist French children and showing an understanding of the need of all classes. This again indicates the strong horizontal relationships developed by the British and French.

There was also an example of British concern with French émigrés settling in successfully based on religion. Generosity was seen when Oxford University “provided a special edition of 2000 copies of the Vulgate Bible printed for the use of the refugee clergy”<sup>216</sup>. Despite religious differences, it was a generous offering to show compassion for those in the precarious situation of settling into a different country. Not everyone in Britain agreed with the contributions made to French Catholic priests. Satirist Thomas Mathias’ *The Pursuits of Literature*, first published in 1794, painted them as a group to fear and criticised the government for helping them. He did not feel it right that the government and layman should provide financial aid and land to people who were part of a “religion hostile in principle and in action” to British religion<sup>217</sup>. However, these thoughts were condemned by writer William Burdon who described Mathias’ work as

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<sup>215</sup> Fitzwilliam and Bourke, eds, *E. Burke, Correspondence*, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp.338-9. Cited in Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, pp.107-8

<sup>216</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, p.158

<sup>217</sup> Thomas James Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature* (London: Printed for T. Becket, 1798) Accessed via <<https://archive.org/stream/pursuitsliterat00unkngoog#page/n5/mode/2up/>> p.23 [accessed 20 September 2017]

showing “virulence” and “narrowness”<sup>218</sup>. It appears that Mathias’ main objection was based upon religion. The fact that they were French did not seem to be as much of an issue. Although there was hostility towards the French Catholics, it was from a small number of individuals and not from the media and government. Nigel Aston summarised the reason for the elite’s philanthropic efforts as “from a sense of pity, shame, and incredulity at the mistreatment of fellow Christians by the Revolutionaries”<sup>219</sup>.

This chapter has detailed the scale of immigration which resulted in émigrés being noticeable in many British communities. The philanthropic efforts discussed suggest that, despite fearful stories in the media and concerns over resources and jobs, there was still sympathy towards the political refugees and that humanitarian efforts were made by the British. Much of the rationale for the philanthropy was a sense of self-fulfilment on behalf of the donors and of superiority over the French. Despite these ulterior motives, philanthropic endeavours united much of the British nation and provided useful assistance to the French, financial and otherwise. That did not mean that refugees escaping the Revolution did not encounter some problems and restrictions when settling in Britain due to the lack of money and accommodation. There were understandably still incidents where the cultural differences of the two nations became a source of contention. Money granted better opportunities in terms of increasing the quality of life. The fortunate few were able to settle with more ease as

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<sup>218</sup> William Burdon, *An Examination of the Merits and Tendency of the Pursuits of Literature* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Printed for the Author by M. Brown, 1799) Accessed via <https://archive.org/stream/anexaminationofm00burduoft#page/n3/mode/2up/> p.49 [accessed 20 September 2017]

<sup>219</sup> Nigel Aston, ‘Burke, Boisgelin and the Politics of the Émigré Bishops’, in *The French Émigrés*, ed. by Carpenter and Mansel, p.197

they had connections with the British gentry and had money that could assist with legal proceedings if the person wanted to be granted the rights of a British citizen. Overall, social status was a determining factor in the successful cases of integration, with class similarity becoming a greater bond than any tension between the British and French.

## Conclusion

This dissertation has shown that government attitudes during the latter stages of the eighteenth-century were founded on pre-established French stereotypes and mistrust. In the middle of the century, the British considered themselves superior to the French in terms of morality and, because of their victory in the Seven Years War, believed that they had imperial dominance. Anti-French sentiment was rife. In the mid-eighteenth century, the characteristics of the French were portrayed in the press and satirical prints as a mixture of weakness and joviality. Towards the end of the century, the French were shown as more dangerous. In the 1790s, British concerns increased because of the risk of the spread of revolutionary ideas and the war against France from 1792, which increased fear of invasion. The rise of Napoleon and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars further increased government anxiety which led to strict legislation and restrictions being introduced for émigrés and, particularly, prisoners on parole. The increased levels of concern were reflected in many press articles which claimed that the danger of invasion would lead to a loss of liberty, and there was concern about the lack of morals of Frenchmen coming to Britain.

Government and press attitudes did not translate into public compliance when interacting with French individuals. Relationships developed through encounters, and there was a mixed reaction to both émigrés and parolees, largely based on individual experiences. There were examples of the British typecasting the French, mostly not in a hostile or violent way, but this did not impede interactions in the majority of cases. The warmth of welcome in encounters was not affected by the stereotypes portrayed in the British press. Winder summarised the views of individuals when considering

immigration in Britain by saying that “individual open-mindedness has often defeated our nastier streak, though it is less well recorded”<sup>220</sup>.

Looking at individual encounters has identified some notable differences in the experiences of French parolees and émigrés. Gender and class distinctions played an important role in British and French interactions and British attitudes. Parolees were military men, but many did not hold the noble status that had been traditional for officers before the fall of the Ancien Régime. Occasionally, parolees brought their families and servants, but predominantly it was men only. In contrast, there was a greater variation in émigrés because they included a significant number of women and children. These family units were considered less threatening than individual male parolees. Another key difference was that most of the first wave of émigrés in 1789 was strongly anti-Revolution and many were from the highest ranks of French society. They were political refugees and had commonalities both in political ideology and, in some instances, social status with the Britons they interacted with. This was less true of later émigrés coming to Britain in 1792 as they came from a variety of backgrounds and many had been supporters of the Revolution until it became more violent. This wave of émigrés caused such concern that the government introduced restrictions through the passing of the 1793 Aliens Act.

Social interaction between parolees and the British was confined to parole towns. There were further restrictions due to limits on the hours they were allowed out of their homes. It was also difficult for them to build relationships with locals as they were

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<sup>220</sup> Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, p.4

constantly being moved around due to parole towns closing down or government initiatives to move them further north and away from port areas. This resulted in less stability than for émigrés, but with movement came opportunities to interact with a wide variety of Britons. Émigrés had the benefit of the opportunity to move around Britain, could choose where they settled, dependent on their financial situation, and were not subject to restrictions on the hours they could be out in their communities. Unlike parolees, émigrés could go to pre-established French communities that had emerged following the arrival of the Huguenots which had the benefit of enabling them to continue to experience French culture.

This dissertation has identified numerous cases of acceptance of both parolees and émigrés on a personal level. Familiarity and interactions allowed relationships to build, and examples have been detailed of joint social events and the willingness of Britons to participate in the favourite pastimes of the French. This was particularly seen in the case of theatres built by parolees. Another important example of acceptance was marriages between the British and the French, even including parolees. It was not always a one-sided affair in the cases where the French did not appear to integrate well socially into British society. Parolees were often subject to suspicion and, for Britons, there was a financial incentive to catch them breaking parole conditions. Cases of British hostility, such as violence towards parolees, did not normally represent the views of entire communities. The French were often the ones holding back from successful integration out of choice. Many were not keen to socialise due to their attitudes towards the British people and their culture. A key feeling expressed by both

parolees and émigrés was that life in Britain was often monotonous. This was due to living in a different cultural setting and a lack of finances.

Finances were an issue for both parolees and émigrés. Émigrés were only able to bring their portable wealth and therefore had a lower economic status in Britain than they had in France, creating resentment. Former French nobles found it hard to find a place for themselves economically. In France, during the Ancien Régime, nobles would not work as they were meant to live off revenue from their landed estates<sup>221</sup>. They brought these pre-revolutionary ideas with them to Britain. Some received help from families and friends in Britain and were still treated as nobles. They did not contribute economically, except for their spending money, instead spending their time liaising with the British gentry. Others were not so fortunate and had to work for a living. Émigrés contributed to Britain's economy by bringing in new trade and being involved in manufacturing, banking and commerce. Parolees were more limited in the type and amount of work they were able to do, so many earned money by teaching dancing or French and therefore their financial impact was predominantly felt in the rents they paid within their communities. Financial assistance also came from philanthropic efforts from the British, aimed principally towards émigrés. This not only showed British sympathy for their plight but the willingness to invest British money. The British government also invested in parolees, albeit on a limited level, but the lack of money still caused issues such as accommodation being unaffordable.

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<sup>221</sup> During this time if nobles were to work, they risked losing their noble status in a process known as derigation.



British attitudes to the French were often status based. Encounters strengthened these attitudes and so social status was a key feature in successful French social integration. Attributes such as honour and politeness were expected from French nobles. Based on this assumption, these people generally received a warm welcome from the British. When describing the British and French as 'natural and necessary enemies', Jeremy Black did not take into account affinities found between those of a higher social status. The importance of social status has been seen in all chapters, whether it be through individual attitudes, the press, or legislation. For example, only certain ranks of prisoners of war were granted parole, but even then the British gentry found it unacceptable that higher ranking French soldiers were subjected to the same level of help and surveillance as lower ranking officers who may not have come from acceptable backgrounds. Allowances were made to bend parole conditions for certain parolees deemed to be noble or distinguished individuals. *Émigrés* came from a variety of backgrounds, meaning that there was no single British attitude towards them. The British gentry appeared more willing to accept many of the *émigrés* because of the higher classes they came from. From the start, certain French parolees and influential *émigrés* were able to socialise with the British gentry as like-minded civilised people. When the French interacted with Britons of a lower social status, this interaction usually started with a financial element, such as agreeing rent prices. However, over time, more individual relationships thrived, as seen in the cases of many parolees.

The extensive contact between French parolees and *émigrés* and the British between 1789 and 1815 bred a sense of familiarity and, ultimately, acceptance by some segments of the British public, leading to a degree of social and cultural integration.

However, it is too simplistic to say that this was the case throughout Britain as there was war tension at work and negative stereotyping. Cases of hostility and resentment emerged due to cultural differences and competition for jobs and resources. Despite some negative attitudes, both émigrés and parolees were able to impart some of their culture and contribute to the social and economic life of British communities. While voluntary immigration generally granted greater levels of opportunity for integration compared to compulsory immigration, it is clear from this research that social status was the greatest influence on individual attitudes and encounters. The introduction stated that Kumar thought that nationhood superseded the importance of social status. However, this dissertation has demonstrated through encounters that this was not the case. In reality, the British gentry and former French nobles often formed a bond through their status rather than reflecting government and press preconceptions. The evidence shows that parity of social status trumped national identity.





Table 2.3 - Arrival of paroled French prisoners of war in parole towns 1793-1815

Country	Town	Number of paroled POWs arriving in the town that year																										
		1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815				
ENG	Alresford	-	-	62	81	66	-	-	-	-	-	7	0	10	13	1	12	143	208	134	49	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Andover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	0	101	58	12	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Ashbourne	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59	15	3	0	2	4	51	48	10	50	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Ashburton	-	-	47	216	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Ashby-de-la-Zouch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53	81	42	0	3	3	84	4	5	0	124	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Ashford	-	1	86	89	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Beccles	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Bishops Castle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	2	3	7	2	3	19	7	28	34	79	0	-	-	-			
ENG	Bishops Waltham	60	0	13	85	21	56	4	-	-	53	36	11	31	12	68	15	169	239	-	-	-	-	-				
ENG	Bodmin	-	18	19	149	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				
ENG	Bridgnorth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	317	124	2	-	-			
ENG	Callington	-	-	28	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Chesterfield	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	114	78	0	46	120	52	81	67	22	4	58	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Chippenhams	-	-	-	104	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	109	45	0	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Crediton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64	59	5	0	0	109	45	0	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Hambleton	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Launceston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	177	2	21	28	4	48	5	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Leek	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	112	91	11	3	4	1	116	3	8	129	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Lichfield	-	-	-	-	93	225	0	-	-	248	61	10	93	2	8	139	43	1	2	0	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Moreton-Hampstead	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	9	0	282	16	4	0	43	-	-	-			
ENG	Northampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	92	59	1	-	-	-	-			
ENG	North Tawton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	25	0	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Odiham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	189	119	12	64	17	44	34	61	34	1	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Okehampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	230	64	43	0	-	-	-	-	66			
ENG	Ormskirk	-	-	-	101	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Petersfield	-	-	15	110	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Reading	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	2	249	223	47	35	95	182	130	20	-	-	-			
ENG	South Molton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Tavistock	-	8	73	177	18	-	-	-	-	118	34	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
ENG	Tenterden	-	-	-	-	119	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			

Table 2.3 cont'd

Country Town	Number of paroled POWs arriving in the town that year																						
	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815
ENG Tiverton	-	-	-	-	187	143	0	-	-	-	281	67	46	33	6	169	13	4	61	-	-	-	-
ENG Thame	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	62	62	29	29	29	4	78	67	54	57	38	13	-
ENG Wantage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	289	2	-	-	-	-	-
ENG Whitchurch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	2	7	9	23	65	65	28	21	2	1	-	-
ENG Wincanton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	294	65	2	0	121	22	29	-	-	-	-
WAL Abergavenny	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	145	105	39	-
WAL Brecon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	2	8	8	23	1	30	42	16	-
WAL Llanfyllin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	179	101	0	-
WAL Milton	3	1	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WAL Montgomery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	28	8	2	8	4	4	5	18	16	0	-	-
WAL Newtown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	74	0	-
WAL Oswestry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	143	-	17	32	321	0	0	-
WAL Welshpool	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	189	9	-	-
SCO Biggar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	1	3	0	0
SCO Cupar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	0	-	-	-
SCO Dumfries	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	175	8	17	2	0
SCO Greenlaw	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	56	0	-	-
SCO Hawick	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	118	0	0	-
SCO Jedburgh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	29	0	-	-
SCO Kelso	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	187	33	107	0	0	-
SCO Lanark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	6	4	0	0
SCO Lauder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	41	2	0	-
SCO Lochmaben	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SCO Lockerbie	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SCO Melrose	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	20	0	0	-
SCO Peebles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	2	4	0	3	3	0	0	184	3	-	-	-	-
SCO Sanquhar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68	0	0	-
SCO Selkirk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	0	0	-
<b>Total no. of POWs arriving</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1136</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1327</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>1818</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Total parole towns open</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>

Key  
- Parole town not open

Notes for Table 2.3

Sources: TNA: PRO ADM 103/549-56, 561, 563-8, 570, 580-5, 587-8, 590-2, 594-6, 598-9, 601-2, 604-14

The recordings of nationalities within the log books were not always complete, so where it has been labelled as a French log books but numbers of prisoners were sent back to other countries, the decision has been made to exclude them from the figures.

TNA: PRO ADM 103/611-614 included the date of capture of prisoners, but not always when they arrived at parole towns. The follows parole towns have additional French prisoners of war arriving that have not been included in the above table, but it is not clear which year they arrived:

Number of parolees not included in table 2.3 figures:

Bridgnorth	62	Biggar	38	Lanark	129
Llanfyllin	10	Dumfries	138	Lauder	14
Newtown	72	Greenlaw	43	Lockerbie	52
Oswestry	43	Jedburgh	90	Melrose	57
Welshpool	86	Kelso	180	Selkirk	103

Total: 1,117 additional parolees arriving from 1809 onwards.

The National Archives does not have data for Lochmaben. However, J. Forbes claims that there were approximately 20 parolees kept in the town. For further details, see Forbes, J. Macbeth, 'French prisoners on parole at Dumfries, Sanquhar, Lockerbie and Lochmaben', *TDGNHAS*, 3.1 (1912-13) <<http://www.dgnhas.org.uk/transonline/SerIII-Vol1.pdf>> [accessed 20 September 2017]

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- 97M81/IV/23                      Letter from John Reeves of the Alien Office to the Mayor of Romsey
- W/D3/328/1-162                      Passports issued or received by the Mayor of Winchester allowing French persons to travel within the United Kingdom

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#### **National Archives**

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- FO 95 Series                      Foreign Office and predecessors: Political and Other Departments: Miscellaneous, Series I
- HO 1 Series                      Home Office: Denization and Naturalisation Papers and Correspondence
- HO 4 Series                      Aliens Office and Home Office: Original Patents of Denization
- HO 5 Series                      Aliens Office and Home Office: Aliens' entry books
- HO 42 Series                      Home Office: Domestic Correspondence, George III
- PRO ADM 98 Series                      Office of the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen (Sick and Hurt Board) and successors: Out-Letters
- PRO ADM 103 Series                      General Entry Books for Parole Depots
- PRO ADM 105 Series                      Admiralty and predecessors: Office of the Director General of the Medical Department of the Navy and predecessors
- T 50 Series                      Treasury: Pay Lists and other Documents concerning Refugees
- T 93 Series                      French Refugees Relief Committee: Records
- WO 1 Series                      War Office and Predecessors: In-Letters and Miscellaneous Papers
- WO 40 Series                      War Office: Secretary-at-War, In-letters and Reports



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HL/PO/PU/1/1793/33G3n1      Public Act, 33 George III, c. 4

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1/703/138                      Letter from the Major of Plymouth from John Reeves of the Alien Office

1/674/1/23                     Plymouth Borough records: alien passport, Jun 1803

1/674/1/35                     Plymouth Borough records: alien passport, 2 Oct 1809

1/674/2/14                     Plymouth Borough records: alien licences, 2 Aug 1806

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