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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE FRENCH REFUGEES 1789-1802:

THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE

by

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the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
at the Australian National University

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This thesis is my own work.

*K. M. Berryman*

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of administrative agencies and practices developed by Great Britain in the late eighteenth century to deal with those refugees from the French Revolution who sought her protection. The refugees raised two main problems requiring an organised response: their potential threat to national security during the ideological and military struggle with France, and the destitution of some twelve thousand transients who were singularly ill-equipped to earn their own living. Hence there were two main areas of refugee administration: alien control and refugee relief. The latter provides the focus and major part of the thesis, with the refugees appearing as a special sort of poor in the context of contemporary methods of organising assistance to the poor in Great Britain. Alien administration, while detailing the other major administrative response to the influx of French, also provides a valuable contrast with the organisation of relief.

The study comprehends French refugees in England, Jersey and the Mediterranean, and the administrative agencies which dealt with them: the Alien Office and various private and official relief organisations. The discussion of the agencies concentrates on their structural development, the relationship between various levels of administration, expenditure, administrative practices, the development of auxiliary services and the relationship between the British administrators and the refugee community. These are placed in the context of late eighteenth century administrative change, assistance to the local poor, and the development of refugee administration in Great Britain between 1685 and 1945.

It thereby demonstrates how ad hoc responses to particular problems and circumstances led the British central bureaucracy into immigration control, and the enlargement of a government's disbursement of public money for the protection of a disadvantaged group in society. It adds to our knowledge of two departments of state, the Treasury and the Home Office, and illustrates the elements of continuity and change in the transition from eighteenth to nineteenth century administration.

PREFACE

The material on which the thesis is based includes many letters and memorials from the French refugees. Their educational backgrounds no doubt varied considerably; many of their communications were verbose, with poor penmanship and grammar. When quoting them and others, I have tried to reproduce their work as nearly as possible, using (sic) sparingly, rather than to make radical alterations. Grammarians or not, their ability to write at all makes them a particularly well-documented group among the poor.

In obtaining this material, I owe a debt to the staff in various libraries and archives in Australia and the United Kingdom, but particularly to those in the Menzies Library, the National Library of Australia, the British Library, the National Library of Scotland, the National Maritime Museum, the Westminster Diocesan Archives, the Société Jersiaise and most of all, the Public Record Office. I would like to give special thanks to Mr Raymond Falle of the States of Jersey Library for his kind help.

I wish to thank Dominic Bellenger, Peter Cahalan, Mary Ellen Condon, Sister Kathleen Connell, Agnes King, Andrée Lawrey, J.T. Murley and Marjorie Wilkinson for their kind permission to read their theses.

A thesis is an endurance test, and there are many who have helped me to stay the course. I am grateful to my supervisors, Oliver MacDonagh and Barry Smith, whose support and suggestions have been invaluable. I would like to thank Phyllis Langley, Barbara Williamson, Rosemary Drury and Lois Simms who have worked hard to produce the final typescript.



I am indebted to the numerous friends and family who have helped in the onerous task of proofreading, and I owe special thanks to my mother, Ian and Jenny who have done so much to keep me fed and functioning in times of crisis.

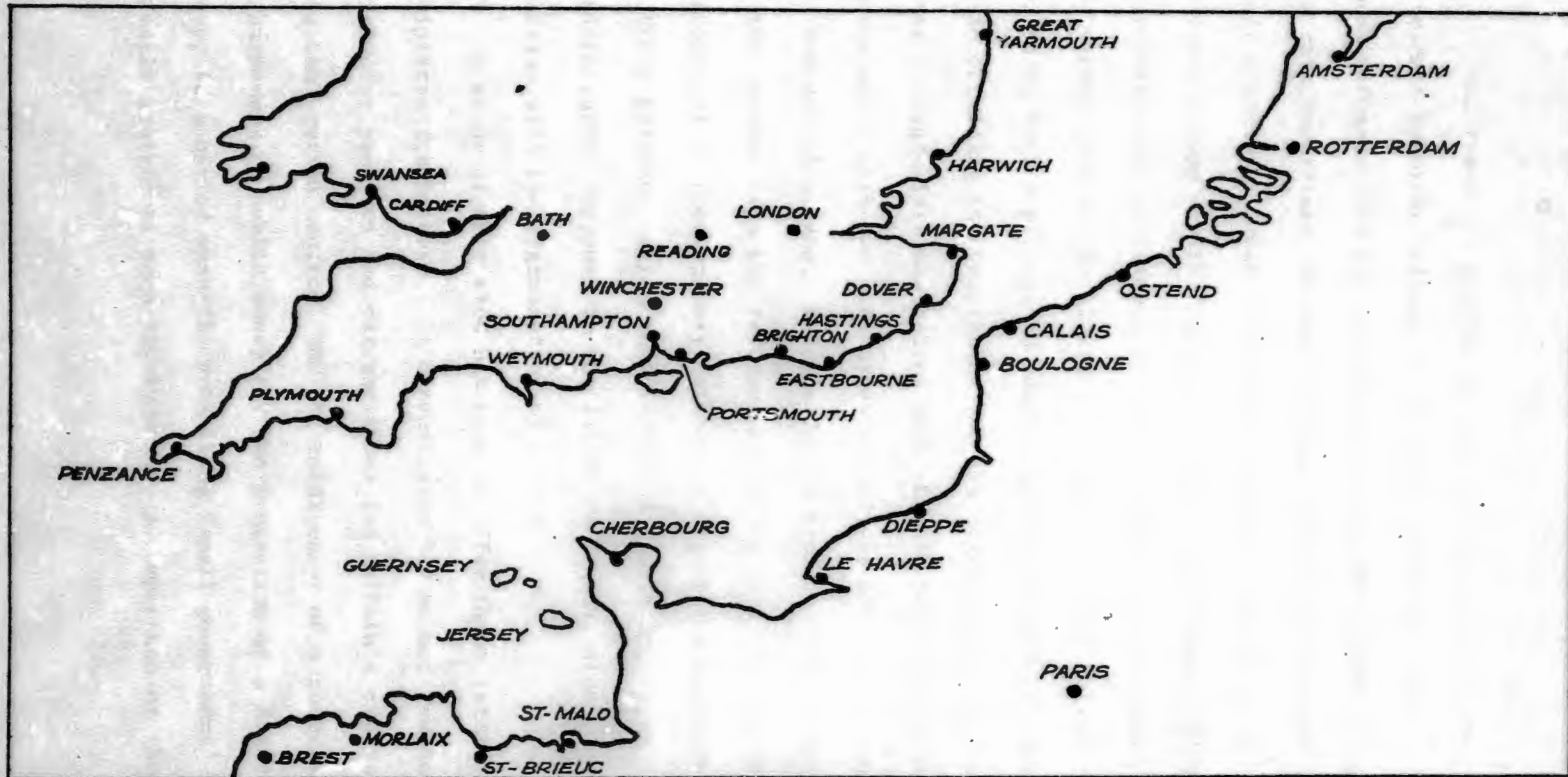
ABBREVIATIONS

From the Public Record Office:

A.O.	Audit Office
F.O.	Foreign Office
H.O.	Home Office
P.C.	Privy Council
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
T.	Treasury
W.O.	War Office

Others:

Add. Ms/s	Additional Manuscript/s
C.R.O.	County Record Office
N.L.S.	National Library of Scotland
N.M.M.	National Maritime Museum
S.J.	Société Jersiaise
W.D.A.	Westminster Diocesan Archives



SOUTH ENGLAND AND THE CHANNEL PORTS

INTRODUCTION

## I

This thesis is a study of administrative structures and practices developed by Great Britain in the late eighteenth century to deal with those refugees from the French Revolution who sought her protection. The refugees raised two main problems requiring an organised response: their potential threat to national security during the ideological and military struggle with France, and the destitution of several thousand transients who were singularly ill-equipped to earn their own living. The second problem was linked with the first, for relieving the destitute served as both a propaganda weapon against the Revolution, and a means of forestalling any temptation for the refugees to turn against their hosts to ingratiate themselves with the new régime at home. Hence my thesis deals with two main areas of refugee administration: the relief and control of aliens. Refugee relief provides the focus and major part of the thesis, with the refugees appearing as a special sort of poor in the context of contemporary methods of organising assistance to the poor in Great Britain. Alien administration, while detailing the other major administrative response to the influx of French, also provides a valuable contrast with the organisation of relief.

A study of this kind has much to offer those interested in British administrative history. It demonstrates how ad hoc responses to particular problems and circumstances led Britain's central bureaucracy into immigration control, and the enlargement of a government's disbursement of public money for the protection of a disadvantaged group, in a period when the prevailing 'small government' philosophy normally restrained such involvement. A comparison of the development

of alien administration and refugee relief shows how the closeness of an issue to the perceived responsibilities of the government can influence administrative structures and practices, and determine whether policy initiatives are generated within or without the civil service. The study adds to our knowledge of the operations of two departments of state, the Treasury and the Home Office; here and elsewhere it illustrates the elements of continuity and change in the transition from eighteenth century to nineteenth century administration. Finally, it shows how refugee administration at the close of the eighteenth century forms part of a pattern of responses to selected refugee movements from the late seventeenth century onwards.

The thesis covers the period from the first departure of refugees from France to Great Britain and elsewhere after the fall of the Bastille, to the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, when the majority of the refugees returned to France. The major concentration is on the period from 1792 to 1802, which marked the development of refugee administration from its beginnings to a plateau of 'steady state' administration, where the essential features were set and the number of refugees was fairly stable. Although the thesis is about administration rather than the refugees,<sup>1</sup> their nature, needs, attitudes and

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<sup>1</sup>There have been several studies of the French refugees in Great Britain. Of the major ones, three concentrate on the clergy: F.X. Plasse, Le Clergé Français Réfugié en Angleterre 2 vols (Paris, 1886) is scholarly and still essential reading; Dominic Terrence Joseph Bellenger, 'The French ecclesiastical exiles in England, 1789-1815' (Ph.D., Cambridge University, 1977) contains a comprehensive bibliography and bibliographical survey on the subject; and Kathleen Connell, 'The Breton refugee clergy in exile on the Channel Island of Jersey - 1792-1801' (Ph.D., St John's University, New York, 1971) discusses in detail an aspect not covered by Dr Bellenger. Still the most comprehensive work is E.M. Wilkinson, 'French émigrés in England, 1789-1802; their reception and impact on English life', (B.Litt., Oxford University, 1952). Margery Weiner, The French Exiles 1789-1815 (London, 1960) was written for a popular readership, without scholarly apparatus, but is based on primary sources and offers a solid bibliography.

behaviour helped to shape the administration which dealt with them. Thus the refugees, while not the focus of the thesis, people its pages, and show the personal dimension of social administration.

The scope of the thesis is determined mainly by administrative boundaries. It is a study of specific administrative agencies and refugee groups. The agencies and their clientèle all came eventually under the jurisdiction and funding of the British government, as represented by Westminster, Whitehall and the court of St James. The inclusion of the Alien Office is a matter of course, as this was the sole agency responsible for the control of aliens in Great Britain, a term I use here in its specific geographical sense as meaning England, Scotland and Wales. Jersey, though under the English crown, used its constitutional right to pass and enforce its own alien laws.<sup>2</sup>

The boundaries of relief administration need more explanation. I have not attempted to deal with all refugees who received direct or indirect assistance from the British government or charitable organisations. The thesis contains little on those who were employed by the British government, such as the émigré soldiers and secret agents,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See Chapter 4, pp. 118-20. Presumably the Isle of Man had the same right, but it did not experience an influx of aliens as Jersey did.

<sup>3</sup>The military émigrés are dealt with in René Bittard des Portes, L'Exil et la Guerre: les émigrés à cocarde noire en Angleterre, dans les Provinces Belges, en Hollande et à Quiberon (Paris, 1908); and Mrs Morgan John O'Connell (ed.), The Last Colonel of the Irish Brigade: Colonel O'Connell and the old Irish life at home and abroad (1st pub. 1892; Cork, 1977) prints a number of letters dealing with the Irish Brigades. The Windham Papers and the Puisaye Papers in the British Library are probably the best manuscript sources on the émigré regiments. For a brief discussion of the military émigrés, see below pp. 50-1, 62-3. There are a number of studies on the émigré agents in British pay, including Harvey Mitchell, The Underground War Against Revolutionary France (Oxford, 1965); André Lebon, L'Angleterre et l'Émigration Française de 1794 à 1801 (Paris, 1882); and Agnes King, 'The relations of the British Government with the émigrés and Royalists of western France, 1793-5' (Ph.D., University of London, 1931).

or on the Bourbon pensioners. The selection of refugee groups and relief agencies is centred on Wilmot's Committee,<sup>4</sup> the largest agency, which was founded as a philanthropic body to raise and administer funds for the relief of the French refugee clergy in England and Jersey. In 1793 the British government agreed to fund it, and thereafter passed to it administrative, financial or auditing responsibilities for several other groups of French refugees: the laity in England, formerly supported by another charitable organisation; the Toulonese and Corsican evacuees, initially under the care of Sir Gilbert Elliot;<sup>5</sup> and those St Domingans<sup>6</sup> judged by the St Domingo Claims Board to be entitled to British pensions. The Toulonese, Corsicans and St Domingans have not been included in any previous studies of British relief to the French.<sup>7</sup> Studying Wilmot's Committee, and those refugees and relief agencies which came within its field of operations, enables us to see a gradual centralisation

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<sup>4</sup>The committee was known by several names throughout its life. Initially its formal title was 'Committee for the relief of the suffering clergy of France, refugees in the British dominions', and it was often referred to as the 'Committee at Freemasons' Tavern', after its meeting place. When it came under government auspices, it was known as the 'Committee for the relief of the suffering clergy and laity of France'. I have chosen to refer to it by another of its names, 'Wilmot's Committee', after the name of its chairman, for the sake of brevity and uniformity.

<sup>5</sup>(1751-1814), first Baron and later first Earl of Minto. He was one of the first of the Whigs to support the government when the Whigs split over the French Revolution (see Chapter 1). As Civil Commissioner in Toulon (1793), Viceroy of Corsica (1794-6) and Minister Plenipotentiary in Vienna (1799-1801) he had considerable contact with the Toulonese evacuees. He was later Governor-General of India from 1807 to 1813: Dictionary of National Biography (hereafter D.N.B.) vi, pp. 673-5.

<sup>6</sup>They were mainly property-owners, and not necessarily resident at the time of the evacuation in 1798.

<sup>7</sup>The definition of the Corsicans as 'French' is arguable, but the government and its agencies treated them as French for the purposes of granting relief.

of administration by a process of subsumation and government directive.

The French refugees in Ireland have not been included in the thesis. Quite apart from the paucity of evidence on them, they fall outside the system of administration described in the thesis. Ireland had a separate legislature and civil service until the Act of Union came into effect on 1 January 1801.<sup>8</sup> It passed and administered its own Alien Act and would have been responsible for any government relief initiatives, although I know of none. The refugees in Ireland never came within the ambit of Wilmot's Committee, which specifically excluded them from its jurisdiction.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, this exclusion is one of the few pieces of evidence to show that there were French refugees in Ireland. Moreover, they were not included in the general grants made by the British government. Although these refugees were not included in the mainstream of Britain's refugee administration, I have made reference to Ireland at appropriate points wherever possible. The French refugees in the British West Indies have also been excluded, as they did not come within the ambit of Wilmot's Committee, and were of peripheral interest to the British government. Most of the St Domingans, who are included, resided in Great Britain.

The thesis is set out in four parts: the first discusses the background to contemporary British administration, and the refugee problem; the second deals with alien legislation and administration; the third and major part concerns refugee relief; the fourth provides perspective and concludes the thesis. In Part III, Chapters 5 to 9 are arranged chronologically, chapter divisions being mostly by

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<sup>8</sup>And the civil service was slow to change even then, judging by Chapter 1 of R.B. McDowell, The Irish Administration 1801-1914 (London, 1964).

<sup>9</sup>J. Wilmot and T. Glyn to C. Long, 29 Nov. 1800, T.93/4, pp. 55-6.



administrative body. Chapters 5 and 6 form a single chronological segment, separated mainly for reasons of length. Chapter 10 places the development of refugee relief in the context of contemporary philanthropy and poor relief. In Part IV Chapter 11 examines British administrative responses to other refugee groups, while the Conclusion sums up the findings on refugee administration as a whole.

PART I: ADMINISTRATION AND REFUGEES

## CHAPTER 1

### THE ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND

1792 was an important year in Great Britain for refugee administration, as it saw both the genesis of the 1793 Alien Act, on which subsequent alien administration was based, and the first attempts to organise relief for the peak influx of French refugees. It was also a watershed in British politics and administration, for it marked the beginnings of a major political regrouping, and the end of the peacetime phase of William Pitt's<sup>1</sup> first administration. In this chapter I shall discuss briefly the state of British politics in 1792, the impact of the 'Economical Reform' movement on British administration in the late eighteenth century, and the structure and functions of the Treasury and the Home Office, as these factors set the scene for the development of refugee administration.

#### I

William Pitt was Prime Minister for most of the period of this study. By 1792 his ministry was dominated by a triumvirate: himself as Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury; Henry

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<sup>1</sup>(1759-1806), second son of William Pitt, first Earl of Chatham. Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Earl of Shelburne in July 1782 and formed his own ministry in December 1783 at the age of twenty-four. He had minimal support in the Commons, and was defeated repeatedly by the Opposition majority, but refused to resign until 1784; when he won the general election convincingly. His ability as a politician and financial administrator won him continued support in Parliament which he kept, apart from the threat of the Regency crisis of 1788, until he resigned in 1801 over his disagreement with George III over Roman Catholic relief in Ireland. He resumed office in 1804 and held it until his death in January 1806. See D.N.B. xv, pp. 1253-71.

Dundas,<sup>2</sup> Home Secretary and Pitt's closest friend and political associate; and Lord Grenville,<sup>3</sup> Foreign Secretary and Pitt's first cousin. Richard Willis describes these three, 'surrounded by a penumbra of administrative specialists', as the 'essential nexus of decision-making'.<sup>4</sup> Thus the Treasury and the Home Office, the two departments which later had the greatest responsibility for refugee administration, were headed by two of the three most influential politicians.

The main group opposing the government, the Whigs, was led by the Duke of Portland,<sup>5</sup> with Charles James Fox<sup>6</sup> as its greatest luminary. It was the largest political grouping in Westminster, but by 1792 it had been out of power for nearly a decade, and the looming

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<sup>2</sup>(1742-1811), created first Viscount Melville in 1802. He was Solicitor-General for Scotland in 1766, M.P. for Midlothian for most of 1774-90 and M.P. for Edinburgh 1790-1802. Dundas served as Lord Advocate 1775-83, Treasurer of the Navy 1782-3 and 1784-1800, Home Secretary 1791-4, President of the Board of Control 1793-1801, Secretary for War 1794-1801 and First Lord of the Admiralty 1804-5. In 1806 he was impeached for corruption, declared negligent and acquitted. He carried a great deal of political influence in Scotland. See *ibid.*, vi, pp. 186-91.

<sup>3</sup>William Wyndham Grenville, Baron Grenville (1759-1834), Chief Secretary for Ireland 1782-3; Paymaster-General 1784; Home Secretary 1789-90; President of the Board of Control 1790-3; and Foreign Secretary 1791-1801. He resigned with Pitt in 1801, but refused to rejoin him in 1804. He was Prime Minister in the ministry of 'All the Talents' in 1806-7: *ibid.*, viii, pp. 576-81.

<sup>4</sup>Richard E. Willis, 'Cabinet politics and executive policy making procedures, 1794-1801', *Albion*, vii, no. 1, 1974, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, third Duke of Portland (1738-1809), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland 1782; Prime Minister 1783; joined in coalition with Pitt in 1794; Home Secretary 1794-1801; Lord President of the Council 1801-6; and Prime Minister 1807-9: *D.N.B.* ii, pp. 302-4.

<sup>6</sup>(1749-1806), Foreign Secretary 1782; joint Secretary of State in the Fox-North coalition of 1783; and Foreign Secretary under Grenville 1806. Despite the brevity of his ministerial career, he was a striking political figure, through his great personal charm and his powers of oratory. He was for some time a close friend of the Prince of Wales, thus earning the dislike of George III, who disapproved of Fox's profligate mode of living. He was probably Pitt's greatest political opponent. See *ibid.*, vii, pp. 535-51.

issue of the French Revolution threatened its unity. There were two main factions in the party: the conservative aristocrats, exemplified by Portland and Earl Fitzwilliam,<sup>7</sup> and the reformers, such as Charles Grey<sup>8</sup> and Richard Brinsley Sheridan.<sup>9</sup> A key figure in the growing schism was Edmund Burke.<sup>10</sup> At the outbreak of the French Revolution his political career was in decline, and he had become an isolated figure in the party. Burke was an early and vehement opponent of the French Revolution. His stance and the publication in 1790 of his influential Reflections on the Revolution in France did much to restore his public standing with the Tory nation, especially as events in France in 1791-2 seemed to justify his interpretation of the Revolution, but alienated the reformers. The Portland Whigs were

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<sup>7</sup> William Wentworth Fitzwilliam, second Earl Fitzwilliam (1748-1833), nephew and heir of the Marquis of Rockingham. In 1794 he joined the coalition as President of the Council, and was then appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He took up his post in January 1795, but was soon recalled, following his abrupt dismissal of several members of the incumbent Irish administration (see E.A. Smith, Whig Principles and Party Politics: Earl Fitzwilliam and the Whig Party 1748-1833 (Manchester, 1975), Chapter 7). He was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1798 and President of the Council 1806-7: D.N.B. vii, pp. 235-7.

<sup>8</sup> (1764-1848), later second Earl Grey, Viscount Howick and Baron Grey, M.P. for Northumberland 1786-1807 and Appleby 1807; first Lord of the Admiralty 1806; Foreign Secretary 1806-7; and Prime Minister 1831-4. He was a foundation member of the radical Society of the Friends of the People in 1792. See *ibid.*, viii, pp. 616-22.

<sup>9</sup> (1751-1816), dramatist and parliamentary orator; Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1782; Secretary to the Treasury 1783; and Treasurer of the Navy 1806-7: *ibid.*, xviii, pp. 78-85.

<sup>10</sup> (1729-1797), lawyer, orator, politician and political writer. He was M.P. for Wendover 1764-74, M.P. for Bristol 1774-80, M.P. for Malton (Yorkshire) 1781-94. He held office as Paymaster General of the Forces in 1782 and 1783: *ibid.*, iii, pp. 345-65. Burke was born in Ireland of Protestant father and Catholic mother. He was raised in the Established Church, but had considerable sympathy for the Catholic and Irish cause. Connor Cruise O'Brien sees Burke's Irish background as a major factor shaping his antipathy to the French Revolution: see his introduction to Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France edited and introduced by Connor Cruise O'Brien (1st pub. 1790; Harmondsworth, 1968) pp. 30-41 and the biographical note pp. 77-81.

in fundamental agreement with Burke, but embarrassed by his vehemence, and dismayed by his break with his great friend Fox on the issue of the Revolution. Fox was ambivalent in his pronouncements. By mid-1792 he had become identified with the more radical Whigs, without yet destroying the personal attachment of Whigs such as Portland and Fitzwilliam. The more the Revolution became an issue, however, the more difficult his position became.

The difficulties within the party as a whole were exacerbated in the autumn and winter of 1792-3 by the emergence of a further group among the Whigs, known as the 'Third Party'. This group, headed by William Windham,<sup>11</sup> Sir Gilbert Elliot and Lord Malmesbury,<sup>12</sup> strongly opposed the French Revolution and advocated support of the government in any measures directed against the Revolution or British radicals. In the same period events in France increased the divergence between the radical and conservative elements of the Whigs, and led to a struggle between Fox and the embryo 'Third Party' for the allegiance of the Duke of Portland. Chapter 3 shows how Pitt used the Alien Bill and anti-radical measures to widen this division.

## II

British administration in the 1790s showed a mixture of the continuity of eighteenth century administrative practices, the

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<sup>11</sup> (1750-1810), M.P. for Norwich 1784-1802. He served as Secretary at War in the coalition government 1794-1801. He was a friend of Dr Johnson and Burke, and helped William Cobbett to found the Political Register: D.N.B. xxi, pp. 643-6.

<sup>12</sup> James Harris, Baron Malmesbury (1746-1820), created first Earl of Malmesbury in 1800. He was a career diplomat, who served as Ambassador to St Petersburg (1777-82) and The Hague (1784-8). He led the abortive peace mission to France in 1796-7. Malmesbury and Elliot married sisters, Harriet Mary and Anna Maria Amyand, of Huguenot extraction: ibid., ix, pp. 8-9.

emergence of features associated with Economical Reform and the faint foreshadowing of developments of the nineteenth century. It followed a seminal period of administrative change in Britain's central bureaucracy. The crucial phase of Economical Reform was 1780-83, when discontent with the mismanagement of the war with the American colonies found an outlet in criticisms of the haphazard and expensive accumulation of administrative traditions and practices which formed Britain's central bureaucracy. The driving force behind reform was the desire to improve the economy, efficiency and probity of the civil service and perhaps thereby to assert parliament's power to influence the conduct of the executive and the Civil Service.

The most important single step had been taken in 1780 when Lord North<sup>13</sup> established the Commission for Examining Public Accounts. North's was a pre-emptive move to recapture the initiative in administrative reform; Lord Shelburne<sup>14</sup> had already proposed a committee of enquiry into public finance, and Burke had advocated reforms to reduce the influence of the Crown and the executive. The enquiry sponsored by North improved upon Shelburne's proposal in two respects: the Commission, whose members had financial and legal experience, was independent of parliament and the civil service, while being able to call on the latter's expertise; and its terms of reference required it to recommend ways to remedy weaknesses and abuses. The Commission made fifteen reports over

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<sup>13</sup> Frederick North (1732-1792), later second Earl of Guilford, Prime Minister 1770-82 and a principal in the Fox-North coalition of 1783: *ibid.*, iv, pp. 604-9.

<sup>14</sup> Sir William Petty, second Earl of Shelburne (1737-1805), later first Marquis of Lansdowne. He led the party formerly headed by William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. He became Britain's first Home Secretary in 1782, under Rockingham, whom he succeeded as Prime Minister in that year, but he lost power to the Fox-North coalition in 1783: *ibid.*, xv, pp. 1005-12.

the next seven years, foreshadowing some of the most important reforms of the succeeding decades: consolidation of like functions in one office, abolition of sinecures, abolition of payment by fee and improvement of the audit.<sup>15</sup> The effect of these reforms on refugee administration was evident, partly by the avoidance of old practices in the new institutions, and partly by the use of the Audit Office to tighten accounting procedures.<sup>16</sup>

Few of the Commissioners' recommendations broke new ground, but the principles enunciated had far-reaching implications for the nature of British public administration. One of the most important was the principle that the public interest was distinct from and had priority over the private ownership of public office and the right to its perquisites. Through its recommendations the Commission was defining the notion that a government official's duty was to serve the public, that he should perform that service himself, and that he should be paid a salary based on his service, not on his office or function. Thus revenue was defined clearly as belonging to the public, and no office-holder should hold claim to any portion of it. Similarly, no office was to be held freehold or in life tenancy by its incumbent; it was the government's, to fill at its pleasure.

Another feature of Economical Reform was the growing demand of parliamentarians to be better-informed on departmental business and hence better able to scrutinise performance of specified duties and

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<sup>15</sup> Henry Roseveare, The Treasury; the evolution of a British institution (London, 1969), pp. 119-25; Peter D.G. Thomas, Lord North (London, 1976), p. 105; John Norris, Shelburne and Reform (London, 1963), pp. 115-20, 199-202; J.E.D. Binney, British Public Finance and Administration 1774-92 (Oxford, 1958), pp. 8-15, 264, 282. See *ibid.*, pp. 14-15 for a summary of the recommendations.

<sup>16</sup> See below, pp. 13-15.



to institute changes. One result was the setting up of commissions or committees to examine problem areas in public administration and to recommend reforms. The Commission for Examining the Accounts again led the way, to be followed by the Commission for Enquiring into Fees in the Public Offices in 1785, and the House of Commons' Select Committees on Finance which reported in 1782, 1786, 1791 and 1797. Pitt was able to suppress for several years the report of the Commissioners for Enquiring into Fees,<sup>17</sup> but the Select Committees reported to the House of Commons, so that their reports and recommendations became public. The 1797 report was perhaps the most interesting. Pressure from parliament forced Pitt to set it up;<sup>18</sup> this reflected the growing interest and expertise of members in administrative matters, and their determination to be kept informed. The Committee members' increasing experience enabled them to investigate thoroughly, and their thirty-six reports included the first 'really adequate statement of current revenue and expenditure'.<sup>19</sup> Such reports gave information and ammunition to those politicians of a reforming bent who were prepared to tackle the intricacies of public finance and administration.

Audit reform may serve to illustrate some of the features of administrative change after 1780. Pitt's Audit Act of 1785<sup>20</sup> abolished the offices of the two Auditors of the Imprest and replaced them with a board of five Audit Commissioners, who gained additional powers to summon accountants, to examine them under oath and to call for any of their papers.<sup>21</sup> The improved scrutiny of the accountants' work,

<sup>17</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> 25 Geo. III, Cap. 52.

<sup>21</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 204-5.

and the calling in of accounts annually, tightened procedures. The Auditors of the Imprest had been sinecurists, holding office under Letters Patent and being paid by fee. They were compensated for the loss of the latter, Pitt preferring this to his more usual method of abolishing an office on the death of its incumbent. The new Commissioners could not delegate their duties, held their office on good behaviour and were paid by salary, as were their clerks, who had formerly been paid by fee. The Commissioners' papers were held to be Crown property.<sup>22</sup> The reforms were sorely needed: Burke had pointed out in 1780 that the lack of an annual accounting and audit system meant that no Treasurer could estimate accurately government income or expenditure in any one year.<sup>23</sup> Shelburne and the Commissioners for Examining the Public Accounts had suggested reform measures.<sup>24</sup> Pitt adopted the idea of payment by fee, but not the Commissioners' key recommendation that expenditure should be checked not only to verify that it had been made, but also that it had been spent on its designated purposes.<sup>25</sup> He also left intact the cumbersome machinery of the Exchequer and made no provision for reporting to parliament. As a result, the measure did speed the audit and regulate the status of the auditors, but was not particularly effective otherwise; further reforms were effected by a succession of Audit Acts

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<sup>22</sup> Burke put a similar clause in his act regulating the office of the Paymaster-General, as otherwise it was common practice for the archives of an office to be held as private papers: *ibid.*, pp. 156-7.

<sup>23</sup> Roseveare, Treasury: evolution, p. 125.

<sup>24</sup> Norris, Shelburne and Reform, p. 220.

<sup>25</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, p. 202.

over the next twenty years.<sup>26</sup> Reform was thus slow and unco-ordinated, but moving in the directions suggested by Economical Reform.

Audit reform reflects something of Pitt's style of administration. He developed his approach to reform in the 1780s, when his ministry lacked parliamentary support, and he had to feel his way cautiously. He tended to concentrate on one problem at a time, often synthesizing or developing the ideas of others to make an existing system function more simply and smoothly. He rationalised where he could, one step at a time, and retreated in the face of strong opposition. His approach was essentially piecemeal, effecting small rather than wholesale reforms. Yet there was little else that he could do, given the political constraints under which he worked and the weight of traditional financial and administrative practices and the powerful interests that thrived on them. When given the opportunity, he could show an impressive grasp of intricate financial and administrative detail, as in his Consolidation Act of 1787.<sup>27</sup> He also displayed courage and innovative ability in his scheme to reduce the National Debt by creating a sinking fund in which surplus revenue would be used to redeem portions of the National Debt<sup>28</sup> and his introduction of the income tax in 1798. Pitt's standing as a financial administrator, the relative lack of corruption under his ministry, and his excellent

<sup>26</sup> The most important were those of 1794, 1799, 1801, 1805 and 1806: Archibald S. Foord, 'The waning of "The Influence of the Crown"', English Historical Review, lxi, Oct. 1947, p. 491. The above section on audit reform is based mainly on *ibid.*; John Ehrman, The Younger Pitt: the years of acclaim (London, 1969), pp. 300-2; Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 202-8; Roseveare, Treasury: evolution, p. 125; and Lord Bridges, The Treasury (1st Pub. 1964; 2nd edn, London, 1966), p. 25.

<sup>27</sup> 27 Geo. III, Cap. 13. On customs reforms and the Consolidation Act see Ehrman, Pitt, pp. 269-73; Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 109-10; Bridges, Treasury, p. 25; and Sir John Craig, A History of Red Tape: an account of the origin and development of the Civil Service (London, 1955), p. 97.

<sup>28</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 110-15; Ehrman, Pitt, pp. 260-9.

relations with the City's merchants and financiers brought the government a new reputation for probity and expertise.<sup>29</sup>

Pitt's greatest achievements were in the financial rather than the administrative field, and in peacetime rather than wartime. Through the Consolidation Act, the Sinking Fund and his audit measures, he managed to increase revenue,<sup>30</sup> reduce the National Debt and improve public accounting - all peacetime measures. From 1792, however, Pitt and his ministers, although politically more secure, had to govern in a changed political and administrative climate. Their alarm at the direction the Revolution was taking in France, and their fears that it might incite revolution in Britain, caused them to turn against parliamentary reform and to take repressive measures against political dissent. Civil liberties are often a vexed and divisive issue in time of national or ideological warfare, and this was so in the 1790s. Pitt's measures drew approval from many erstwhile opponents, thus strengthening his political position, but they alienated proponents of parliamentary reform and civil liberties, in and out of parliament. The political lines of battle were redrawn even before France declared war in February 1793, as the circumstances surrounding the passing of the 1793 Alien Act clearly show, and the attacks on Pitt and his policies were fierce and constant, if not particularly effective.

The government's fear of political dissidence, together with the constant demands of wartime administration, meant that decisions had to be made quickly and under pressure, often resulting in ad hoc

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<sup>29</sup> Roseveare, Treasury: evolution, p. 128.

<sup>30</sup> See Ehrman, Pitt, pp. 273-6.

arrangements that might bring unforeseen consequences. Pitt had to venture outside his speciality of financial management, because administrative reorganisation of inefficient structures and cumbersome procedures, and the development of effective strategy and tactics, were imperative if Great Britain were to survive the French onslaught. In these circumstances, Pitt's piecemeal approach, and preference for 'tidying up' affairs in limited areas, could be ineffectual and even disastrous: his strategy of scattered small-scale attacks on the French and his preoccupation with colonial gains rather than a consolidated European theatre, cost Great Britain dear. The failure to push the war to a speedy and successful conclusion in turn put pressure on Pitt's domestic management. The escalating cost of the war and the disruption to trade ruined Pitt's most ambitious scheme, the reduction of the National Debt, while the financial crisis of 1797 showed that he could be vulnerable even in his speciality - financial management. Even so, he rose to the occasion by introducing the income tax in 1798, and in the long haul, the continuity, stability, and low cost of Britain's bureaucracy under Pitt did much to aid the British war effort. The development of refugee administration under Pitt shows a pattern of ad hoc responses to specific problems, followed by periodic rationalisations, in Pitt's favourite mode. These responses were shaped by wartime pressures, the government's pre-occupation with wartime security, and the slow aggregation of administrative change flowing on from Economical Reform.

### III

The government departments most concerned with refugee administration from 1792 were the Treasury and the Home Office,

although the War Department shared some of the burden from 1794 to 1796. The Treasury gradually acquired responsibility for the majority of French refugees receiving government relief, and had to approve all grants administered elsewhere, while the Home Office had the dual role of administering the 1793 Alien Act and overseeing relief to several groups. As these two departments play an important role in this study, a brief examination of their structure and functions, with emphasis on how they stood in 1792, may be useful.

In 1792 the effective staff of the Treasury was less than fifty.<sup>31</sup> John Sainty narrows the staff further to an 'active civil list establishment' of twenty-one clerks: seven on the Revenue side and twelve on the Expenditure side, together with a copying clerk and one with no specific duties; four chief clerks had charge of them.<sup>32</sup> Additional to these, but not 'permanent' officers, were the two joint secretaries, and the 'supernumary' and 'extra' clerks, who fluctuated in number. In 1792 George Rose<sup>33</sup> was the 'Parliamentary' and Charles Long<sup>34</sup> the 'Financial' Secretary. A board of five lords commissioner

<sup>31</sup> J.D. Binney estimates the 'efficient' staff in 1784 at forty-four from a total establishment of fifty-nine: Binney, Finance and Administration, p. 170. Additional clerks were probably appointed in the interim, due to an increase in business; the war later provided further impetus to growth of business and hence of staff: J.C. Sainty, Treasury Officials 1660-1870 (London, 1972), p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11. In 1792 the chief clerks were Thomas Pratt, who no longer attended the office, Thomas Cotton, William Mitford and George Edward Ramus: *ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>33</sup> (1744-1818), served as joint Secretary 1784-1801 in Pitt's first administration, and as vice-president of the Board of Trade and joint Paymaster-General 1804-6 in Pitt's second administration. He was M.P. for Launceston in 1784, Lymington in 1788 and Christchurch in 1790-1818. See D.N.B., xvii, 226-30.

<sup>34</sup> (1761-1838), later first Baron Farnborough; served as joint Secretary 1791-1801. He was appointed a lord commissioner of the Treasury in 1804, privy councillor 1805, Secretary of State for Ireland 1806 and joint or sole Paymaster-General 1810-26. He was M.P. for Rye 1789-96, Midhurst 1796, Wendover 1802 and Haslemere 1806-26. See *ibid.*, xii, pp. 99-100.

presided over the whole. The Prime Minister was traditionally the First Lord, and Pitt was also Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Revenue side and the junior temporary staff need not concern us here, for only the Expenditure side was concerned with the refugees. Under the Treasury reforms of 1782, the Expenditure section had been divided into six fixed divisions, each specialising in certain areas, but much business was shared. A senior and a junior clerk formed the nucleus of each division, while subordinate staff varied according to the prevailing need.<sup>35</sup> Judging from the surviving correspondence, Charles Long, the Financial Secretary, and George Ramus, chief clerk, handled the bulk of French refugee business at their respective levels.<sup>36</sup>

The Expenditure side of the Treasury handled all correspondence and the preparation of warrants and other instruments of expenditure.<sup>37</sup> It thus came into contact with all civil service agencies, as all applications for money passed through the Treasury at some stage. The role of the Treasury was to control and account for the expenditure of all public monies, to ensure that there were sufficient funds in hand to meet demand, and to assign priorities of payment. Refugee benefits had a low priority, and payments were usually in arrears; this was particularly so during the financial crisis of 1797.<sup>38</sup>

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Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 171-2; Sainty, Treasury Officials, p. 11; and Roseveare, Treasury: evolution, p. 123.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Minutes 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, f. 241.

<sup>37</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, p. 172.

<sup>38</sup> See below, p. 330.

Although much of the Treasury's work concerned the expenditure of other departments, it also arranged payment of sums granted by parliament or the executive to persons or agencies not connected with other departments. The administration of these grants thus fell to the Treasury itself, and formed part of its normal business. Included in this category were the payment of pensions and compensation for losses. One instance is pertinent to the later involvement of the Treasury in French refugee relief: the case of the American Loyalists.

The government's involvement with American Loyalist claims followed an almost classic pattern: first, ad hoc responses to specific approaches; then attempts to rationalise administration with the aim of cutting costs and developing a system for judging claims; and ending with a programme costing more and lasting longer than envisaged. The first payments were made in 1775-6 to Loyalists who applied to the Treasury or to Lord George Germain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was sympathetic to their plight. Early in 1777 the Treasury drew up a formal pension list of about a hundred Loyalists who were to receive an annual pension at a standard rate of £100. The pensions were paid quarterly, at the Treasury office, to the Loyalist in person or to an agent bearing a signed receipt. The Treasury board met twice a year to discuss further applications.<sup>39</sup> This continued for the duration of the war, although from 1779 the Treasury Lords tried to contain rising costs by reducing allowances, by replacing them with once-only grants in quittance of all claims, or by refusing some claims altogether.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See Mary Beth Norton, The British-Americans: the Loyalist exiles in England 1774-1789 (London, 1974), pp. 52-61.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.



In August 1782 the Treasury Lords decided that a review of all Loyalist pensions was needed, and Shelburne, then Prime Minister, appointed two members of parliament, John Eardley Wilmot<sup>41</sup> and Daniel Parker Coke<sup>42</sup> to conduct the enquiry. They commenced work in October and reported in January 1783.<sup>43</sup> Coke's and Wilmot's brief to rationalise or finalise payments and to cut costs<sup>44</sup> resembled those of other parliamentary select committees: to investigate, to inform parliament, to make recommendations and to effect economies.

Coke and Wilmot selected 'the clearly defined criteria of need, loyalty and loss' as the basis for awards. This changed payments to the Loyalists from a debt claimed by right into a government charity, a change which the Loyalists found very difficult to stomach.<sup>45</sup> In response, they organised themselves to press for compensation for losses, especially in view of the treaty then being negotiated with the United States.<sup>46</sup> A Compensation Act of July 1783 established

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<sup>41</sup>(1750-1815), later changed his name to Eardley-Wilmot. He was educated at Westminster and University College, Oxford, and served as a master in chancery, and as M.P. for Tiverton 1776-84 and Coventry 1784-96. He opposed the government over the war with the American colonies, but generally supported Pitt after 1784: See D.N.B., xxi, pp. 540-1; and Esmond Wright, 'The Loyalists in Britain', in Esmond Wright (ed.), A Tug of Loyalties: Anglo-American relations 1765-85 (London, 1975), p. 9. Wilmot is a major character in this thesis, as he was chairman of Wilmot's Committee from 1792-1806. Unfortunately, little is known of his life, as he does not appear to have left many private papers. The Wilmot Papers in the Derby Library do not include his correspondence. An obituary appeared in Gentleman's Magazine, 1815, pt 11, pp. 83-4.

<sup>42</sup>(1745-1825), barrister and M.P. for Derby 1775-80 and Nottingham 1780-1812. He was an independent Tory: D.N.B., iv, pp. 684-5; Wright, 'Loyalists in Britain', pp. 9-10.

<sup>43</sup>Norton, British-Americans, pp. 114-5, 119.

<sup>44</sup>Wright, 'Loyalists in Britain', p. 9.

<sup>45</sup>Norton, British-Americans, p. 121.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 186-91.

a five-member commission, the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services and Claims of the American Loyalists (hereafter referred to as the American Loyalist Claims Commission).<sup>47</sup> Coke and Wilmot served as Commissioners, the latter being the only member to serve through the entire enquiry.<sup>48</sup>

Some preliminary payments were made in 1785, but Pitt presented his plan for final settlement to parliament on 6 June 1788, proposing settlement in full of claims up to £10,000 and partial payment according to a sliding scale on claims over £10,000.<sup>49</sup> The Commission's final report in 1790 showed that £3,033,019 was awarded to 2,291 Loyalists, although this represented only thirty-seven percent of their claims; a further 343 claimants received nothing.<sup>50</sup> This was a considerable expenditure of time and money for a cost-cutting exercise originally expected to take two or three months.<sup>51</sup>

The case of the American Loyalists was not directly analagous to that of the French refugees, except perhaps those from St Domingo, as the French had no claim to compensation from the British and were thus dependent on their own resources and British charity. One important parallel can be drawn, however. In setting up the American Loyalist Claims Commission, the government had created a body outside

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<sup>47</sup> For details of the Commission see: John Eardley-Wilmot, Historical View of the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims, of the American Loyalists (London, 1815); Norton, British-Americans, esp. pp. 114-21 and Chapter 7; and Wright, 'Loyalists in Britain', pp. 8-17.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-12.

<sup>49</sup> Norton, British-Americans, pp. 213-4. Coke and Wilmot were distressed by the commutation of their recommended amounts: ibid., p. 214.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 216. Esmond Wright sets the settlement at £3,292,452 and estimates the total British expenditure on Loyalists at home and abroad at seven million pounds: Wright, 'Loyalists in Britain', p. 12.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp. 10, 12.

the Treasury to investigate claims, and to make recommendations which the Treasury would use as a basis for its decisions. This freed the Treasury from direct contact with the plight and importunities of the Loyalists. It reached a similar arrangement, by a different route, in relief to the French. Another important link was in personnel, for in 1792 Wilmot, in his private capacity, became chairman of the major charitable organisation for the relief of the French. He retained that position, as it passed increasingly under Treasury control, until his resignation in 1806. His experience with the American Loyalist Claims Commission was reflected in some of the administrative practices adopted by Wilmot's Committee.<sup>52</sup> Robert Mackenzie, one of his fellow Commissioners,<sup>53</sup> later became a commissioner on the St Domingo Claims Board.<sup>54</sup>

Payments to the American Loyalists were appropriated under miscellaneous supply grants, and supplemented by advances from the Civil List funds. Appropriations to repay the Civil List for advances to grants would then be made the following year.<sup>55</sup> The latter arrangement allowed for fluctuations in disbursements, and meant an interest-free loan from the Civil List to public funds. Most payments to the French refugees were made under the same arrangements,<sup>56</sup> although those in the Channel Isles were paid from war extraordinaries until 1796.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>52</sup> For a discussion of this point, see below, p. 276.

<sup>53</sup> Norton, British-Americans, p. 211.

<sup>54</sup> See below, p. 337.

<sup>55</sup> Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 137-8.

<sup>56</sup> See Treasury Minutes 12 Dec. 1793, T.29/66, pp. 252-3; and Great Britain, Accounts and Papers, xxxv, 1868-9, pp. 448-9.

<sup>57</sup> De Bedée, de Monti and de Vezé to Prince de Bouillon, 23 Aug. 1796, W.O.1/921, pp. 619-21.

From 1799 the appropriations for the French and the American Loyalists were lumped together, and in the long term the Treasury amalgamated the lists of the few remaining French and American pensioners.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, it may be useful to outline the Treasury's usual mode of disbursing public monies; it has not been possible to document financial transactions between the Treasury and the agencies for the relief of French refugees, but there is no reason to suppose it differed from normal practice. The Treasury first issued an instrument, usually a warrant, authorising payment of a grant to a particular department, agency or person. This instrument was sent to the Auditor of the Receipt of the Exchequer, who prepared and signed an order for payment of the stipulated amount. In some cases the orders were countersigned by the lords commissioner. The order was then lodged with the Auditor. No money was paid out until the Treasury sent the Auditor a Letter of Direction, usually signed by the Financial Secretary, which authorised actual payment, and specified the revenue fund or funds from which the money was to be drawn. A single warrant might occasion several Letters of Direction, or one Letter might cover several warrants. It was the Treasury's responsibility to ensure that there were sufficient funds in hand to meet the demand, and to assign priorities of payments.<sup>59</sup> This cumbersome process, and the low priority accorded to refugee relief grants, go a long way to explain the constant arrears of grants to the French which bedevilled the relief administration.

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<sup>58</sup> See Weiner, French Exiles, p. 223; and 'Account of Thomas Crafer Paymaster...' for the year ending 31 March 1837, A.O.3/276, unf.

<sup>59</sup> This is a rather simplified version of the processes involved. For the more detailed account on which it is based, see Binney, Finance and Administration, pp. 172-6.

## IV

In 1792 the Home Office as such had been in existence only since the separation of foreign and domestic business a decade before.<sup>60</sup> Its effective establishment was very small: two under secretaries,<sup>61</sup> a chief clerk, eleven clerks and a précis writer. The Home Secretary presided, assisted by a private secretary. The office was tiny: the Home Secretary, Henry Dundas, and the Under Secretaries, Evan Nepean<sup>62</sup> and John King,<sup>63</sup> each had a room, while the clerks shared a room. The chief clerk<sup>64</sup> and two or three senior clerks had separate desks, while the rest sat at a long table.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Between 1768 and 1782 there had been three secretaries of state. Two of them shared domestic matters and divided foreign affairs between them, their two offices being known as the 'Northern' and 'Southern' [European] Departments. The third secretary handled colonial business. In 1782 this position was abolished, and the work of the three offices rearranged into two: the Foreign Office, with charge of foreign affairs, and the Home Office, responsible for all domestic and colonial business: see J.C. Sainty, Home Office Officials 1782-1870 (London, 1975), p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> There was a third under secretary, as a temporary arrangement, from December 1791 to August 1792. John King was appointed initially to stand in for Evan Nepean while the latter was abroad, but continued in office after Nepean's return. The number returned to two when Scrope Bernard left office in August 1792: see *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> (1751-1822), created a baronet in 1802. He was Under Secretary 1 April 1782 to 11 July 1794, when he became Under Secretary for War. In 1795 he was appointed Secretary of the Admiralty. He served briefly as Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1804, and was Governor of Bombay 1812-19. See *ibid.*, p. 56; and D.N.B., xiv, pp. 222-3.

<sup>63</sup> He was Under Secretary from 3 December 1791 until 18 February 1806, when he moved to the Treasury as Secretary. His brother, Dr Walker King (see below, p. 93), was one of Burke's closest friends, and a member of Wilmot's Committee. John King was also part of the Burke circle. See R.R. Nelson, The Home Office, 1782-1801 (Durham, N.C., 1969), p. 34; and Sainty, Home Office Officials, p. 53.

<sup>64</sup> William Pollock, chief clerk 1 June 1782-15 February 1816: *ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>65</sup> Nelson, Home Office, pp. 65-6.

The Home Secretary read most of the office's correspondence, indicated the substance of the more important letters, such as those to the King and Cabinet, signed all letters to heads of civil service departments, and functionaries abroad, and signed most letters to correspondents outside the civil service, such as local government officials and private citizens.<sup>66</sup> Normally the two Under Secretaries were respectively 'Parliamentary' and 'Permanent'. Although both officers were appointed by the Home Secretary, the latter was more likely to remain through a change in incumbent. Nepean was 'Permanent' Under Secretary from April 1782 until 11 July 1794; King served as an additional and then as an associate 'Permanent' Under Secretary from 3 December 1791 until Nepean's departure, and remained in office until shortly after Pitt's death in 1806. There was no 'Parliamentary' Under Secretary from August 1792 to July 1794.<sup>67</sup> Nepean and King between them held the position of 'Permanent' Under Secretary from 1782 until 1806, under twelve different Home Secretaries, thus lending great stability to the Home Office. In this capacity they fulfilled the directions of the Home Secretary, drafted most of the correspondence, some under instruction from the Secretary, signed most of the letters to other departments, and managed the finances and personnel of the office.<sup>68</sup>

The Home Office had been created as part of Economical Reform, and was reorganised in 1795 in a further round of reforms when two important steps were taken. First, salaries were paid under the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 39, 67-8, 71.

<sup>67</sup> See Sainty, Home Office Officials, p. 13.

<sup>68</sup> Nelson, Home Office, pp. 39, 67-8.

Civil List instead of from the personal funds of the Home Secretary. This put the officers under parliamentary jurisdiction, and made them servants of the state rather than the Crown.<sup>69</sup> Secondly, the financial structure was reorganised, so that the office accounts, those of the police offices and colonial officials, and any proposed disbursements to citizens, had to be submitted to the Treasury for approval. The Treasury in turn referred many claims to the Home Secretary for advice.<sup>70</sup> As a corollary, accounting records became the property of the government instead of the Chief Clerk, as formerly.<sup>71</sup> By these measures, the Home Office was more firmly defined as a public office under parliamentary control, rather than as merely administrative support for an office of the Crown; these reforms also had an impact on the development of the Alien Office.<sup>72</sup>

The concentration of domestic affairs in the hands of one department was a crucial stage in Great Britain's political and administrative development. To be effective, it needed reliable information on what was happening in the kingdom, as it might be necessary to act on this information. The Home Office thus became closely involved in two related issues: public order and public welfare.

The Home Office's primary interest in public order was reflected in its sponsorship of the militia, the main instrument for suppressing local riots; its fostering of the embryo police forces, which later

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., pp. 7, 69.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>72</sup>See below, pp. 128, 157.

assumed the major role in maintaining public order; and its development of a domestic intelligence system.<sup>73</sup> To do these things effect. ... to develop closer links with local government, the magistracy ... ices of the peace, for these were the major sources of information and means of social control throughout the nation.

The advent and example of the French Revolution stimulated the public order role of the Home Office, while the outbreak of war with France in February 1793 added the need for counter-intelligence operations against French agents and suspected fifth columnists. The development of alien administration clearly belongs in this context. The Alien Office was an institution created to counter foreign subversives, just as the establishment of seven police offices additional to Bow Street under the 1792 Middlesex Justices Act was designed to counter radicalism and popular disturbances as well as criminal activities.<sup>74</sup> There were personnel links between the Alien Office, the police offices and the secret service, and there is some evidence that the Alien Office was used as a cover for domestic espionage.<sup>75</sup> The 1793 Alien Act thus belongs with other anti-subversive measures of the 1790s, such as the 1793 Traitorous Correspondence Act, the 1795 Seditious Meetings Act, the 1795 Treasonable Practices Act and the suspension of Habeas Corpus in 1794.

The public welfare aspect of the Home Office was bound up with that of public order, but was later in origin and less clear-cut. Most popular disturbances had their origins in food shortages, low

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<sup>73</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 103-6, 114-22.

<sup>74</sup> See Chapter 2 of a forthcoming book by J. Ann Hone on radicalism in London 1796-1821.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see below, pp. 161-4.



income or unemployment, rather than in purely political grievances. On occasion the Home Office tried to forestall possible unrest, as when it co-ordinated the distribution of corn during the shortages in 1794. To do this successfully it had to be aware of sources of discontent, and hence in some measure of living and working conditions; it gained such information through its connections with local government officials, magistrates and justices of the peace. I suggest that the collection and centralisation of such information by the Home Office brought the poverty and appalling circumstances of many Britons to the attention of the executive and parliament, and made these problems harder to ignore in the growing moral and religious revival of the nineteenth century. Alien administration played a small part in this process, as it engendered further contact between the Home Office and local officials. It also strengthened links between the Home Office and the Customs service, and thus contributed to the domestic co-ordinating role of the developing Home Office in the 1790s.

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I wish to conclude this discussion on late eighteenth century British administration by foreshadowing my intention to touch on a subject more usually associated with nineteenth century administrative history: government growth.<sup>76</sup> This study is too early for Benthamism

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<sup>76</sup> The literature on this subject is itself a growth industry. The current debate began with two works by Oliver MacDonagh: A Pattern of Government Growth 1800-1860: the Passenger Acts and their enforcement (London, 1961) and 'The nineteenth century revolution in government: a reappraisal', Historical Journal, 1, no. 1, 1958, pp. 52-67, which reviewed the earlier theories of A.V. Dicey in his Lectures upon the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century (London, 1905). Henry Parris replied

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to be a significant factor, or for the moral and political climate of the 1830s to be pertinent, but it is a case of the extension of government intervention in a welfare field, and a small growth in one part of the central bureaucracy. By examining why and how these took place, some suggestions can be made as to how bureaucratic growth occurred in the nineteenth century, and how limits were placed on expansion of the central government.

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76 (continued)

with 'The nineteenth-century revolution in government: a reappraisal reappraised', Historical Journal, iii, no. 1, 1960, pp. 17-37 and Constitutional Bureaucracy: the development of British central administration since the eighteenth century (London, 1969), and the lists were open. Some of the more important contributions are: David Roberts, Victorian Origins of the British Welfare State (Yale, 1960); J. Hart, 'Nineteenth-century social reform: a Tory interpretation of history', Past and Present, xxxi, July 1965, pp. 39-61; Valerie Cromwell, 'Interpretations of nineteenth-century administration: an analysis', Victorian Studies, ix, no. 3, March 1966, pp. 245-54; and (as editor) Revolution or Evolution: British government in the nineteenth century (London, 1977); William Lubenow, The Politics of Government Growth: early Victorian attitudes toward State intervention (Newton Abbott, 1971); Gillian Sutherland (ed.), Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government (London, 1972); and to complete the circle, Oliver MacDonagh, Early Victorian Government 1830-1870 (London, 1977). An additional early, but still standard, work is Emmeline W. Cohen, The Growth of the British Civil Service 1780-1939 (1st pub. 1941), repr. London, 1965).

CHAPTER 2THE EMIGRATION AND THE REFUGEES

The French refugees were not a particularly large group, but the difficulties which the British faced were common ones for a host nation. Refugee movements are difficult to control at any time, and were probably more so then than now, as eighteenth century administrators had to work within the constraints of a small-scale bureaucracy, limited funds, a lack of systemised records on the refugees involved, and no aids such as photography and fingerprinting. There was no international system of passports, and not even an agreed definition of an 'alien'. The French emigration itself, in fact, helped the development of the concept of nationality. On the one hand the French government had to consider to whom the term 'émigré' could be applied, which meant that they had to determine who was or was not French. On the other hand, when the British government had to decide whether someone was an alien, it might first have to determine whether or not he was British.

The problem of controlling aliens is often exacerbated during wartime, particularly in the case of enemy aliens, such as the French, for national security becomes of paramount importance. Great Britain was in a better position than most, because she has no land borders, but the prevalence of smuggling shows how difficult it was to police the coastline. Once within the host nation's borders, refugees pose further problems of whether to settle them elsewhere, to keep them within a special area such as a refugee camp, or to allow them to mingle with the general population.

The problem of refugee subsistence then arises. Should the refugees be ignored, and left to fend for themselves? In effect, this is often

the case for small groups of refugees, or those who fail to attract public sympathy. However, this might be dangerous in the case of enemy aliens or large groups of refugees, if they were tempted to support themselves by subversive or criminal activities. Alternatives might be to provide employment opportunities for the refugees, or some form of assistance in cash or kind. But who should tender this assistance? Should it be individuals, organised charity, or a public institution, severally or together, and in which of their varied manifestations?

A host nation thus faces a number of decisions in dealing with a refugee group. The major choice is between action and inaction; prior to 1793 the latter predominated in the field of alien control in Great Britain. It would also be fair to say that co-ordinated welfare action was confined to aid for selected refugee groups only; individuals, small groups and those who lacked appeal to the charitable were dependent on their own resources. The responses adopted by a host nation are shaped by the nature and traditions of its private and public institutions, its social and political attitudes and its financial capacity and generosity; these factors are discussed in the course of the thesis. But its responses are also shaped by the size and composition of the refugee influx, the nature of the refugees and their reasons for exile. The purpose of this chapter is to sketch in broad terms the French emigration, the influx into Britain, some of its demographic aspects and those features of the refugees that influenced their reception and the subsequent administrative response.

## I

The first emigrants left France in the 'Great Fear' of July-August 1789, which followed the fall of the Bastille. Most were members of the

nobility. According to Godechot, they left conspicuously, took funds with them, and expected their absence to be of short duration.<sup>1</sup> Sufficient numbers arrived in London to attract the attention of the press and public, and The Times soon carried reports of their participation in the London social scene.<sup>2</sup> The march of the Parisiennes on Versailles on 5 and 6 October caused further flights from France, including some army officers, higher clergy and members of the Constituent Assembly, although new arrivals in London continued to be mainly noblemen and women.<sup>3</sup> The Duc d'Orléans' visit to England in October 1789 attracted considerable attention in, as well as some hostility from, the press.<sup>4</sup> Orléans joined his fellow-countrymen in enjoying London society.

The attacks on privilege by the National Assembly that followed the popular disturbances were a further incentive to emigration. The abolition of feudal dues, the reorganisation of the civil service and the administration of justice, the nationalisation of Church property, the Declaration of Rights and the erosion of the Royal prerogative, attacked the French 'establishment' on all fronts and foreshadowed enormous social, political and economic change. Moreover, the first great military insurrections, especially that at Nancy in August 1790, initiated a military emigration. Most military emigrants, however, went

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Godechot, The Counter-Revolution: doctrine and action 1789-1804 trans. Salvator Attanasio (Eng. edn, London, 1972), p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> The Times 18, 20, 30 July, 4, 6, 20, 22 Aug. 1789. See also T. Somers Cocks to W. Miles, 25 Aug. 1789, William Augustus Miles, The Correspondence of William Augustus Miles on the French Revolution 1789-1817 ed. Rev. Charles Popham Miles, 2 vols (London, 1890), i, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> The Times 20 Oct. 1789; Godechot, Counter-Revolution, p. 143; E.M. Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 4-7.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, The Times 1 Feb. 1790.

to Piedmont or Savoy, to be close to the French royal Princes at Turin. Few went to England, and even they were counterbalanced by some earlier arrivals returning to France to safeguard their property.<sup>5</sup>

The emigration from France increased in 1791. The military emigration was heavy, with the early émigrés who had congregated around the royal princes putting pressure on those who remained, by propaganda, and accusations of cowardice and self-interest.<sup>6</sup> Insubordination within the army, the newly-instituted practice of electing officers, and a new oath of allegiance which omitted the King's name alienated the officer corps, and by September 1791 two-thirds of it had left the army and France. This situation had its parallel in the navy, which by 1792 had lost half of its officer corps through emigration.<sup>7</sup> Again, few from the armed forces went to England; most joined the Princes' armies now gathering at the frontiers of France.

The flight of the royal aunts in February and more particularly, the flight to Varennes of the King and Queen in June 1791, both stimulated the emigration in general, and made departure more difficult and hazardous. The Assembly responded quickly and severely with the emergency decree of 21 June 1791, which ordered the arrest of all

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<sup>5</sup> M.J. Sydenham, The French Revolution (London, 1965), pp. 54-9; Edmund Burke, The Correspondence of Edmund Burke ed. Alfred Cobban and Robert A. Smith, vol. vi (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 199n, 203n; Godechot, Counter-Revolution, p. 143; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 9-11.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 17; Madame de La Tour du Pin, Memoirs of Madame de La Tour du Pin ed. and trans. Felice Harcourt (Eng. edn, London, 1969), p. 155; Godechot, Counter-Revolution, p. 143.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.; J.W. Fortescue, A History of the British Army 13 vols (London, 1899-1930), iv, pp. 20-4; The New Cambridge Modern History ed. A. Goodwin, vol. viii (Cambridge, 1971), p. 185 (hereafter N.C.M.H.); Sydenham, French Revolution, p. 90.

those caught leaving France or smuggling out money or weapons.<sup>8</sup> The emigration was increasing daily, and Britain received its share of fugitives. In July, Lady Malmesbury<sup>9</sup> entertained M. de Champcenay, the former governor of the Tuileries, who had escaped hours before the decree was enforced. She told her sister, Lady Elliot,<sup>10</sup> that men escaped France in small boats, under fire. There were then eight or ten members of the Breton parliament in Romsey,<sup>11</sup> part of the growing number of office-bearers who had fled France. Further laws of 9 July and 6 August threatened the property of émigrés who failed to return.<sup>12</sup>

After a lull in the autumn, when the political situation stabilised temporarily and the laws against the émigrés were revoked, the militant posture of the émigré groups gathered at the frontiers caused a legislative reaction against them in the newly-formed Legislative Assembly. By the decree of 9 November 1791, the émigré groups were ordered to disperse or return by 1 January 1792 on penalty of death and confiscation of property; and officials abroad were stripped of their posts.<sup>13</sup> On 1 January 1792 exit passports were

<sup>8</sup> Marcel Ragon, La Législation sur les Émigrés 1789-1825 (Paris, 1904), pp. 18-19; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 19.

<sup>9</sup> Born Harriet Mary Amyand. Married James Harris, Baron Malmesbury, later first Earl of Malmesbury: see above, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> Born Anna Maria Amyand. Married Sir Gilbert Elliot, later first Earl of Minto: see above, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Lady Malmesbury to Lady Elliot, 19 July 1791, Countess of Minto (ed.), Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot First Earl of Minto from 1751 to 1806 3 vols (London, 1874), i, p. 389 (hereafter Minto).

<sup>12</sup> Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> Ragon, Législation, pp. 33-4.

made compulsory; on 9 February the estates of émigrés who had failed to return were confiscated; and on 30 March, penalties were imposed on the properties of those who had returned. In response to these measures and to the increasing danger of remaining in France, the emigration reached epidemic proportions, with Brussels, Jersey and the Rhineland as the most popular destinations.<sup>14</sup>

The growing conflict between the state and the Roman Catholic Church in France began to affect the emigration in 1791. Although welcomed by some sections of the Church, the July 1790 Civil Constitution of the Clergy was condemned by many of the bishops. By the decree of 20 November 1790, the clergy were compelled to swear allegiance to the constitution, or lose their benefices. For many, this decision caused a crisis of conscience. Opposition to the oath, and to the interference of the state in Church affairs, was led by the bishops, with Brittany the foremost area of resistance. Papal briefs to the bishops on 10 March and 13 April 1791 condemning the oath and the actions of the French government reinforced this resistance. The majority of the bishops emigrated in 1791.<sup>15</sup> By the law of 29 November 1791 the Legislative Assembly tried to weaken the stand of the refractory clergy by making the oath less obnoxious to conscience, whilst imposing severe penalties for non-compliance: loss of ecclesiastical pensions, possible eviction from residence, and imprisonment if convicted of creating a disturbance. By a further law of 27 May 1792, a priest might be banished if denounced by twenty citizens, or by one citizen in cases where an offence could be proved against the priest.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38; *N.C.M.H.*, viii, p. 697; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 18-23.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-4; *N.C.M.H.*, viii, pp. 688-90; Kathleen Connell, 'Breton refugee clergy', pp. 75-6.

<sup>16</sup> *N.C.M.H.*, viii, pp. 697-8; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 45.



The exodus from France of both clergy and laity increased rapidly early in 1792, until land border crossings in the north and east were made more difficult by the outbreak of war between France and Austria in April.<sup>17</sup> These difficulties diverted some of the flow to Britain. The military emigration had waned, and priests formed an increasing proportion of the fugitives. England and the Channel Islands, especially Jersey, received many provincial nobles and non-juring clergy from western France. The attraction of the Channel as a quick escape route from western France was amply demonstrated in September, when the peak wave of the emigration to Britain was precipitated by events in France.

The attack on the Tuileries on 10 August was the key to the period of chaos and terror which followed. The popular and radical Paris commune had taken the initiative from the Legislative Assembly. Monarchy in any form was ended. The allied army of Austria, Prussia and the French Royalists, led by the Duke of Brunswick, had invaded French territory and was marching towards Paris. The Legislative Assembly in its last days, rent with faction fighting, unable to control the Paris mob, and threatened by Brunswick's armies, passed a series of drastic measures on feudalism, inheritance, émigré property, civil marriage and divorce, and the clergy. The decree most affecting the emigration to Britain was that of 26 August, which forced 'voluntary exile or compulsory deportation' on the non-juring clergy.<sup>18</sup>

The climate of fear in Paris throughout August found expression in the massacres of 2 to 7 September, when over one thousand prisoners

<sup>17</sup> Godechot, Counter-Revolution, pp. 142, 144.

<sup>18</sup> N.C.M.H., viii, p. 706.

from Parisian gaols were slaughtered.<sup>19</sup> In the panic stimulated by the invading armies, the unrest in the provinces and the massacres of August and September in Paris, a mass exodus from France took place, its numbers swelled by the departing clergy.

Britain received a large share of the ecclesiastical emigration. The incidence of non-juring clergy was particularly high in western France, and most of those leaving Brittany, Normandy and Picardy went to Britain. Others from the interior chose to leave through the Channel ports of Rouen, Dieppe and Le Havre, believing that they would get better treatment from officials there than at other control points. Even for those who wanted to go to other destinations, it could be safer to leave quickly through the Atlantic ports and proceed via England to their desired destination, than to travel through France to the appropriate frontier.<sup>20</sup> Customs reports in The Times on 16 and 23 October gave an estimate of nearly four thousand arrivals in England from 30 August to 13 October 1792.<sup>21</sup>

The emigration to Britain slackened during October. Some of the refugees stayed only briefly in England, and departed for the Low Countries and Germany as quickly as possible.<sup>22</sup> In November a new wave of refugees began arriving, mainly at the south-east ports of Dover, Harwich and Yarmouth from Belgium and Holland. On 20 September the French Revolutionary

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<sup>19</sup> Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France 3 vols (3rd edn, Harmondsworth, 1963-70), i, p. 202.

<sup>20</sup> Abbé Baston, Mémoires de L'Abbé Baston Chanoine de Rouen ed. Abbé Julien Loth and Ch. Verger, 3 vols (Paris, 1897-9), ii, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> The estimate seems reasonable, but the figures in the report are unreliable, as the sub-totals do not tally with the total, and some figures are given twice. The estimate does not include refugees in the Channel Islands.

<sup>22</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 13; Bishop of St Pol de Léon to H. Dundas, 19 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 572; Lodge to Miles, 19 Sept. 1792, Miles, Correspondence, i, p. 332.

armies defeated Brunswick's forces at Valmy and forced them to retreat. Émigré families fled before the advancing French armies. As Lord Auckland<sup>23</sup> wrote from The Hague, 'The numerous emigrants and their families have no longer any prospect but that of beggary and despair'.<sup>24</sup>

September had also seen the abolition of the monarchy in France, and the French occupation of Savoy and Nice. In October the French army under Custine crossed the Rhine and occupied Frankfurt. In November France's General Dumouriez defeated the Austrians at Jemappes, and the French armies invaded the Austrian Netherlands and captured Brussels. The French émigrés who had taken up residence there were caught by surprise, and fled in panic. Madame de La Tour du Pin<sup>25</sup> described the scene in her memoirs:

It is difficult to convey an idea of the tumult and panic which then overtook all those poor people in their haste to get away. The whole night was spent packing the few belongings they had with them and at daybreak every available boat, carriage and wagon was hired at an extortionate price to carry them to Liège and Maestricht. The wisest, and those most plentifully supplied with funds, decided to cross to England. 26

The French dislodged from the Austrian Netherlands were joined by a new sort of emigrant to England: officers from the retreating armies of

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<sup>23</sup> William Eden, first Baron Auckland (1744-1814), lawyer, statesman and diplomat. He negotiated the 1786 commercial treaty with France, and was ambassador extraordinary at The Hague 1791-3: D.N.B., vi, pp. 362-4.

<sup>24</sup> Lord Auckland to Sir Morton Eden, 9 Oct. 1792, Lord Auckland, The Journal and Correspondence of William Eden, Lord Auckland ed. Bishop of Bath and Wells, 4 vols (London, 1860-2), ii, p. 453.

<sup>25</sup> Henriette Lucie, Marquise de La Tour du Pin Gouvernet (1770-1853). As a member of the Dillon family, she was related to the Archbishop of Narbonne, Lord Dillon and the Jerninghams: La Tour du Pin, Memoirs.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

the French Princes. On 12 November the customs officer at Dover reported 'that about Four hundred French Emigrants including many Officers from the Princes' Army have arrived at this place from Ostend since the 1st Instant.'<sup>27</sup> The number of arrivals at Harwich increased dramatically: at least seven hundred French passengers from Holland arrived at Harwich between 12 November and 27 December 1792, according to customs estimates.<sup>28</sup> On 29 and 30 December, 353 French passengers, 'all come from the Army of the French Princes; and, in a deplorable situation most of them', arrived at Gravesend from Rotterdam.<sup>29</sup>

The wave of emigration which began in November 1792 is distinguishable from that of August to October on several counts. Prior to November, most refugees came directly from France and landed mainly on the southern coast of England or in the Channel Islands. From November, the refugees can be seen as part of a secondary migration, as most had originally fled to somewhere other than Britain. They left from the Austrian Netherlands and landed mainly on the eastern coast of England from Yarmouth to Dover, with Harwich the most common port of arrival.<sup>30</sup> The composition of the refugee groups changed. Before August 1792 the refugees were mainly non-military nobles and their entourages, lawyers, administrators and politicians, though with a growing number

<sup>27</sup> P. Newport to C. Long, 12 Nov. 1792, H.O.42/22, f. 358.

<sup>28</sup> Reports from W. Crowder, Harwich Customs, 8, 27 Dec. 1792, H.O.42/23, ff. 342, 587.

<sup>29</sup> J. Hume to E. [Nepean?], 1 Jan. 1793, H.O.1/1, unf. Report of A. Sabery, 1 Jan. 1793, enclosed in Hume to [?], 2 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*; J. Lind to Nepean, 29 Dec. 1792, H.O.42/23, f. 594.

<sup>30</sup> These categories omit Dover and Gravesend, which received refugees throughout; Dover received more refugees in the first period, and Gravesend more in the second.

of clergy. The wave of August to October 1792 was predominantly ecclesiastical. The émigrés from the Princes' armies made their first appearance in November, and were the dominant group for several months; they continued to be so up until at least 1797, as they were the most mobile of the refugees, and travelled to and from Britain in response to the fluctuations of the Allied campaigns.<sup>31</sup>

Great Britain received few emigrants directly from France after the end of 1792, but this is not to say that the emigration from France had slackened. According to Donald Greer, fewer French emigrated before 1 January 1793 than after.<sup>32</sup> This is accounted for by a heavy migration of the third estate from eastern France in 1793. Apart from an influx of refugees, some of them returned émigrés, after Fructidor in 1797, the later emigration had little direct effect on Great Britain. Instead, the pattern was one of secondary migration, as the peripatetic soldiers and restless priests or aristocrats passed to or from the Continent, or used England as a staging post for other destinations, particularly the Americas.<sup>33</sup> The success of French arms and diplomacy also reduced the scope of asylums available to the refugees in Europe, as in Bonaparte's Italian campaign of 1796-7, and the expulsion of French emigrants from Berne (1796), Geneva (1798) and Hamburg (1798) at the

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<sup>31</sup>The observations re 1792-3 are based mainly on the customs officers' reports in H.O. 42/22-3 and H.O. 1/1. See Chapter 4 for details of the later emigration.

<sup>32</sup>Donald Greer, The Incidence of the Emigration during the French Revolution (1st pub. 1951; repr. Gloucester, Mass., 1966).

<sup>33</sup>Abbé Lubersac estimates that about 3,600 French clergy left Britain for alternative havens between 1792 and 1802: Abbé de Lubersac, Journal Historique et Religieux de l'Émigration et Déportation du Clergé de France en Angleterre (London, 1802).

behest of the French government.<sup>34</sup> The majority of refugees, whether early or late, settled in England or the Channel Islands, with small colonies or scattered individuals in Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The emigration in the Mediterranean and the West Indies must also be considered, as some of the participants passed into the care of the British government.

## II

No one who has written on the French refugees in Great Britain has yet been able to give a precise breakdown on the chronology, numbers and composition of the emigration there. There are no adequate or reliable statistics available either on total numbers within the kingdom or of numbers on relief. I have incorporated the most available estimates in their chronological and administrative contexts, so that they are scattered through the text of this study. It is possible, however, to make some broad generalisations on the demographic features of the emigration to Great Britain, supported by a few tables reserved for that purpose.

My own estimate is that there was a maximum of 13,000 refugees in Great Britain and Ireland at any one time, but up to twice as many may have set foot there in 1789-1815.<sup>35</sup> I would expect the numbers resident to have been highest about 1798, following Fructidor, and allowing for the disbandment of some of the émigré corps. The latter form one of

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<sup>34</sup>W. Wickham to Lord Grenville, 14 July 1796, William Wickham, The Correspondence of the Right Honorable William Wickham ed. William Wickham, 2 vols (London, 1870), 1, pp. 415-6; The Times 1, 15 March 1798.

<sup>35</sup>I concur with Marjorie Wilkinson's estimate of approximately 12,000 in England and Jersey (see Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. ii-vii), and have allowed for an unknown number, certainly no more than a few hundred, in Ireland.

the least determinable variables, as it is difficult to say how many were in Britain at any one time, and they are not usually included in the estimates available.

Statistics are least adequate during the early years of the emigration. By the end of 1792 there were over four thousand refugees in Jersey: a survey made in October 1792 showed 4,026 emigrants, composed of 2,944 clergy and 1,082 laity,<sup>36</sup> and these figures probably rose in the next two months. At the end of 1792 there were probably four or five thousand in England, of whom about three thousand were clergy.<sup>37</sup> By February 1793 there were thought to be about six thousand refugees in and around London.<sup>38</sup>

These figures are obviously highly speculative, but more accurate ones can be given for refugees receiving relief in Great Britain and Jersey in March 1795, as this is one of the few months for which I have a complete set of figures.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>The survey is discussed in detail on pp. 58-9.

<sup>37</sup>Dr Bellenger gives this estimate for the clergy: Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. v. Dr Walker King of Wilmot's Committee thought there were about 2,000 clergy in England by 17 September 1792 (see below, p. 94). Some 4,000 refugees, predominantly clergy, arrived in August-October (see above, p. 38), and hundreds of soldiers arrived in November 1792 - January 1793 (see below, pp. 114-5). An unknown number of departures have to be offset against these arrivals.

<sup>38</sup>See below, p. 117.

<sup>39</sup>Clergy: Minutes 16 April 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, ff. 111-2; Laity in England: T.93/29, p. 34; Laity in Jersey: H.O. 69/39, ff. 6, 8, 50-4.

Clergy :

London	1825	
Country	535	
Winchester	698	
Jersey	<u>1667</u>	3705

Laity:

## Great Britain -

Men	585	
Women	475	
Children	334	
Servants	<u>377</u>	1851

## Jersey -

Women, Old and Sick	268	
Children and Servants	<u>431</u>	<u>699</u>
		2550

Total in Great Britain and Jersey: 6255

This also gives figures of 3,899 refugees on relief in Great Britain, and 2,356 in Jersey.

There are no figures available on numbers not on relief in March 1795, but on 9 March 1797 The Times published Alien Office estimates of the numbers of refugees in the kingdom; these give a better idea of the proportion than on relief:

French Clergy, supported by Government	5000
Lay-People ditto, including women and children	2950
Clergy, with means or income, about	500
Emigrants not supported by Government	3000
Jersey	<u>700</u>
	12150

These figures should be viewed with caution, however, as they are obviously rough estimates. Three years later, a 'Return of the number of French Emigrants residing in Great Britain made from the



Registers of the Alien Office 28th of February 1800' showed 5,621 clergy and 4,153 laity then resident<sup>40</sup> - a less specific but probably more accurate estimate than that of 1797.

### III

Refugee settlement in the British Isles was concentrated in London and the Home Counties, and in Jersey. The main path of the emigration was from the northern and western provinces of France through the Channel Islands and the south-eastern ports of England to London; many refugees settled en route, but few went far beyond London without some specific motivation, such as the refugee colony organised in Winchester<sup>41</sup> or the forced resettlement in northern England of six hundred clergy evacuated from Jersey in 1796.<sup>42</sup>

This pattern of settlement is evident in a survey by Wilmot's Committee of French clergy in want of relief on 1 November 1795:<sup>43</sup>

In Jersey	1860
London	1719
King's House, Winchester	635
Town of Winchester	168
Guildford - Surrey	62
Farnham - Surrey	78
Lewes - Sussex	18
Dover - Kent	52
Canterbury - Kent	17
Lenham - Kent	7
Tunbridge Wells - Kent	13
Exeter - Devonshire	43
Liverpool - Lancaster	14
Nuns French	88
Nuns English	380
	<hr/>
	5154

<sup>40</sup>Quoted by Dr John Douglass, Vicar Apostolic of London: Entry 21 March 1800, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary 2 vols, ii, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup>See below, pp. 210 et seq.

<sup>42</sup>See below, pp. 135-7.

<sup>43</sup>Minutes 5 Nov. 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, ff. 129-30. I have rearranged the order of the list. The English and French nuns probably include the Montargis nuns at Bodney Hall: see below, p. 46.

Refugees receiving relief tended to congregate in areas where they had ready access to one of the distributors of the dole. There were similar clusters in northern England following the evacuation of Jersey.

This study deals principally with refugees settled in the above areas, and those on relief, so I shall discuss them no further here, but describe those who scattered to northern England, Scotland, Wales or Ireland. Their main motive for dispersing was better means of support there: family connections, patrons or private employment; hence they do not figure prominently in this study.

Teaching was the most common form of employment, whether in institutions or privately. The clergy were active in this field, as some of them had taught in France.<sup>44</sup> They were fortunate in that the Catholic Relief Act of 1791 had legalised Catholic education in Great Britain.<sup>45</sup> Two of the better known schools set up primarily by the French refugees were Stonyhurst in Lancashire and the school at Bodney Hall in Norfolk, set up by the community of Benedictine nuns from Montargis. The latter shifted several times before settling in Princethorpe in 1833.<sup>46</sup>

The only detailed regional study on the settlement of the refugees outside southern England and Jersey is one on Scotland by James McGloin. He gives brief biographical notes on thirty-nine French refugees living in Edinburgh, Leith and Musselburgh.<sup>47</sup> Of these, twenty-four were

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<sup>44</sup>W.J. Battersby, 'The educational work of the French refugees: a contribution to the history of education in England', Dublin Review, ccxxiii, no. 446, 1949, p. 106.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>47</sup>James McGloin, 'Some refugee French clerics and laymen in Scotland, 1789-1814', Innes Review, xvi, no. 1, 1965, pp. 27-55.

teachers of some kind, although six of them were teaching outside the period of my study. Most of the other refugees discussed in more detail were also involved in education.<sup>48</sup> While most taught privately, some taught in establishments such as the Ayr Academy, the Banff Academy and the Perth Academy,<sup>49</sup> and in 1794 Pierre Vitrouil de la Grandière was appointed to teach French at St Andrews University.<sup>50</sup> Several Frenchmen were attracted to Scotland by the opportunity to study medicine there,<sup>51</sup> which suggests that they had patrons or private means. A further small group of Royalists came to Edinburgh in the wake of the Comte d'Artois,<sup>52</sup> who took up residence in Holyrood Palace in 1796.<sup>53</sup> In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it seems likely that refugee settlement in Wales and northern England followed the same pattern of dispersal according to specific opportunity.

Refugee settlement in Ireland probably followed a similar pattern. Means of support was probably even more important than in Great Britain, for the French in Ireland fell outside the scope of the British relief organisations, and there seems to have been no comparable relief

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<sup>48</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 31, 35-6, 39.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 44-5.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>52</sup> Charles Philippe de Bourbon, Comte d'Artois (1757-1836), youngest brother of Louis XVI; succeeded his brother Louis XVIII as Charles X in 1824. Artois emigrated immediately after the fall of the Bastille and remained an intransigent opponent of the Revolution. The Revolution of 1830 cost him his throne, and he returned to Holyrood Palace for a second exile: M.J. Sydenham, The First French Republic 1792-1804 (London, 1974), p. 323.

<sup>53</sup> McGloin, 'Refugee French... in Scotland', p. 28. For an account of Artois' circle in Edinburgh see Weiner, French Exiles, pp. 131-4. See also A. Francis Stuart, The Exiled Bourbons in Scotland: an account of their residence at Holyrood during their two emigrations (Edinburgh, 1908).

programme in Ireland.<sup>54</sup> Numbers are very difficult to ascertain. Dr Bellenger quotes Abbé Gregoire's estimate of three hundred French clergy in Ireland and two hundred in Scotland.<sup>55</sup> The latter estimate seems rather inflated in the light of McGloin's study, and the Irish case may be similar. One obvious attraction of Ireland was its prevailing Catholicism, and the clergy in particular were assured of a greater welcome there than in Great Britain. Another was the familial links between the French and the Irish, given that intending Irish clergy had to train in France, and that Irish Catholic soldiers, whose religion barred them from serving in the British Army, frequently sought employment in the French Army, particularly in the famous Irish Brigade. Henri Forneron believed that many of the émigrés in Ireland were descendants of the Jacobite Irish families, known as the 'Wild Geese', who had migrated to France in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>56</sup>

This brings us to another problem: how many of the émigrés in Ireland were actually Irish, normally resident in France, returning home? Some were undoubtedly Irish priests and seminarians who had been forced to leave France.<sup>57</sup> Others were former members of the Irish

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<sup>54</sup>The fact that Wilmot's Committee received over £400 from a subscription in Dublin (probably the one organised by the Lord Mayor: see London Chronicle 18-20 October 1792), suggests that there were then few French clergy in Ireland in need of relief, nor any comparable organisation there to attract the funds raised: see below, p. 194.

<sup>55</sup>Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. vii.

<sup>56</sup>Henri Forneron, Histoire Générale des Émigrés pendant la Revolution Francaise 3 vols (Paris, 1884) pp. 62-3. For an account of the 'Wild Geesé' elsewhere, especially Spain, see Micheline Walsh, 'Further Notes towards a History of the Womenfolk of the Wild Geese', Irish Sword, v, no. 20, Summer 1962, pp. 133-45.

<sup>57</sup>W. Benjamin Kennedy, 'Catholics in Ireland and the French Revolution', Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, lxxxv, no. 3/4, 1974, p. 223.

Brigade. On Christmas Day 1792 Daniel O'Connell<sup>58</sup> wrote from London that 'All the unfortunate young men of that Corps are daily coming over here destitute of everything, and have no resource left but going to live with their friends in Ireland'.<sup>59</sup>

O'Connell was instrumental in persuading the British government to relax the prohibition under the Penal Laws against Irish Catholics serving in the British army.<sup>60</sup> The Home Secretary, Portland, saw the raising of an Irish Brigade as a way 'to make provision for the families of the Roman Catholic persuasion, which would not have been liable to any exception on the part of the old Protestant interest'.<sup>61</sup> Six regiments were commissioned in 1795. The first three were to be commanded respectively by the Duc de Fitz-James,<sup>62</sup> the Comte de

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<sup>58</sup> Comte Daniel O'Connell (1745?-1833) of Darrynane, County Kerry. He entered the French Army in 1760, and rose to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the Régiment Royal-Suédois in the American War of Independence, then became Colonel of the Régiment Salm-Salm. He emigrated in 1792, and in 1794 was appointed Colonel of one of the regiments of the Irish Brigade raised by the British in 1795. See John L. Garland, 'The "Wild Geese" return', British History Illustrated, ii, no. 1, 1975, p. 7; D.N.B., xiv, pp. 815-6.

<sup>59</sup> D. O'Connell to [M. O'Connell], 25 December 1792, O'Connell, Last Colonel, ii, p. 111.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>61</sup> Duke of Portland to Lord Pelham, 9 Aug. 1797, quoted in ibid., pp. 180-1.

<sup>62</sup> Jacques-Charles, Duc de Fitz-James (1743-1805), appointed maréchal de camp 1 March 1780 and Colonel Proprietor of the Régiment de Berwick (a regiment of the Irish Brigade in France, first formed by his ancestor the Duke of Berwick, illegitimate son of James II: Garland, 'Wild Geese', p. 7) on 9 May 1784. He emigrated in July 1791 at the head of 300 men from his regiment, and fought in the Army of the Princes in 1792. In 1794 the British government invited him to bring the remnants of his regiment to Great Britain, and commissioned him as colonel on 1 October 1794: Jean Pinasseau, L'Emigration Militaire: campagne de 1792: Armée Royale 2 vols (Paris, 1957 and 1964), ii, p. 49.

Walsh-Serrant<sup>63</sup> and Colonel Dillon.<sup>64</sup> These regiments were based on the former regiments of Berwick, Walsh and Dillon in the Irish Brigade in the French army, and the colonels were all descendants of Irish Jacobites. The other three regiments were to be commanded by Irish-born officers from the French Army: Comte O'Connell; Thomas, Comte Conway; and his younger brother James Henry, Vicomte Conway. The 5th Regiment was later commanded by Charles, Vicomte de Walsh-Serrant (1746-1820), younger brother of the Comte de Walsh-Serrant.<sup>65</sup> Most officers of the regiments were French or Irish who had served France, while the men were to be recruited in Ireland.<sup>66</sup> Recruiting was slow, so the regiments saw no active service until 1796. In March 1796 the 3rd (Dillon) and 5th (Conway/Walsh) Regiments embarked for Gibraltar and the West Indies, where the 3rd saw active service in St Domingo. The 5th was stationed first in Jamaica, then Nova Scotia. In September 1796 the 2nd Regiment (Walsh) was made up to strength from the three remaining regiments and sent to the West Indies, where it

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<sup>63</sup> Antoine-Joseph-Philippe, Comte de Walsh-Serrant (1744-1817), appointed Colonel of the Régiment de Walsh irlandais on 14 May 1776; promoted *maréchal de camp* on 1 January 1784. He emigrated in 1791 with the officers and 300 men of his regiment. The British appointed him Colonel of a regiment in the Irish Brigade on 1 October 1794, and he served until it was disbanded in 1798: *ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>64</sup> It is not clear whether the Colonel was Comte Edouard Dillon (1750-1839) or his younger brother the Hon. Henry Dillon. O'Connell, Last Colonel nominates the latter on p. 142, but the former on pp. 194-5, which also describes Henry Dillon as Colonel of the 2nd battalion of the Régiment de Dillon in St Domingo, where it surrendered to the British in September 1793 and was recruited into the British Army in October 1794. Garland, 'Wild Geese', p. 7 gives Henry Dillon as the Colonel of the 3rd (Dillon) Regiment, but Pinasseau, Emigration Militaire ii, p. 18 ascribes the honour to Comte Edouard Dillon.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245; Garland, 'Wild Geese', p. 7.

<sup>66</sup> A list of the members of the Irish Brigade in 1797 is given in O'Connell, Last Colonel, pp. 185-92.

served in Martinique, St Domingo and Jamaica. The 6th (Conway) Regiment served briefly in Nova Scotia. The 1st (Berwick) and 4th (O'Connell) Regiments did not serve overseas, and appear to have been disbanded on half-pay. Despite their poverty, they probably had the better of it, as many in the other regiments succumbed to typhus or tropical fevers.<sup>67</sup> Most of the Irish Brigade was disbanded in 1797-8.<sup>68</sup>

Their raising represented a relaxation of the prohibition against Irish Catholics serving in the British Army, but the British government ensured that they never served in a European theatre.

Just as the military emigration brought Irish Catholics back into the British service, the ecclesiastical emigration brought vocational training for the priesthood back into Ireland. The breakup of the seminaries in France deprived the Irish of a major source of training. In 1795 the Irish parliament passed 'An Act for the better Education of Persons professing the Popish, or Roman Catholic religion'.<sup>69</sup> This provided for the foundation, administration and funding of Maynooth College. Dr Bellenger describes the foundation staff at Maynooth as 'predominantly French'.<sup>70</sup> This description appears to apply to two French ecclesiastics. Peter Justin Delort, formerly a professor at Bordeaux, came from London in 1795 to take up the chair of Natural and Experimental Philosophy, and returned to France in 1801. Andrew Darré, formerly Professor of Philosophy at Toulouse, was

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<sup>67</sup>In February 1797 the 5th Regiment had six officers and sixty-three men fit from an 'establishment' of thirty-five officers and five hundred men: Garland, 'Wild Geese', pp. 7-8.

<sup>68</sup>For details on the raising and service of the Irish Brigade see *ibid.*, pp. 6-10; O'Connell, Last Colonel, pp. 113, 141-3, 180-92, 194-201.

<sup>69</sup>35 George III, cap. XXI, Ireland, Statutes at Large, xvii.

<sup>70</sup>Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. 111.

appointed Professor of Logic, Metaphysics and Ethics in June 1795, took up his appointment in May 1797 and returned to France in 1813. Two subsequent émigré appointees who had considerable influence on Maynooth were Lewis Giles Delahogue, formerly a professor at the Sorbonne, who was Professor of Moral Theology 1798-1801 and of Dogmatic Theology 1801-20; and Francis Anglade, formerly Professor of Divinity in Paris, who was appointed Professor of Logic in 1802. An Irishman, Maurice Ahearne, formerly Professor of Philosophy in Paris, was Professor of Dogmatic Theology 1795-1801. A further émigré appointment beyond the period of this study was Francis Eloy (or Elloy), who was Professor of Ecclesiastical History 1808-9, before moving to Downside College.<sup>71</sup> As most of these men came from England to take up their appointment, they conformed to the Scottish pattern of being drawn from more popular areas of settlement by particular circumstances. What did differ was the nature of Maynooth, as a government-funded institution for the training of priests. Its establishment enabled the government to attract teachers of high calibre to Ireland, while also providing means of support for a handful of émigré clergy.

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<sup>71</sup>Details re the French clergy at Maynooth are based on *ibid.*, pp. 111-2; J. Healy, Maynooth College: its centenary history (Dublin, 1895), pp. 708-14; and information kindly supplied by Professor Patrick J. Corish of St Patrick's College, Maynooth.



## IV

The Channel Islands of Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney received nearly as many French refugees in 1791-2 as did the United Kingdom. Almost all of them went to Jersey, which lies within sight of the French coast. It is only forty-five square miles in area, and had a small population, estimated at 28,600 in 1821. The flow of refugees brought special problems in its wake, because of Jersey's peculiar status and situation.

Jersey, like other British-held islands in the Channel Islands, is a British Crown dependency. As such, it has a special legal and administrative relationship with Westminster, some elements of which date back to the eleventh century, when it was joined to the English Crown, as a territory under the dominion of William of Normandy. From that time until the late nineteenth century, its proximity to France in geographic and cultural terms made it important strategically to both countries. Although a centre for English espionage activities, it stayed free of Anglo-French military strife for several centuries, until the French launched attacks on it in 1779 and 1781, during the American War of Independence. The brief success of the 1781 invasion made the British government and the islanders fearful of a further attempt during the period of the French emigration.

In the late eighteenth century, Jersey's economy was based on cider, the manufacture of stockings and waistcoats, farming and fishing. The island was not self-sufficient in food all year round, and the difficulties of the winter months were compounded by the return from Newfoundland of the island's fishing fleet, which added up to three thousand men to the summer population. France was of dual importance to

its economy, as a market for manufactures<sup>72</sup> and a source of food supplies. During winter, bad weather could impede shipping from English ports, and communications might be interrupted for several weeks at a time. Jersey's population was militantly Protestant, and the nonconformist churches were an active force on the island; Roman Catholics were legally forbidden to settle there. The anti-papism was probably an attempt to offset its continuing links with French language and culture.<sup>73</sup>

At the onset of the emigration, the island's special relationship with the British Crown, its strategic importance and its geographic separation from England, affected the position of its administrators. In 1791 the non-resident governor was General Henry Seymour Conway, and the resident lieutenant-governor, Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Fall, a native of Jersey.<sup>74</sup> The lieutenant-governor of Jersey served as the Crown's personal representative on the island, in both a civil and a military capacity, but without voting powers in the States of Jersey, the island's legislative body. The States were presided over by the Bailiff, a Crown nominee, who had no voting rights, but held the power of veto. Legislation passed at Westminster did not apply in the Channel Islands, unless the latter were specifically mentioned in it.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> P. Fall to Nepean, 5 Sept. 1787, P.R.O.30/8/134, f. 24.

<sup>73</sup> Fall to Grenville, 27 May 1791, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>74</sup> 'Liste des Gouverneurs, Lieut.-Gouverneurs et Deputés-Gouverneurs de l'Isle de Jersey 1749-1850', Société Jersiaise Bulletins, v, 1902-5, pp. 8-26; G.R. Balleine, A Biographical Dictionary of Jersey (London, 1948), pp. 269-71.

<sup>75</sup> For the general information on Jersey and the Channel Islands see: Encyclopaedia Britannica (1969 edn), ii, pp. 271-2, xii, pp. 1005-06'; F. de L. Bois, A Constitutional History of Jersey (Jersey, 1970), pp. 14-21; Connell, 'Breton refugee clergy', pp. 100-05.

There had been little emigration to Jersey during the initial stages of the French Revolution. It held few attractions for refugees from the court and capital, or the armed forces. However, the civil disturbances in France's western provinces and the mounting persecution of the non-juring clergy made speed of escape more imperative, and refugees flocked in during 1791. The first mention of the French refugees in official despatches from Jersey was made on 20 May 1791, when Lieutenant-Governor Fall estimated that over four hundred were on the island, with more expected.<sup>76</sup> A week later, he announced that many more had arrived, including a number of priests, 'who exercise the Roman Catholic religion here, & assemble for that purpose numerous congregations, under the plea of having that right by the Treaty of Commerce.'<sup>77</sup> Fall stated that the island was by tradition exclusively Protestant and asked for guidance on the actual effect of the Treaty on the island's ancient laws forbidding the practice of Catholicism. His fears of a probable rise in the price of provisions, with consequent complaints from the islanders, was but the first expression of what was to be a continuing theme in despatches from Jersey.<sup>78</sup>

In November 1791 a new problem arose when a Frenchman, resident in Jersey for some years, applied to the States to be naturalised. Fall claimed to have information that many of the French nobility intended to apply for naturalisation, in order to be able to purchase property in Jersey.

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<sup>76</sup>Fall to Grenville, 20 May 1791, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>77</sup>Fall to Grenville, 27 May 1791, *ibid.* The Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce and Navigation was signed at Versailles on 26 September 1786. Article V gave reciprocal rights for the free practice of religion in private. See Annual Register, xxviii, State Papers, p. 269.

<sup>78</sup>Fall to Grenville, 27 May 1791, H.O.98/2, unf.

He opposed this on the two heads that their ties with France might induce them to curry favour with their homeland by putting the island in its hands, and that having Frenchmen of influence in the community might weaken the attachment of the islanders to the British government. The French refugees were thereby presented to the ministry as a security problem at an early stage of the emigration. The Home Secretary, Henry Dundas, was unable to give Fall a legal ruling on naturalisation by the States, but told him to discourage such applications pending further instructions.<sup>79</sup> Another incident involving the security of Jersey occurred in March 1792, when Calonne,<sup>80</sup> then minister to the émigré court at Coblenz, ordered six thousand stand of arms from an English firm, to be delivered to Jersey. Dundas had heard nothing of the affair until informed by Fall, and forbade the latter either to receive them, or to act as agent in the business.<sup>81</sup>

Early in September 1792, Fall discovered that a depot of arms and ammunition had been formed on the island by French emigrants there. This would be a serious breach of neutrality, as 'British vessels were to be employed in conveying these Arms and Ammunition to France, and in landing emigrants there fo hostile purposes'.<sup>82</sup> Two additional problems were

<sup>79</sup> Fall to Dundas, 24 November 1791, H.O.98/2, unf. Dundas to Fall, 28 December 1791, *ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734-1802), former controller-general of French finances (1783-7): Chambers Biographical Dictionary 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1975), pp. 214-5.

<sup>81</sup> Dundas to Fall, 28 Mar. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>82</sup> Fall to Dundas, 8 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*

the alarm which the discovery had caused the islanders, who thought that the weapons might be turned against them, and the possible reprisals which might be taken against islanders on French territory, if the scheme came to fruition.<sup>83</sup> Fall lodged the arms in Elizabeth Castle, pending further instructions, and sent for the Comte de Botherel,<sup>84</sup> an agent of the French Princes, who had planned the enterprise, but Botherel had left.<sup>85</sup>

Dundas chose to attribute the reports of alarm amongst the inhabitants to fear of a scarcity of provisions. There had been a flood of recent arrivals, chiefly ecclesiastics, from Brittany and Normandy. He got in touch with Wilmot's Committee, a London charity which had been set up to provide relief for refugee clergy.<sup>86</sup> It agreed to provide subsistence for those in need, and to enable those who so desired to cross to England and occupy temporary accommodation at Winchester.<sup>87</sup> The government would take no part in either their removal or their supply.<sup>88</sup> Dundas asked Fall to make up a return of the numbers of refugees on the island.<sup>89</sup> By this time, Fall had already consulted the States on the means to prevent the shortages expected to result from the presence of an estimated five thousand refugees on the island. They had decided that no

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> René-Jean, Comte de Botherel (1745-1805). Served in the French army, then as 'procureur-syndic des États de Bretagne'. In 1788 he protested against the suppression of the Breton parlement, and resisted the court. During his exile in Britain, he was heavily involved with the insurrections in western France. Dictionnaire de Biographie Française, vi, p. 1159, (hereafter D.B.F.).

<sup>85</sup> Fall to Dundas, 8, 26 Sept. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>87</sup> See below, p. 217.

<sup>88</sup> Dundas to Fall, 26 Sept. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

actual shortage of corn yet existed but that if the refugees remained, an augmentation of the allowance of supplies from England would be needed in case of emergency.<sup>90</sup> The French decree cutting supplies to the island, and the expected return of a thousand fishermen from Newfoundland for the winter, made the removal of some of the French clergy desirable 'both for the Island, & on account of their truly distressed situation'.<sup>91</sup>

Fall maintained that the States were more worried about the arms than the prices.<sup>92</sup> He had anticipated Dundas' request for a list of the refugees, by directing the police officers in the various parishes to collect their names and number.<sup>93</sup> The results were sent to Dundas on 24 October,<sup>94</sup> and a breakdown gives an idea of the composition of the 4,026 emigrants listed. There were 2,944 clergy from thirty-one dioceses, most of them in Normandy and Brittany. There were more than a hundred refugees from each of the following dioceses:

Coutances	(Normandy) ....	508
Bayeux	( " ) ....	403
Mans	(Maine) ....	327
Avranches	(Normandy) ....	306
Rennes	(Brittany) ....	244
St Brieuc	( " ) ....	192
St Malo	( " ) ....	190
Tréguier	( " ) ....	146
Dol	( " ) ....	120

<sup>90</sup> Fall to Dundas, 26 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Fall to Dundas, 2 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Enclosure in Fall to Dundas, 24 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*

The lay refugees were listed in occupation groups as follows:

Nobles	(Men	174	
	(Women	296	
	(Children	170	640
Merchants	(Men	10	
	(Women	11	21
Bourgeois and Workers	(Men	74	
	(Women	22	96
Servants	(Men	166	
	(Women	159	325
			<u>1,082</u>

A further breakdown shows that there were 424 laymen, 488 women and 170 children. The composition of the refugees suggests two important points: they were unlikely to be a military danger to the security of the island, and many would find it difficult to earn a living in a place such as Jersey. The ecclesiastics formed by far the largest group. While there might be some trouble over their attachment to the Roman Catholic religion, on the whole, they were not likely to endanger security by bearing arms against the islanders, nor to favour Republican France. Against this, opportunities for employment for men of their calling were severely curtailed in an island forty-five square miles in area, with a small population. Teaching posts were limited, there were no local Catholics to support them for religious offices, and they were unlikely to join the fishing fleets. Among the nobility, women and children outnumbered the men two to one, and they had few marketable skills. Few of the noblemen were able-bodied, as most men of their class in that category had joined the armies of the Princes. A community such as Jersey could not absorb 325 servants. Once the families whom they had accompanied into exile ran out of funds, their outlook would be bleak. Despite the fuss over the arms cache, it is difficult to imagine these refugees as posing a real threat to a community which was not yet at war.

By December, however, new arrivals on the island were coming mainly from the army of the French Princes, and Fall reported uneasiness among the islanders at the considerable increase in the number of emigrants. The population had also been swollen by the return of nearly two thousand Newfoundland fishermen. Provisions were scarce, and food prices had risen. Fall continued:

I therefore am apprehensive of discontents, the more so, as strange as it may appear, the Inhabitants have taken it into their head, that the Emigrés will deliver this Island into the hands of the French nation, to make their peace with them, & thereby recover their Estates; it is therefore a desirable object, [that] they were, if possible, removed from this Frontier place.<sup>95</sup>

Meanwhile, Dundas was reflecting the current ministerial preoccupation with seditious utterances. The Comte de Botherel had claimed that French propagandists had been disseminating their 'pernicious principles' in Jersey. Should 'any treasonable or seditious expressions' be uttered, Dundas wanted speedy action taken against the culprits. Fall was surprised at Botherel's allegations, and inclined to see them as an attack on his conduct in office. He called them 'an absolute falsehood', and pointed out that there was more cause for alarm in the recent rough treatment accorded by ardent French Royalists to French traders visiting the island. He thought that Botherel was unduly fearful of any Frenchmen unknown to him, and antagonistic towards Fall because of his confiscation of the arms cache.<sup>96</sup> He soon had further cause to construe Botherel's actions as a personal affront. A body of French emigrants on Jersey

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<sup>95</sup> Fall to Dundas, 23 Dec. 1792, ibid.  
20 Dec. 1792, ibid.

See also Fall to Dundas,

<sup>96</sup> J.T. Stanley to [Dundas], 11 Dec. 1792, ibid. Dundas to Fall, 14 Dec. 1792, ibid. Fall to Dundas, 28 Dec. 1792, ibid.



had formed themselves into a council known as the Conseil des Doyens, and to this body Botherel sent an account of his actions, stating in it that Fall did not have the confidence of the government, and was likely to be recalled at any time. This information was circulated on the island by the council.<sup>97</sup> Naturally, Fall was furious. He was a man quick to take offence, and he considered that he had done much for the refugees in Jersey. Relations between him and the emigrants, particularly Botherel, were already strained. Fall had termed extravagant Botherel's proposal 'that a Committee of Frenchmen should be authorised to assist the Government here for the public security', and he found the refugees in general difficult to deal with. He told Dundas that they were

uneasy, fretful, believing the most absurd reports, very indiscreet in their expressions, and frequently in their actions, and I do assure you, I have a very irksome and disagreeable task with them.<sup>98</sup>

Fall exemplified the ambivalent view of the refugees taken by several other Britons who had to deal with them: he was sympathetic to their misery, conscientious in duty towards them, but exasperated by their intransigence and refusal to accept reality.

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<sup>97</sup> Fall to Dundas, 31 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Fall to Dundas, 28 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*

There are no precise figures from Great Britain to complement the Jersey ones, but the general composition of the refugee population in both places is clear enough. Three major categories can be distinguished: clergy, aristocratic households and the military. The Jersey survey records very few bourgeois or artisans, and there are few references to any on the mainland. The refugees in Britain and Jersey were primarily from the first and second estates of France, members of a dispossessed establishment. This gave them the advantage of arousing the sympathy of their counterparts in the British establishment, who feared the radical challenge to their own privileged position, but their former position also meant that they had few marketable skills and little experience of poverty. The lower orders of the clergy probably had the least adjustment to make to a low standard of living.

The military émigrés do not play a direct part in this study, for they were controlled by the military authorities, and had some means of support. They did have an indirect impact, however, as the Alien Act took account of their presence, and the vagaries of military employment and the disabilities arising from them correspondingly put pressure on the relief organisations. Able-bodied men not serving in the émigré regiments were ineligible for relief, so the dole to their families might have to stretch to accommodate them.

The military émigrés included the most intransigent opponents of the Revolution, and hence those least able to cope with their changed circumstances, and most liable to remain in exile until the Restoration of the Bourbon Monarchy. They fought the Republicans to regain their former position in France, blinding themselves to the

changed social attitudes in France that made a return to the past impossible.<sup>99</sup> The British government was ambivalent towards them, enlisting (or coercing) them to fight against the Republican armies, but treating them as mercenaries rather than allies. In 1793 Edmund Burke protested that 'we carefully avoid the appearance of being of a party with them',<sup>100</sup> while treating and exchanging prisoners of war with the Republicans. Burke was concerned that

we take the Royalists of France only as an instrument of some convenience in a temporary hostility with the Jacobins, but that we regard these atheistic and murderous barbarians as the bonâ fide possessors of the soil of France.<sup>101</sup>

By implication, émigré action against the French Republic was treason.<sup>102</sup> The British government solved two problems by enlisting the émigrés - it gained scarce recruits, and it provided a means of support for them and their families. On the other hand, it also ensured that their exile would be protracted.

The French clergy were the predominant group in exile in Britain. In his study of the exiled clergy in England, Dr Bellenger puts the mean figure of French clergy on the mainland at some 5000, with 4,008 on relief in 1793, rising to 5,621 in 1800.<sup>103</sup> Brittany and Normandy were the main provinces of origin, especially in the case of the refugees in Jersey, as might be expected.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Harvey Mitchell, 'Resistance to the Revolution in western France', Past and Present, lxxiii, 1974, p. 117.

<sup>100</sup> 'Remarks on the policy of the Allies with respect to France' [begun in October 1793], in Edmund Burke, The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke 12 vols (London, 1887), iv, p. 408.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 409.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 409-10.

<sup>103</sup> Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. v.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. ix. Also, see above, p. 58.

Britain received a high proportion of the higher clergy.

F.-X. Plasse includes six archbishops and twenty-eight bishops in his table of 'Des ecclésiastiques réfugié en Angleterre les plus connus, groupés dans leurs diocèses respectifs'.<sup>105</sup> Most of them emigrated, whether to Britain or elsewhere, before the general deportation order of 26 August 1792. Their early departure destroyed their influence in France, despite their attempts to exert episcopal authority from their places of exile.<sup>106</sup> Most of them were true 'émigrés' in that they chose exile rather than tolerate a detested régime. Fifteen of them stayed in England after the Concordat of 1801, in defiance of Papal authority, because they refused to compromise with the Republic.<sup>107</sup>

The lower clergy were a more mixed group; some of them had consciously chosen exile, but the majority were deported as non-jurors in 1792. The high numbers of clergy on relief reflected their general lack of means of support, and perhaps also a preference on the part of the British government for keeping them within the cognisance of the relief organisations. They maintained some of their ecclesiastical structure and discipline in exile, and for the most part refrained from activities likely to upset the equilibrium of the Anglican establishment. Instead, they turned inward; Dr Bellenger sees the clergy's exile as bringing a purification

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<sup>105</sup> Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, pp. 407-43. He lists the Archbishops of Bourges, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Narbonne, Aix and Reims, and the Bishops of Bayeux, Avranches, Séez, Coutances, Nantes, Vannes [St Pol de] Léon, Tréguier, Dol, Blois, Limoges, Angoulême, Périgueux, Condom, Comminges, Lescar, Lombez, Rodez, Montpellier, Uzès, Saint-Pons, Sisteron, Toulon, Digne, Dijon, Troyes, Noyon and Arras.

<sup>106</sup> John McManners, The French Revolution and the Church (1st pub. 1969; New York, 1970).

<sup>107</sup> See below, p. 367.

of religious belief, in which 'bishop and curate alike rediscovered something of the simplicity of their message and lost much of their pomp'.<sup>108</sup>

The last major grouping were the aristocratic households, composed of aristocratic families and their servants. The diversity of its members in skills, background and circumstances made them the most difficult group administratively, especially as the British attempted to discriminate between them on the basis of status, age and sex. They ranged from grands seigneurs to petty provincial nobility. Female and aged or infirm male aristocrats were best assured of support; able-bodied men were ineligible, and the standing of children and female servants varied according to time and circumstance. Members of this grouping were the least equipped to cope with an impoverished exile, and most British administrators found them difficult to deal with. On the other hand, their literacy, administrative and political skills, and social contacts enabled them to win more practical assistance from the British than might otherwise have been the case.

Finally, special mention should be made of the servants, the 'forgotten' people of the emigration. Although not of the first estate, they were largely dependent on it, and they emigrated with their masters for reasons of attachment, panic, or fear for the future in France. There are few statistics on them, but the figure of 325 in Jersey in October 1792<sup>109</sup> suggests that at least five hundred, and probably twice that number, emigrated to Britain. One can only speculate on the role they played in assisting households to survive in exile. But their inclusion on the relief lists despite the reluctance of the

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<sup>108</sup> Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. 227.

<sup>109</sup> See above, p. 59.

British to support them, and the circumstances of some of the specific cases dealt with by the British, suggest that British and French alike recognised their importance.

## VI

British involvement with French refugees in the Mediterranean region flowed from the Anglo-Spanish occupation of Toulon in August-December 1793. In that year the French Convention faced regional revolts in the Vendée, Lyons and the south-east, centred on Marseilles and Toulon. When the Republicans recaptured and wreaked vengeance on Marseilles, the citizens of Toulon consented to the entry of British, Spanish and Neapolitan forces into the city as a bulwark against the Republicans. This enabled the British to capture or disable the French Mediterranean fleet based there, and thus secure naval supremacy in the region. Even supported by foreign forces, the Toulonese were unable to hold the city against the Republican army, led by Napoleon Bonaparte. On 19 December 1793 up to twelve thousand panic-stricken evacuees left on British and Spanish naval vessels, and on those French ships not sunk by the departing British.<sup>110</sup> The Neapolitans took some evacuees to Naples where the King provided them with some assistance, while the Spanish fleet disembarked their load of evacuees in Minorca and Carthage; the Archbishop of Murcia organised relief measures there.<sup>111</sup> The British evacuated some four thousand Toulonese,<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Godechot, Counter-Revolution, pp. 244-5; Greer, Incidence of the Emigration, p. 55; E. Coulet, Les Fugitifs de Toulon et les Anglais dans la Méditerranée après la Rébellion de 1793 (Société d'Études Scientifiques et Archéologiques de Draguignan, Mémoires XXV, Toulon, 1929), pp. 18-19. For a detailed account of the British occupation and evacuation of Toulon, see J. Holland Rose, Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon (Cambridge, 1922).

<sup>111</sup> Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, pp. 21-2.

<sup>112</sup> See below, p. 298.

and disembarked them in Leghorn, and Porto Ferrajo on the Island of Elba, with the reluctant consent of the King of Tuscany.<sup>113</sup> The British occupied Corsica in June 1794, and resettled a number of the Toulonese there; but when they abandoned Corsica in August 1796, the British evacuated about seventy Corsicans as well as the several hundred remaining Toulonese.<sup>114</sup> Most of them were resettled in Italy.<sup>115</sup>

The refugees from Toulon can be divided into two distinct groups, to whom E. Coulet has applied the terms 'émigrés' and 'fugitifs'.<sup>116</sup> The 'émigrés' were a small group with strong Royalist or anti-Jacobin leanings. A number of them were not natives of Toulon, but had either held office (often naval) there before the Revolution, or had fled there when the Republicans had put down the rebellion in Marseilles.<sup>117</sup> It was this group which negotiated with Vice-Admiral Lord Hood<sup>118</sup> for the surrender of the French fleet and arsenal to the British, and co-operated with the foreign commanders in the governance of the city. As collaborators with the enemy, the 'émigrés' were anathema to the Republicans, and had little hope of return to France. The 'fugitifs' formed the bulk of the refugees. They left the city in

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<sup>113</sup> See below, p. 299.

<sup>114</sup> The Toulonese had a high rate of return to France: see below, p. 305.

<sup>115</sup> See below, p. 312.

<sup>116</sup> Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, p. 16.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 77; Godechot, Counter-Revolution, p. 244. Coulet has based his conclusions on biographical notes on about twenty-three of those who received pensions from the British: Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, pp. 57-75.

<sup>118</sup> Samuel, Baron Hood of Catherington (1724-1816), later first Viscount Hood, a lord of the Admiralty 1788-93, famous for his naval battles in the West Indies during the American War of Independence. He was Commander of the Mediterranean Fleet, and played a major part in evacuating the Toulonese. His fleet captured Corsica in 1794. He was promoted admiral in 1794; and created Viscount Hood and Governor of Greenwich in 1796: D.N.B., ix, pp. 1157-64.

panic for fear of reprisals by the invading Republicans. They were a diverse group of citizens, including a number of tradesmen,<sup>119</sup> and sailors whose officers had gone over to the British. They were not necessarily collaborators with the occupying powers, nor even Royalist in sympathies, and more than half of them returned to France by 1796, although not without personal risk.<sup>120</sup> The British clearly distinguished between the two groups by paying pensions, usually of £50 per annum to the 'émigrés',<sup>121</sup> while paying a subsistence allowance or nothing at all to the 'fugitifs'.

The 'fugitifs' from Toulon formed a distinct group amongst the French refugees succoured by Great Britain including artisans and members of the petite bourgeoisie. They also differed in their political affiliations, as an anti-Jacobin stance was not necessarily a pro-Royalist one, and the high return rate in this group suggests that most of its members could live in peace with less extreme Republicanism. British treatment of this group suggested an awareness of these social and political differences.

## VII

The French Revolution had an enormous impact on the French West Indies, and caused the emigration of a number of groups of French, principally to the United States, but also to Britain or the British West Indies. Prior to the Revolution, there were four main strata of society in the French West Indies: the grands blancs, or principal

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<sup>119</sup>See below, p. 303.

<sup>120</sup>Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, pp. 41-4.

<sup>121</sup>See 'Les Pensionnés' in *ibid.*, pp. 57-75. See also *ibid.*, pp. 52-3.



land holders; the petits blancs, who were smallholders and small businessmen; the mulattoes, who were coloured freemen; and the negro slaves. The great landowners believed that the Revolution gave them a golden opportunity to win greater political and economic independence from France, while others sought improvement in their social, political and economic status. In practice, the Revolution broke the dominant hold of the grands blancs, and led to conflict, marked by shifting alliances, between the castes, complicated from 1793 by the intervention of the British.<sup>122</sup>

The major upheaval was in St Domingo, which after 1791 was never again wholly controlled by a European power. In May of that year the National Assembly of France, urged on by the Parisian anti-slavery society the Amis des Noirs,<sup>123</sup> decreed that mulattoes born of free parents could vote if otherwise eligible. The white colonists refused to obey the decree, and the mulattoes rose against them.<sup>124</sup> The rising was overtaken by a massive slave revolt in August 1791; the mulattoes first tried to compose their differences with the whites, but news of the National Assembly's revocation (in September 1791) of the May decree drove them to join forces with the slaves against the whites. At the height of the revolt, a British squadron from Jamaica evacuated some of the French women and children from

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<sup>122</sup>For a discussion of these social groups, and the initial impact of the Revolution, see Andrée Lawrey, 'The impact of the French Revolution on the French Antilles, notably Saint-Domingue, 1789-1791' (Honours dissertation, Australian National University, 1972).

<sup>123</sup>Frances Sergeant Childs, French Refugee Life in the United States, 1790-1800: an American chapter of the French Revolution (Baltimore, 1940), p. 12.

<sup>124</sup>J.H. Parry and P.M. Sherlock, A Short History of the West Indies (London, 1956), p. 163; Sir Alan Burns, History of the West Indies (London, 1954), pp. 562-3.

The revolt was partly subdued, but when the National Assembly changed tack and granted all freemen equal status in colonial government by a decree of 4 April 1792, and sent three Jacobin Commissioners backed by troops to enforce the edict, trouble broke out anew. Many whites left the colony for the United States, Jamaica and Britain.<sup>126</sup> Matters worsened with the arrival of Governor Galbaud in May 1793. The Civil Commissioners and their pro-black forces were aligned against the Governor, the French sailors and the white colonists. The latter alliance gained the upper hand in the ensuing fighting, until the Commissioners opened the city of Le Cap to Negro brigands who pillaged and fired the city. The Governor's forces and refugees from the city were evacuated in a fleet of naval and merchant vessels, which then sailed to the United States,<sup>127</sup> where Dr Frances Childs estimates that some ten thousand St Domingan refugees disembarked.<sup>128</sup>

The advent of war between France and Great Britain brought further upheavals. The behaviour of the Jacobin Commissioners in St Domingo and Martinique alienated the planters and drove them to seek outside help. In 1793 British and Spanish forces invaded St Domingo; the French surrendered Jérémie and Le Môle St Nicholas to the British in 1793, and in March 1794 the British took Port au Prince. Despite these successes, the British were unable to consolidate. In 1798, after four years fighting against French and negro forces,

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<sup>125</sup>Ibid., p. 563.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.; Childs, French Refugee Life, pp. 14-15.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

and tropical diseases, particularly yellow fever, the British withdrew. They had mixed success with Martinique, which they captured with the aid of the white colonists in 1794, only to see some of their erstwhile allies amongst them aid a subsequent attempt by French forces to recapture the island. In 1794 Britain also captured Guadeloupe and St Lucia, but these were quickly recaptured by the French. By 1801 Great Britain had won control in the Caribbean, mostly through her sea power, but she returned all territories except Trinidad, a Spanish colony, under the Treaty of Amiens. Britain was unable to conquer St Domingo, which eventually passed under the control of the local negro leader, Toussaint L'Ouverture.<sup>129</sup>

Those French Royalists and planters from St Domingo and Martinique who aided the British in the struggle for supremacy in the West Indies were supported by British grants from time to time in Dominica, Antigua and Jamaica.<sup>130</sup> In the main, like the Toulonese 'émigrés' and the Corsicans, these refugees were strongly anti-Republican if not die-hard Royalists. Their active collaboration with the British committed them to exile until such time as the monarchy might be restored in France, and the British appeared to recognise this by paying them long-lasting allowances.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Burns, West Indies, pp. 560-4; Parry and Sherlock, West Indies, pp. 165-72; James G. Leyburn, The Haitian People (New Haven, 1941), pp. 20-7.

<sup>130</sup> For Dominica, see G. Rose to Lt Gov. Bruce, 7 Oct. 1793, T. 27/43, p. 441. See vouchers for payment of relief to 'old, infirm and distressed French Royalists' in Jamaica, from 1 Oct. 1795, in A.O. 3/905. For a grant of over £2,000 for provisions 'furnished to French Emigrants in the Island of Antigua', see Treasury Minutes, 19 March 1796, T. 29/69, p. 61.

<sup>131</sup> See below, p. 337.

PART II: ALIEN LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION

## THE PASSING OF THE ALIEN ACT OF 1793

The Alien Act of 1793 marked Great Britain's first attempt to enact comprehensive legislation to govern the ingress, egress and residence in the kingdom of aliens. Various forms of immigration control had been practised in England since William the Conqueror had set up a system for controlling entry into England, using the Castles of the Cinque Ports. In Elizabeth's reign, officials questioned new arrivals at the ports, and she used her prerogative to order aliens to quit the realm on several occasions. In the seventeenth century a body of officials known as the Clerks of the Passage organised port control, and their functions were of particular importance during the Civil War and the period of Marlborough's wars. After the latter, the strictness of controls was relaxed. By 1792 no immigration service existed. The Clerks of the Passage had been disbanded.<sup>1</sup> Thus there was no existing institution to build on and the government was uncertain of its legal powers. Much had been done formerly by royal prerogative, but the balance of powers had changed during the past hundred years. It is not surprising that William Pitt's ministry chose to act by legislative means.

The decision to legislate was grounded in the events and politics of 1792. Pitt had cautiously welcomed the Revolution in 1789, as a constitutional monarchy in France might be to Britain's advantage. But he became disturbed by the growing radicalisation of the Revolution,

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<sup>1</sup>T.W.E. Roche, The Key in the Lock: a history of immigration control in England from 1066 to the present day (London, 1969) Ch. 1, espec. pp. 13, 37, 39, 41-2, 46-9; William Evan Davies, The English Law Relating to Aliens (London, 1931), p. 77.

The early emigrants to Britain had caused the government no alarm, as the French nobility posed no threat to Britain's security, and their numbers were small. However, the increasing number and more diverse character of the emigrants in 1791-2 led the ministry to fear that political radicals with experience of revolution might be included among them and that they would reinforce the growing agitation of local radicals. By May 1792, the more alarmist members of the government, especially Henry Dundas who as Home Secretary was responsible for public order, believed that the internal security of the nation was in danger. Action on the question of the aliens streaming into the country formed part of a more general parcel of measures designed to restore order, 'a very turbulent and pernicious spirit having pervaded numerous and various descriptions of persons in this Country'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the more conservative Whigs shared the ministry's views on quelling internal disturbances. Pitt was alive to the possibility of using this to increase dissension in Opposition ranks, and perhaps thereby persuade a portion of them to form a connection with his ministry.<sup>3</sup>

On 9 May Dundas informed the Lord Chancellor, Thurlow,<sup>4</sup> that the

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<sup>2</sup>Dundas to the Lord Chancellor, 9 May 1792, N.L.S. Melville Papers 1, f. 50.

<sup>3</sup>George III, The Later Correspondence of George III ed. A. Aspinall, 5 vols (Cambridge, 1962-70), i, p. 630n; Sir G. Elliot to Lady Elliot, 31 May 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 34-5.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Thurlow, first Baron Thurlow (1731-1806), barrister, and M.P. for Tamworth in 1765. He was a constitutional lawyer of note. He was appointed Solicitor-General in 1770, Attorney-General in 1771, and was made Lord Chancellor and Baron Thurlow in 1778. Fox forced him to resign in 1783, but he was reappointed by Pitt; he alienated the latter by supporting the Prince of Wales in the regency crisis, and Pitt forced him to resign in 1792. D.N.B., xix, pp. 824-9.

a Proclamation from His Majesty founded on the seditious publications of the times, and the industrious dispersion of those Publications, the immense influx of Foreigners and the suspicious conduct of many of them in relation to the internal Tranquility of this Kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

The Attorney-General<sup>6</sup> had drafted such a proclamation, and Dundas hoped that 'tomorrow he may furnish me w<sup>i</sup>. a draft of such a Bill as may be thought proper, relative to Foreigners'. Dundas thought that these measures would be important in capitalising on offers of support from the Opposition, and urged quick action because

above all we must avoid impressing those, who have on public grounds, are proffering [sic] their aid, that His Majesty's Government is backward and tardy in taking such steps as may be thought necessary in suppressing sedition.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the three motive forces behind the Alien Bill were evident already in May 1792: the activities of British radicals; the 'suspicious conduct' of foreigners who might prove to be French agents intent on inciting a revolution in Great Britain; and the government's desire to win the co-operation of those Whigs who shared its fears of a British popular revolution. The Alien Bill also grew out of reactions to events in France throughout 1792, and its specific proposals evolved through the government's attempts both to keep track of the movements and activities of aliens and to develop mechanisms for the expulsion of those considered undesirable.

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<sup>5</sup> Dundas to Lord Chancellor, 9 May 1792, N.L.S. Melville Papers 1, ff. 50-1.

<sup>6</sup> Sir William Scott (1745-1836), later first Baron Stowell, maritime and international lawyer, M.P. for Downton 1790 and Oxford University 1801-21, judge of high court of the Admiralty 1798-1828. D.N.B., xvii, pp. 1046-50.

<sup>7</sup> Dundas to Lord Chancellor, 9 May 1792, N.L.S. Melville Papers 1, f. 51.

Developments in radical activities during the first five months of 1792 gave impetus to the proposed Royal Proclamation, which was issued on 21 May. On 16 February the second part of Thomas Paine's<sup>8</sup> Rights of Man was published,<sup>9</sup> giving form, voice and focus to popular radicalism. The London Corresponding Society, founded in January 1792 by Thomas Hardy,<sup>10</sup> provided organisation and communication. Together with the Society for Constitutional Information it kept radical societies all over the country informed and in touch with one another. The thriving radical press, especially in the provinces, reported the activities of the proliferating radical societies to an increasingly literate populace,<sup>11</sup> and gave the radical movement a new scale of mass publicity and sense of identity.

Britain's conservative establishment, with the example of the progressively popular base of the French Revolution before it, could not but fear popular radicalism at home. These fears were exacerbated by the formation in April 1792 of the Association of the Friends of

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<sup>8</sup> (1737-1809), political writer. Paine first gained fame through his pamphlet 'Common Sense' (1776) on the origins of the dispute with the American colonists. He fought for the Americans and wrote on their behalf. He returned to Europe in 1787. The first part of his Rights of Man was written in reply to Burke's Reflections on the Revolutions in France. After the publication of the second part he fled to France to avoid prosecution, was proclaimed a French citizen in August, and elected a member of the Convention in September 1792. The Jacobins imprisoned him in December 1793 for his opposition to the execution of Louis XVI, but he was released after the fall of Robespierre. He completed the Age of Reason while in prison. He returned to America in 1802. D.N.B., xv, pp. 69-79.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Goodwin, The Friends of Liberty: the English democratic movement in the age of the French Revolution (London, 1979), p. 198.

<sup>10</sup> (1752-1832), bootmaker and political radical. He was charged with high treason, but acquitted, in 1794. D.N.B., viii, pp. 1241-2.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion on the rise of the radical press in Britain, see Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 220-33.



Grey, Sir James Mackintosh<sup>12</sup> and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The aim of the Association was to provide moderate political leadership to the reform movement and to quieten its language,<sup>13</sup> thus damping the fears of the opponents of reform. It failed dismally on both counts. The radical societies, after initial overtures, found it overcautious, while it raised for conservatives the spectre of upper-class leadership of a mass movement, on the French model.<sup>14</sup> It deepened the split in the Whigs; the prospect of such leadership drove Earl Fitzwilliam, a bulwark of the party, into supporting the Royal Proclamation.<sup>15</sup>

In the meantime, on 20 April 1792, France had declared war on Austria. France on the march in Europe had the potential to draw Great Britain into conflict. Pitt clung grimly to his policy of neutrality, but Republican France was henceforth a potential enemy to Great Britain, both militarily and ideologically, and a threat to her external and internal security. The government viewed with alarm any links between British radicals and the French. The visit of James Watt Jnr and Thomas Cooper of the Manchester Constitutional Society to Paris in April 1792, in which they gave an address, stressing international fraternity, to the Paris Jacobin Club, and joined a patriotic fête organised by the Parisian democrats,<sup>16</sup> was ill-timed. Burke made a stinging attack on them in parliament on 30 April,

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<sup>12</sup> (1765-1832), author of Vindiciae Gallicae (1791), one of the best known replies to Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France. D.N.B., xii, pp. 617-21.

<sup>13</sup> Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 211-2.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 207, 213-4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 202-3.

and French Jacobins.<sup>17</sup> A few days later, in an attempt to refute Burke's charges against British radicals, the London Revolution Society published its correspondence with the French National Assembly and various Jacobin clubs. This move was designed to show the innocence of its contacts, but the existence of the correspondence was enough to fuel conservative alarms.<sup>18</sup>

The combination of Paine's polemic, the mass circulation of other 'seditious' radical publications, the growth of popular-based political organisations, the existence of links between British radicals and French Jacobins, and the influx of French refugees who might include French agents in their number, together with the prospect of deepening the schism among the Whigs, persuaded the government that action was needed. In the event, however, the promised Royal Proclamation was aimed more against subversion and seditious writings in general than French emigrants and agents, and was accompanied by the government's attempt to prosecute Paine for seditious libel. This move rebounded, for Paine then decided to allow the publication of a cheap edition of Rights of Man, and the radical societies rallied to his support.<sup>19</sup>

Over the next few months the government moved from a repressive mood to repressive measures, which stiffened the resistance of the radicals and caused them to espouse more openly the cause of the French revolutionaries.

Events in France over the summer and autumn of 1792 polarised opinion on the Revolution. The September massacres were probably the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

gone too far;<sup>20</sup> it was condemned even by those who usually supported the Revolution. The storming of the Tuileries, the incarceration of the French royal family and the dismembering of the established Church in France seemed further proof of the breakdown of tradition and stability. The divergence of opinion was evident in reactions to the French victories at Valmy and Jemappes. They brought consternation to the conservatives. But the radicals were jubilant at the resounding victory of the Revolutionaries over the forces of reaction in Europe, celebrating the triumphs and offering congratulatory addresses to the French Convention.<sup>21</sup>

November 1792 was a key period in determining government attitudes and actions towards possible subversives, whether local or imported. Jemappes and the subsequent French invasion of Belgium alarmed Pitt;<sup>22</sup> a France militant, militarily successful and in occupation of the Low Countries was a threat to Britain, no matter what style of government ruled in Paris. The behaviour of the National Convention also caused alarm. On 16 November it declared the Scheldt open to all traffic, which broke France's own treaty obligations, infringed the neutrality of one of Britain's closest allies<sup>23</sup> and attacked a basic tenet of British foreign policy: that no strong naval power should occupy the

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<sup>20</sup> J.T. Murley, 'The origin and outbreak of the Anglo-French war of 1793' (D.Phil. thesis. Oxford University, 1959), pp. 52-3.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-8.

<sup>22</sup> J. Holland Rose, William Pitt and the Great War (London, 1911), p. 69.

<sup>23</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 140-1.

Scheldt, a prime launching place for any invasion of Great Britain. The annexation of Savoy on 27 November seemed further proof that Revolutionary France, despite protestations to the contrary, was adopting an expansionary policy. Government fears that Britain might be infiltrated by French agents were strengthened by the Edict of Fraternity issued by the French Convention on 19 November 1792, by which it offered assistance to all peoples who wished to gain their liberty.

The government also had cause for alarm on the home front. The harvest had failed, and the consequent grain shortages set off a wave of wage strikes and bread rioting.<sup>24</sup> The English radical societies were at the peak of their popularity and membership.<sup>25</sup> Dundas, visiting Scotland, was sending Pitt alarmist reports of radical activities there.<sup>26</sup> There were eighty radical societies in Scotland in thirty-five towns, riots in Perth and Dundee and a seaman's strike in Aberdeen. In these circumstances, it was injudicious of the Edinburgh Friends of the People to announce the summoning of a convention for all Scottish Reform Societies.<sup>27</sup> There was also trouble in Ireland, where Catholic leaders had called a convention, Protestants had formed armed volunteer groups, and the United Irishmen were attempting to capture this movement and unite Protestant and Catholic dissidents against British rule. Corn riots in Cork, Waterford and elsewhere further threatened public order.<sup>28</sup> The United Irishmen

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-7, 179-81.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 162-3.

<sup>26</sup> See W. Pitt to Dundas, 8, 27 Nov. 1792, Pitt Papers, Clements Library, University of Michigan; Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 201-3.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. 177-8; Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 283-4. The outcome of the meetings of the Convention in December 1792 and April 1793 was the notorious Scottish sedition trials of Thomas Muir and Thomas Palmer: *ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>28</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 179-81, 200.

had also opened negotiations with the regime in Paris for French assistance against British rule in Ireland.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile further links were being forged between British radicals and French revolutionaries. The French government granted French citizenship to Joseph Priestley and Thomas Paine in August; in September Paine took his seat as member for Calais in the National Convention, and in October was appointed to its constitutional committee.<sup>30</sup> Evidence of British radical sympathy and support for the French cause was not hard to find. In November addresses were sent to Paris by the London Revolution Society and radical societies at Norwich, Manchester, London, Newington and Rochester, while the Society for Constitutional Information sent delegates to the National Convention.<sup>31</sup> Addresses and toasts to the French nation were also tendered on 4 November at the annual dinner of the London Revolution Society, where French guests, including the democrat Jérôme Pétion, former member of the Constituent Assembly and soon to be mayor of Paris, mingled with prominent radicals such as Paine, Priestley, and Thomas Walker of

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<sup>29</sup> Thomas Paine, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Coquebert (a French agent in Ireland) and the French general Félix Dumuy all urged Franco-Irish co-operation on Lebrun at the end of 1792: Lionel D. Woodward, 'Les projets de descente en Irlande et les réfugiés Irlandais et Anglais en France sous la Convention, Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française, viii, 1931, pp. 1-5. For a detailed examination of subsequent Franco-Irish relations see Marianne Elliott, 'The United Irishmen and France 1793-1806' (D. Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1975).

<sup>30</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', p. 24; Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, p. 262; Thomas Paine, Rights of Man ed. and intro. by Henry Collins (1st pub. 1791-2; Harmondsworth, 1969), pp. 37-8. This only added to the case against him; he was tried and convicted in absentia in December, and was forced to remain in exile for the rest of his life. Ironically, Paine's opposition to the execution of Louis XVI earned him distrust and imprisonment in France as a suspected Royalist; *ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>31</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 153-4; Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 244-6.

the Manchester Constitutional Society.<sup>32</sup> A more practical expression of support was the attempt by Sir William Maxwell to commission armaments and raise subscriptions in Britain to send to France.<sup>33</sup> The government's alarm at contacts between French and British radicals and its belief that the French government had sent agents to gather intelligence and to foment revolution in Great Britain were part of its rationale for introducing the Alien Bill into parliament in December 1792. What remains to be seen is whether the government's beliefs were justified: were there French agents in Britain, did they plot with British radicals and, if so, how effective were they?

## II

J.T. Murley's study of Anglo-French relations in the months preceding the outbreak of war clearly shows that French agents were active in Britain in 1792, that they were in touch but not in collaboration with British radicals and that they were singularly ineffective as negotiators, spies and agents provocateurs. Murley argues convincingly that their very ineptitude and the inaccuracy of their reports, coupled with the abandonment of diplomatic channels by both sides, lured the French into declaring war.

The mutual eschewing of traditional diplomacy was crucial in this process. Even before the formal break in August 1792, Georges

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 186-7.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 242-4. Goodwin argues that the plethora of addresses arose from the suggestion of the London Corresponding Society that they were a preferable and less dangerous expression of support than the despatch of arms and money: *ibid.*, p. 244.

diplomacy', which by-passed normal channels, sending secret agents well-supplied with money as propagandists of France and the Revolution to sway government and public opinion.<sup>35</sup> This approach had its fullest flowering in Holland; French funds, supplemented by money from the Dutch democrats, supported Dutch Patriots in exile and raised the Batavian Legion in July 1792 in preparation for the French invasion of Holland. At the same time France used its legation in The Hague as a centre for meetings with Dutch Patriots and for the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda.<sup>36</sup> In 1792 the French opened those negotiations with Irish dissidents which culminated in the French invasions of Ireland in 1796 and 1798;<sup>37</sup> hence the British government had grounds for its uneasiness over the presence of French agents in England and their possible recruitment of a 'fifth column' to engage in subversive activities.

The British government fostered French reliance on revolutionary diplomacy when it withdrew the British Ambassador, Lord Gower,<sup>38</sup> from

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<sup>34</sup> (1759-94), peasant-born lawyer and politician, founder of the radical Cordeliers' Club. He became Minister for Justice in 1792, and was a foundation member of the Committee of Public Safety. He left Paris after Robespierre gained political ascendancy; on his return in 1794 he was arrested, tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal, convicted despite a heroic defence, and executed: Chambers Biographical Dictionary, i, p. 352.

<sup>35</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 223-6, 275, 283. See also Jacques Godechot, France and the Atlantic Revolution of the Eighteenth Century trans. Herbert H. Rowen (New York, 1965), pp. 127-8.

<sup>37</sup> See above, pp. 79-80.

<sup>38</sup> George Granville Leveson-Gower (1758-1833), later Baron Gower (1798) and Duke of Sutherland (1833), son of the first Marquis of Stafford, heir of his uncle, the last Duke of Bridgewater, and husband of the Countess of Sutherland. M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme 1778 and 1780, and Staffordshire 1787-98. He was Ambassador at Paris 1790-92 and joint Paymaster General 1799-1810. D.N.B., xi, pp. 1025-7.

Paris in response to the treatment of the French Royal Family on 10 August, and refused to acknowledge the ci-devant Marquis de Chauvelin as the accredited French ambassador at St James. Lebrun,<sup>39</sup> France's new Foreign Minister, thereby denied access to normal diplomatic channels, espoused Danton's technique of revolutionary diplomacy. He sent a steady flow of secret agents across the Channel. The events of August 1792 left Chauvelin in an impossible position. The British government ignored him because it refused to recognize the régime which he now represented, while his new masters distrusted his aristocratic background. Lebrun sent his agents not only to spy and to spread propaganda, but also as a means of by-passing Chauvelin. The latter tried to prove his value by sending numerous intelligence reports back to Paris. Frustrated by his unsuccessful attempts to force recognition from the British government, Chauvelin cultivated contacts with British radicals. These moves bred fierce rivalry between the French Legation and Lebrun's agents to send Lebrun those distorted reports on the strength of British radicalism which shaped his policy towards Great Britain.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the activities of both parties, as reported to Evan Nepean through his domestic intelligence system, alarmed the British government<sup>41</sup> and was one of its grounds for

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<sup>39</sup> Pierre Henri Hélène Marie Lebrun (or Lebrun-Tondu) (1763-1793), published the Journal Général de l'Europe in Liège before the Revolution; appointed Foreign Minister after 10 August 1792, and Minister for War October 1792. Robespierre denounced him in 1793; the Revolutionary Tribunal condemned him as a counter-revolutionary, and he was guillotined on 27 December 1793; George Lefebvre, The French Revolution from its Origins to 1793 trans. Elizabeth Moss Evanson (London, 1962), pp. 184, 225, 238, 353; Nouvelle Biographie Générale (hereafter N.B.G.), xxx, pp. 160-1.

<sup>40</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. xiii, 32, 38-9.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 62.



introducing the Alien Bill.

From August 1792 onward, Lebrun and Danton sent a number of independent agents or groups of agents to Britain. Talleyrand,<sup>42</sup> the ex-Bishop of Autun, can probably be considered as the first. He arrived in August, was unsuccessful in his attempts to see Lord Grenville, and quickly retired from the diplomatic scene; he had accepted the mission primarily as a means of leaving France without incurring confiscation of his property under the laws against the émigrés.<sup>43</sup>

The major secret mission to Britain was led by François Noel, an academic priest turned revolutionary journalist. He arrived on 2 September 1792, accompanied by Danton's step-brother, Recordain, and Mergez, Danton's cousin.<sup>44</sup> Noel was soon joined by an agent named Benoit who stayed only briefly, to be replaced by Scipion Mourgue, a former member of the French Legation who had quarrelled with Chauvelin.<sup>45</sup> Noel was instructed to gather intelligence and to spread revolutionary propaganda.<sup>46</sup> Although he was not sent to negotiate,

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754-1838), later Prince de Bénévent. He was nominated Bishop of Autun in 1788, and elected to the Estates-General in 1789. He welcomed the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790, consecrated two bishops in 1791 and was excommunicated by the Pope. After failing to return to France from England, he was declared an émigré in December 1792. The British government deported him in 1794 (see below, p. 122). After two years in the United States he returned to Paris, and was made Foreign Minister under the Directory in 1797. He was closely associated with Bonaparte until 1809, and one of the most powerful men in France. He turned completely against Bonaparte in 1814, and became Foreign Minister under the Restoration, negotiating skilfully for France at the Congress of Vienna, but soon lost favour. He supported Louis Philippe in the 1830 Revolution, and was appointed ambassador in London: Chambers Biographical Dictionary, ii, p. 1246.

<sup>43</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 38-9, 64-5.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-4, 38.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 36-8.

he attempted to do so, without success. He had several meetings with William Augustus Miles,<sup>47</sup> who tried to keep negotiations going between France and Britain in the hope of averting war,<sup>48</sup> and he met William Smith,<sup>49</sup> the radical M.P.,<sup>50</sup> but was unable to make any important contacts in government circles. Amongst the radicals, he talked to David Williams<sup>51</sup> and Dr Joseph Priestley,<sup>52</sup> but was rebuffed by Sheridan and Lansdowne.<sup>53</sup>

The French government sent a number of other agents, or used volunteers already resident in England, such as Say de Bellecôte and Randon de Lucenay, a merchant who claimed friendship with Fox and Sheridan.<sup>54</sup> Lebrun sent Xavier Aubriet, a young relative, to investigate the dispute between Chauvelin and Noel, to report on Achille Viard, another agent, and to report general impressions to be gained from touring through Great Britain and Ireland. Lebrun also used foreigners sympathetic to the Revolution, such as Gorani, an

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<sup>47</sup> (1753?-1817), political writer, a former agent of the Foreign Office and correspondent of Pitt: *ibid.*, pp. 71, 256-8; D.N.B., xiii, p. 379.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> (1756-1835), M.P. for Sudbury 1784-90, Camelford 1791, Sudbury 1796-1802, and Norwich 1802, 1807, 1812, 1818, 1820 and 1826-30. He was a Foxite Whig, championed Dr Priestley, and campaigned strongly against the slave trade: D.N.B., xviii, pp. 557-9.

<sup>50</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', p. 71.

<sup>51</sup> (1738-1816), founder of the Royal Literary Fund, and political theorist. In September 1792 he was granted honorary French citizenship: Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 224; 487.

<sup>52</sup> (1733-1804), Dissenting theologian and scientist. His house in Birmingham was wrecked in July 1791 by a mob protesting against his revolutionary sympathies: D.N.B., xvi, pp. 357-76.

<sup>53</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', p. 69.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Italian publicist, and Stephen Fayne, an American sent both to buy arms and to persuade Englishmen of the value of staying neutral. None of these, nor any of Noel's group, were particularly successful as emissaries, intelligence officers or propagandists,<sup>55</sup> although Noel may have had some success in influencing English newspapers such as the Morning Chronicle, the Argus and the Gazeteer in favour of the Revolutionary cause.<sup>56</sup> On some counts Chauvelin emerged as the best intelligence officer. He sensed the anti-radical and anti-French swing in Britain in late November-December 1792, and reported accordingly to Lebrun.<sup>57</sup> He also sent valuable and accurate naval intelligence, gained from an agent whom he sent around the south coastal ports and from Vital, a clerk in the employ of the Duke of Richmond,<sup>58</sup> the Master-General of the Ordinance.<sup>59</sup>

The final agent of revolutionary diplomacy who should be mentioned is Hugues Bernard Maret, later Duc de Bassano, who came to London in November 1792, ostensibly on a minor errand. While in London Maret was in touch with the French legation and several of the French agents. He met William Smith, who helped to arrange a meeting between Pitt and

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 38-9, 63-9, 79-80.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>57</sup> Noel also warned Lebrun of the change in mood, but he ignored them both: Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, p. 257.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Lennox, third Duke of Richmond and Lennox (1735-1806), soldier, Lord-Lieutenant of Sussex 1763, Ambassador at Paris 1765, Secretary of State for the Southern Department 1766-7, Master-General of the Ordinance and member of cabinet, 1782-95. Although noted for his espousal of parliamentary reform in the 1780s, he strongly opposed it in the 1790s. D.N.B., xi, pp. 923-7.

<sup>59</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', p. 74. In December 1792 an agent named Restif was also sending naval information, and Lebrun sent Pereyra, a Portugese Jew, to report on the Navy and on troop dispositions; he was quite successful: ibid., pp. 286-7, 301, 417-20.

Maret on 2 December.<sup>60</sup> Maret assured Pitt that the Edict of Fraternity was not directed at Britain; Pitt was justifiably sceptical, given the French reception of British radical addresses.<sup>61</sup> In the event, Maret's attempts to ensure British neutrality were overtaken by the French declaration of war in February 1793.

To sum up, the British government was justified in its belief that the French were infiltrating agents, money and propaganda into Britain, and in fact was quite well informed of their identity and activities. The agents did try to influence British opinion and radicals in favour of the Revolution and revolutionary action. They were not notably successful: revolutionary ideas were far more potent than the French agents, and the French government, like the British, failed to grasp the essentially reformist nature of British radicalism and the strong conservative support of the British mode of government. The agents had few close contacts amongst the radicals, knew little of the radical movement and considerably overestimated its strength. Their intelligence reports were, therefore, often both erroneous and misleading, and contributed towards the French decision to declare war, while their presence and activities in Britain stirred the British government into drafting legislation designed to curtail their activities.

### III

The actions of the British government between May and December 1792 show its first attempts to deal with the practical problems associated

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<sup>60</sup> Apparently Pitt had approved Smith's approach to Maret. See Richard W. Davis, Dissent in Politics 1780-1830: the political life of William Smith, M.P. (London, 1971), pp. 89-92.

<sup>61</sup> Murley, 'Anglo-French war', pp. 263-5; Goodwin, Friends of Liberty, pp. 256-7.

with the increasing number of refugees arriving from the Continent, interwoven with its response to local radicalism and Pitt's wooing of the conservative Whigs. Among the latter the ambitious Lord Loughborough<sup>62</sup> was a particular target. By May 1792 he was already on increasingly intimate terms with the ministry, and a valuable source of information on the state of the Whigs.<sup>63</sup>

Loughborough's advice may have prompted the proclamation mooted by Dundas on 9 May.<sup>64</sup> On 4 May Loughborough told Lord Auckland that some Whigs were ready to support the government 'in repressing any attempt to disturb the publick Tranquility'.<sup>65</sup> He suggested that the difficulty of making a declaration of principle on an executive decision might be overcome by putting forward a measure important enough in the eyes of the public to justify men of principle standing forth to support it.<sup>66</sup> Pitt invited the Whigs to collaborate on the proclamation, but despite his overtures, Portland was prepared only to suggest amendments to the proposed measure, not to join in its issue; the Whigs might 'act in concert though not in conjunction'.<sup>67</sup> He was still anxious not to aggravate the schism between the conservative and radical wings of the party.

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<sup>62</sup>Alexander Wedderburn, first Baron Loughborough (1733-1805), later first Earl of Rosslyn, Chief Justice 1780-92 and Lord Chancellor 1793-1801. He already had a history of shifting allegiances: see D.N.B., xx, pp. 1044-5.

<sup>63</sup>F. O'Gorman, The Whig Party and the French Revolution (New York, 1967), pp. 86-7.

<sup>64</sup>See above, pp. 73-4.

<sup>65</sup>Lord Loughborough to [Auckland], 4 May 1792, P.R.O.30/8/153, f. 83.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., ff. 83-4.

<sup>67</sup>Portland to [Pitt], 9, 13 May 1792, P.R.O.30/8/168, ff. 101, 103; Elliot to Lady Elliot, 14 May 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 23-4; O'Gorman, Whig Party, p. 88. Also, the Whigs would lose face by such public collaboration.

Pitt accepted the amendments suggested by the conservative Whigs, and continued to woo them. Due to a delay caused by Pitt's moves to oust Lord Thurlow from the Lord Chancellorship, the proclamation was not issued until 21 May. Thurlow's departure allowed Dundas to offer the seals to Loughborough. He declined, but acted as an intermediary in talks of coalition. However, talks between Portland and Fox on 24 May prevented differences of opinion expressed in the debate the following day from breaking the apparent unity of the Whigs.<sup>68</sup>

Negotiations for a coalition with the Whigs continued throughout the summer, but came to nothing. The Whigs refused to coalesce without Fox; Fox would not join unless Pitt left the Treasury, Pitt's friends refused to countenance Fox being in the ministry, and Pitt was not prepared to stand down as Prime Minister. Although unity of class interest in the face of internal disturbance was a desirable object, it is doubtful that either side was fully serious in its proposals. At the end of August the Whig party still held together, with its members' distrust of Pitt reinforced by the negotiations.<sup>69</sup>

In his meeting with Portland in May,

Pitt told the Duke that he had undoubted information of many foreigners who are employed to raise sedition in England, and that money is sent from France to assist in this attempt.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 17, 22 May 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 26, 29; Portland to Pitt, 24 May 1792, P.R.O. 30/8/168, f. 105; O'Gorman, Whig Party, pp. 88-9.

<sup>69</sup> For a discussion of the negotiations, see *ibid.*, pp. 91-102; Loren Reid, Charles James Fox: a man for the people (London, 1969), pp. 284-6.

<sup>70</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 14 May 1792, Minto, ii, p. 24.

The proclamation eased the situation during the summer, but the measure was not strong enough to withstand the increased pressure caused by the mass influx of French in September 1792. The government's first inkling of this was a letter from Eastbourne on 9 September, reporting the landing there of 250 fugitives, mainly priests,<sup>71</sup> and similar reports followed thick and fast from the south coast. The government was alarmed by the possible dangers to security posed by the flood of arrivals, and reviewed its powers for dealing with the influx. Pitt's ministry had no experience of the matter, and was uncertain of its legal powers.

On 12 September Dundas wrote when calling a meeting to discuss the situation:

What His Majesty can do by His own Prerogative, must, in the present moment, be the first object of discussion, and it will be for future consideration to determine how far any Parliamentary Provision will be necessary.<sup>72</sup>

In the meantime, he requested a legal opinion from the law lords on the subject. The government wanted to know how far the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Act could be applied to foreigners, and welcomed suggestions on what powers were available to the executive government to prevent the residence of aliens, or to make them 'give Security for their peaceable and inoffensive Conduct'.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Viscount Bayham and S. Thornton to Dundas, 9 Sept. 1792, H.O. 42/21, f. 472.

<sup>72</sup>Dundas to Lord Kenyon, Lord Loughborough and the Lord Chief Baron, 12 Sept. 1792, H.O. 43/4, p. 96.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid. The copy sent to Loughborough was for his private information, and Dundas invited his comments. See Dundas to Grenville, 12 Sept. 1792, Historical Manuscripts Commission, The Manuscripts of J.B. Fortescue, Esq. Preserved at Dropmore 7 vols (London, 1891-1927), ii, pp. 314-15 (hereafter H.M.C. Dropmore).

Dundas regarded the current influx of aliens as an inconvenience rather than a peril. His fear was that future arrivals might be of a more dangerous character. He expected that Brunswick's invading armies would conquer Paris and thereby 'create much panick in those concerned in the late atrocious proceedings, and it may occur to many of them to seek refuge by flight into this Country'. If Brunswick could restore order in Paris, he might request the extradition of such persons, so it was important to consider Britain's proper and legal action in such circumstances.<sup>74</sup>

The government promised the Austrian and Neapolitan ambassadors that no asylum would be given to regicides if the French King or Queen were murdered. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Grenville, told his brother the Marquis of Buckingham<sup>75</sup> that

Opinions are a little doubtful about the best means of giving effect to this promise, should the case arise. Our lawyers seem clear, and Blackstone expressly asserts, that the King may prevent any alien from coming into the kingdom, or remaining there. But this power has so rarely been used, that it may, perhaps, be better to have a special Act of Parliament applying to this case.<sup>76</sup>

Brunswick's failure to capture Paris removed the spectre of hordes of displaced Jacobins fleeing to Britain. However, fears of Britain

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<sup>74</sup>Dundas to Lord Kenyon, Lord Loughborough and Lord Chief Baron, 12 Sept. 1792, H.O.43/4, pp. 95-7.

<sup>75</sup>George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, first Marquis of Buckingham (1753-1813), a former Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1782-3, 1787-9), and Pitt's first cousin. In 1775 he married the Hon. Mary Elizabeth Nugent (1759-1812), elder daughter and co-heiress of Earl Nugent: see D.N.B., viii, pp. 560-2. She was a practising Catholic, and through her influence, Buckingham became interested in the welfare of the French refugee clergy.

<sup>76</sup>Grenville to Marquis of Buckingham, 20 Sept. 1792, Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George the Third 4 vols (2nd edn, revised, London, 1853), ii, p. 217.



being infiltrated by French emissaries bearing subversive ideas were strengthened by the decree of the French Convention on 19 November 1792, by which it offered assistance to all peoples who wished to gain their liberty.

One group of émigrés in England caused the government particular concern. Early adherents of the Revolution in France had themselves come under threat as the Revolution became increasingly radical. Some came to England before August 1792.<sup>77</sup> The events of 10 August were a signal to prominent Constitutionalists such as Narbonne and Talleyrand that France was no longer safe for them, and both departed for England.<sup>78</sup> In September, Fanny Burney's<sup>79</sup> sister wrote to her that

la Marquise de la Châtre, whose husband<sup>80</sup> is with the emigrants; her son; M. de Narbonne, lately Ministre de la Guerre; M. de Montmorency; Charles or Theodore Lameth; Jaucourt; and one or two more, whose names I have forgotten, are either arrived today, or expected.<sup>81</sup>

Madame de Staël later joined this group of Constitutionalists at Juniper Hall, and Talleyrand was a visitor there. The government viewed this group with suspicion, as being tainted by their involvement in the Revolution, and Talleyrand was especially distrusted because of his association with local radicals such as Thomas Paine, Horne Tooke and

<sup>77</sup> A. Storer to Auckland, 27 July 1792, Auckland, Journal and Correspondence, ii, p. 421.

<sup>78</sup> S. Phillips to F. Burney, Nov. 1792, Frances d'Arblay, Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay (1778-1840) ed. Charlotte Barrett, with preface and notes by Austin Dobson, 6 vols (London, 1904-05), v, p. 136; Prince de Talleyrand, Mémoires du Prince de Talleyrand, preface and notes by the Duc de Broglie, 5 vols (Paris, 1891), i, p. 224.

<sup>79</sup> Frances Burney (1752-1840), authoress and diarist. She married one of the Constitutionalist émigrés, Général Alexandre d'Arblay, in 1793: Chambers Biographical Dictionary, i, p. 199.

<sup>80</sup> Claude-Louis, Comte de La Chatre de Nançay (1745-1824), later Duc de La Chatre. He was commissioned as Colonel of the Loyal Emigrant regiment on 1 May 1793: Pinasseau, Émigration Militaire, ii, pp. 85-6.

<sup>81</sup> Phillips to F. Burney, Sept. 1792, d'Arblay, Diary and Letters, v, p. 117.

the Marquis of Lansdowne.<sup>82</sup>

The government knew it would need reliable information on aliens if it were to establish effective controls over the refugees, so Dundas early sought out from people in contact with them 'every degree of intelligence respecting the number and description of People arriving from France'.<sup>83</sup> From the first, he had received information on the arrival of refugees at the ports on the south coast and the Channel Islands from private individuals, customs officers and local government officials.<sup>84</sup> The customs houses kept returns of numbers arriving at the various ports,<sup>85</sup> and by November, customs officers were reporting arrivals directly to the Home Office,<sup>86</sup> as well as through James Hume of the central customs office in London. Thus the use of customs officers to report on arrivals was already in operation when legislation on aliens was introduced in December.

Several charitable committees for the relief of the French refugees were set up in September, and the two major ones, Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee,<sup>87</sup> proved a further source of information on the refugees. On 17 September Rev. Dr Walker King,<sup>88</sup> a member of Wilmot's

<sup>82</sup>Rose, Pitt, p. 51.

<sup>83</sup>Dundas to T. Curry, 13 Sept. 1792, H.O.43/4, p. 97; Dundas to Bayham and Thornton, 14 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, p. 98; Dundas to Lieut.-Gov. Trigge, 15 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*; Dundas to E. Burke, 21 Sept. 1792, Edmund Burke, The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, ed. P.J. Marshall and John A. Woods, vol. vii (Cambridge, 1968), p. 223.

<sup>84</sup>Curry to Dundas, 12 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 529; Trigge to [Dundas ?], 13 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 539; Lord Sheffield to [?], 21 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 581; Paul Le Mesurier to Dundas, 22 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 602.

<sup>85</sup>The Times 16, 23 Oct. 1792.

<sup>86</sup>Newport (Dover) to Long, 12 Nov. 1792, H.O.42/22, f. 358; Crowder (Harwich) to Long, 12 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 360.

<sup>87</sup>The former aided the clergy only, and the latter both clergy and laity. For a fuller discussion of the foundation of the committees, see Chapter 5.

<sup>88</sup>(1751-1827), later (1809) Bishop of Rochester. He was a friend of Edmund Burke's: Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 56.

Committee, estimated that there were then two thousand refugee clergy in England.<sup>89</sup> The priests came mainly from Brittany, Normandy, Picardy and the neighbourhood of Calais.<sup>90</sup> Their characters could be ascertained from the superiors of their dioceses, to whom they were referred for certificates on their arrival in London, when most priests reported to the Bishop of St Pol de Léon.<sup>91</sup> The Bishop kept a register which recorded their names, dioceses and ecclesiastical functions. By 19 September he had inscribed almost a thousand names.<sup>92</sup>

As a further means of gathering information, Dundas asked Lord Hood,<sup>93</sup> the naval commander in Portsmouth, to make a list of the refugees there,<sup>94</sup> just as he later asked Fall to do in Jersey. When Hood and Trigge, the Lieutenant-Governor of Portsmouth, suggested that the government should allow some three hundred priests to occupy Forton Hospital at Gosport,<sup>95</sup> the government agreed, as Dundas phrased it, 'both from sentiments of humanity and from the expediency of keeping as many of those unfortunate men as possible within the knowledge of Government'.<sup>96</sup> Walker King approved

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<sup>89</sup>W. King to Dundas, 17 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 558, (hereafter cited as W. King, to distinguish him from John King, who is cited without initial).

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid. Jean-François de La Marche (1729-1806) was a Breton bishop who had strongly resisted the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, then fled to England in 1791. He was a rallying point for practical assistance to the exiled clergy in Britain: N.B.G., xxix, pp. 51-2. Also, see below,

<sup>92</sup>La Marche to Dundas, 19 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 572.

<sup>93</sup>Samuel Hood, first Viscount Hood (1724-1816), a lord of the Admiralty, famous for his naval battles in the West Indies during the American War of Independence. As naval commissioner of Toulon in 1793, he was involved with the Toulonese evacuees: see D.N.B., ix, pp. 1157-64.

<sup>94</sup>Dundas to Lord Hood, 21 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 584.

<sup>95</sup>See below, pp. 210-11.

<sup>96</sup>Dundas to George III, 22 Sept. 1792, George III, Later Correspondence, 1, p. 616.

of the project, but for reasons of economy rather than security. He pointed out to Dundas that only a third of the total number were applying for relief, so many would not come under the government's eye, and that those who had been sent with 'evil intentions' would hardly be under the necessity of applying for charity.<sup>97</sup>

November brought the problem of the military émigrés. The government was alarmed at the prospect of having a large number of armed French soldiers in the kingdom, no matter what their political allegiances. The Home Office thought it advisable to station men along the roads from Harwich and Dover to London to search aliens for arms, and to bring anyone bearing them before a magistrate. In so instructing one local man, Evan Nepean warned that

It is possible that in the performance of this service some steps may be necessary to be taken not exactly justifiable by Law, but in times like the present, when dangerous incendiaries are daily resorting to this Country, avowedly with mischievous intentions, it is not necessary to be very nice.<sup>98</sup>

He promised that the government would give support if any trouble arose from such actions.<sup>99</sup>

In a letter to Pitt, William Augustus Miles, no lover of the émigrés, warned Pitt that their arms might be turned against Britain,

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<sup>97</sup>W. King to [Dundas], 20 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, ff. 576-7.

<sup>98</sup>Nepean to Rev. P. Salter, 1 Dec. 1792, H.O.42/23, f. 43.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

'and the fable of the Trojan horse realized'. He suggested that foreigners should be compelled to deposit all arms at the customs houses on arrival, 'giving the collector or mayor their names, situation in life, and the object of their coming to England'.<sup>100</sup> Miles was mistaken in his belief that this letter was the origin of the Alien Bill, but his suggestion about arms was incorporated in it.

During November, the ministry thought that there was danger of insurrection in the country, and decided to call out the militia.<sup>101</sup> Parliament had to be convened within fourteen days of the militia being called out on 1 December, and it was in the ensuing session that the first Alien Bill was introduced. Sir Gilbert Elliot, a Whig who supported Burke's views on the Revolution, knew of no insurrections, and thought that Pitt had called out the militia as an excuse to convene parliament at short notice.<sup>102</sup> Fox was scathing on the subject of insurrections at places that could not be named, being 'too notorious to be described'.<sup>103</sup> The government had two obvious motives for introducing the Alien Bill in this session: to deal with a genuinely perceived threat to internal security, and to reap political advantage from dissensions in the Whig ranks.

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<sup>100</sup> Miles to Pitt, 30 Nov. 1792, Miles, Correspondence, i, p. 361. For the Trojan horse idea, see also W. Robertson to [?], 5 Dec. 1792, H.O.42/23, f. 134.

<sup>101</sup> For the views of Pitt and Dundas, see Pitt to Dundas, 8, 27 Nov. 1792, Pitt Papers, Clements Library, University of Michigan. From these letters, it would appear that the alarms came from Dundas in Scotland; Pitt was preoccupied with seditious libels rather than aliens at the time.

<sup>102</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 13 Dec. 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 80-1. Parliament could not be convened at less than fourteen days notice, unless for the purpose of calling out the militia: *ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Charles James Fox, Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox ed. Lord John Russell, 4 vols (London, 1853-7), iii, pp. 30-1.

## IV

The Alien Bill introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Grenville on 19 December 1792 represented the legislative outcome of the government's growing fears of an influx of aliens bearing seditious ideas, and experience of revolution, into a country in which political radicals were questioning the rights of the oligarchs to rule unchallenged and unchanged. Politically, it was the culmination of the first stage towards the coalition of the Portland Whigs with Pitt's ministry, which was to be effected in July 1794.

Negotiations for a coalition between the entire Whig party and the ministry had continued throughout the summer and autumn, without result. If Fox's position in the party had been equivocal then, by the time the session opened, he was clearly aligned with the radical and reforming wing which was so distrusted by conservative Whigs such as Portland and Fitzwilliam. Portland could no longer condone Fox's views on reform, sedition and the French Revolution, but he was still held to him by ties of affection and long political association. One faction within the party, comprising Windham, Loughborough, Elliot, Malmesbury and Burke, thought that the time had come for a formal separation from the Foxite Whigs and urged Portland to break with them. This faction later formed a 'Third Party', under the nominal leadership of Windham.<sup>104</sup> The debates on the Alien Bill clearly exposed these splits in the Whig ranks.

The session opened on 13 December and was conducted amid rumours that French emissaries and persons actually concerned in the massacres of 10 August and early September were in London.<sup>105</sup> Auckland sent reports

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<sup>104</sup> O'Gorman, Whig Party, pp. 119-21.

<sup>105</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 13, 25 Dec. 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 81, 91.

to Grenville warning of dangerous characters entering England, adding that 'there are 200 or 300 emissaries from the Propagande, with allowances to live in taverns, coffee houses, and ale-houses, and to promote disorder'.<sup>106</sup>

This climate of apprehension of sedition, and speculation as to the possibility of war with France,<sup>107</sup> affected the debates. The main body of conservative Whigs thought that the country and constitution were in danger from the seditious practices and principles of British radicals and French Jacobins within the realm, and believed that war was imminent. For them, it was right and necessary to support the Bill; their dilemma was whether or not to extend this support more generally to an administration which they disliked and distrusted, thereby making an irreparable breach with the Foxite wing of the party.

The Foxite Whigs argued that fears of sedition were largely groundless, and were being exploited by Pitt's ministry to enable it to introduce repressive measures. War was imminent only if the ministry desired it. The way of the Foxites was clear; they must oppose the Alien Bill as an unnecessarily repressive measure, and continue in their opposition to Pitt's administration.

The group around Windham thought that the conservative Whigs should support the government in a separate body, and considered that Portland's reluctance to break with Fox was damaging his reputation and that of his followers.<sup>108</sup> Windham, Elliot and Malmesbury pressed Portland to declare

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<sup>106</sup> Auckland to Grenville, 14 Dec. 1792, H.M.C. Dropmore, ii, p. 358.

<sup>107</sup> Parliament ordered the augmentation of the forces during this session: W. Cobbett (ed.), Parliamentary History of England (hereafter Parl. Hist.), xxx, col. 334.

<sup>108</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 15, 18 Dec. 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 82-3, 85.

his stance to the House. Several times he promised to do so, but backed down each time, to the exasperation of the group.<sup>109</sup> Elliot forced the Duke's hand to some extent with his own speech in the House of Commons. He disassociated his views from those of Fox, and declared that it was 'the duty of every man to stand forward in support of his majesty's government, and thus to maintain the constitution, and to save the country'. He further stated that many friends, including Portland, shared his sentiments. This upset Fox.<sup>110</sup> That evening, Windham and Elliot met an agitated Fox at Burlington House,<sup>111</sup> and Elliot described the meeting as 'a most unpleasant conference, each of us claiming the Duke of Portland, who is involved in such a labyrinth of inconsistencies as he can never extricate himself from'. Portland agreed that while Elliot had spoken with his authority on the necessity for supporting the government, Elliot's disavowal of Fox had been on his own behalf.<sup>112</sup>

Whig unity was disintegrating but had not yet broken; Portland, Titchfield<sup>113</sup> and Thomas Grenville<sup>114</sup> spoke in favour of the measure, but

<sup>109</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 20, 22, 27 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, pp. 86, 88, 95; Minute of meeting at Burlington House, 24 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, pp. 92-5; Elliot's draft representation to Portland (not executed), Dec. 1792, N.L.S. Ms 11193, ff. 110-11; Entries 18-26 Dec. 1792, Earl of Malmesbury, Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, first Earl of Malmesbury ed. Earl of Malmesbury, 4 vols (London, 1844), ii, pp. 478-88.

<sup>110</sup> Parl. Hist., xxx, 28 Dec. 1792, cols 176-8.

<sup>111</sup> London home of the Duke of Portland.

<sup>112</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 29 Dec. 1792, Minto, ii, p. 96; Entry 28 Dec. 1792, Malmesbury, Diaries and Correspondence, ii, p. 492.

<sup>113</sup> The Marquis of Titchfield, Portland's eldest son.

<sup>114</sup> (1755-1846), brother of Lords Buckingham and Grenville, but a Whig supporter. M.P. for Buckinghamshire 1780-4, Alborough 1790-6, Buckingham 1796-1818; envoy extraordinary to Vienna (1794) and Berlin (1799); and President of the Board of Control and First Lord of the Admiralty 1806-7. He bequeathed his book collection (the 'Grenville Library') to the British Museum. See D.N.B., vii, pp. 575-6.



disavowed any general support of the government. Carlisle, Burrell, Ridley and Fielding spoke in favour of the bill, but remained in the mainstream of the party. Hartley, Windham, Elliot, Beauchamp, Burke and Stanley<sup>115</sup> spoke in support of the measure, and later joined the breakaway 'Third Party' that formed when France declared war in February 1793.<sup>116</sup>

The Alien Bill was represented to Parliament as a measure necessary for the safety of the realm. Its rationale, as expressed by Pitt in his summing-up speech, was that

great numbers of foreigners had come into this country without the means of subsistence, without being brought here for any purposes of commerce, or without any possibility of discrimination,

thus forming a problem of itself. However, 'these persons came from a country whose principles were inimical to the peace and order of every other government'. In addition, France was propagating her doctrines by every means of art and force. But the crux of the matter was the existence of those in Britain who propagated the same principles and corresponded with the Jacobins. 'Was there, then, not reason to suppose, that persons might have been sent to this country, with a view to carrying on that concert'? Though their numbers might not be great, 'it was to be recollected, that these were not to act upon their single strength, but in conjunction with those in this country, who entertained seditious views'.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> John Stanley (1740-99), M.P. for Hastings 1784-96. He practised as a lawyer in Nevis, held several offices, including President of the Council, in the Leeward Islands, and owned considerable property in the West Indies: Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke (eds), The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1754-1790 3 vols (London, 1964), iii, p. 472. He was an active member of Thomas' Committee for the relief of the French clergy and laity: Minutes 5 Nov. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff 37-8.

<sup>116</sup> I have given Whig labels to those who spoke of often acting in Opposition, or who are listed as such in O'Gorman, Whig Party, Appendix I, pp. 243-9. Members of the 'Third Party', are listed in *ibid.*, Appendix II, pp. 250-1.

<sup>117</sup> Parl. Hist., xxx, 4 Jan. 1793, cols 229-31.

Such a conjunction of internal and external enemies of the existing state was what Pitt feared above all else.<sup>118</sup> The Alien Bill can be seen as an early legislative manifestation of this fear, which was evidenced later in the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1794, and the Traitorous Correspondence and Seditious Meetings Acts in 1795. As M.A. Taylor pointed out, the ministers had justified calling parliament on the grounds of the eruption of insurrection inimical to the constitution.<sup>119</sup> Not just the Bill, but the session itself was based on the idea that a time of crisis was at hand, and that Britain and her constitution were threatened by external force and internal insurrection.

The proposed measure would grant the Crown and the executive an unusual amount of discretionary power, so much of the argument centred around whether presumed but unproven danger to the realm justified an extension of executive power. In introducing the Bill into the House of Commons, Dundas said that he hoped the regulations would be seen as necessary to the safety of the state, 'and not giving a power to the executive government greater than the occasion justified'.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup>In one area, these fears were justified. In December 1792 the French Government began the secret negotiations with the United Irishmen, which led to the French invasion of Ireland in 1796, and the Irish uprising in 1798. See above, pp. 79-80.

<sup>119</sup>Parl. Hist., xxx, 4 Jan. 1793, col. 194.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., 28 Dec. 1792, col. 176. Speakers giving the safety of the country as a reason for supporting such a bill included Pitt, Dundas, Mitford, Lord Mulgrave, Jenkinson, Hardinge, and members who usually opposed the government, such as Lord Beauchamp, Lord Fielding, Colonel Hartley, Sir M.W. Ridley, Stanley, Sir Thomas Grenville and Lord Titchfield: ibid., 28 Dec. 1792, cols 176, 189; 31 Dec. 1792, cols 192, 194; 4 Jan. 1793, cols 197, 200, 205, 212, 216, 219, 231.

Some of the strongest supporting speeches came from the Whig ranks. Edmund Burke, Sir Peter Burrell, Sir Gilbert Elliot and William Windham all advocated the measure in terms of a wider principle of support for the administration in a time of crisis. Burrell put solidarity above faction in this manner:

The question now was, not who should govern, but whether there should be any government at all; not who should be minister, but whether there should be a ministry. While we were quarrelling about the shadow, the French were endeavouring to deprive us of the substance.<sup>121</sup>

Windham put the case for strong government. If a bad administration was a bad thing, so was a weak one, he argued. A bad administration must be made weak to be overturned, and the interim might prove dangerous to the security of the country. At the present moment, he doubted that the benefit to be gained was worth the risk involved. In such times, the ministry should be able to concentrate on its functions, rather than on keeping office.<sup>122</sup>

In leading the opposition to the Bill, Fox tried to bring the debate away from the question of general support for the ministry. He considered that the Bill should be discussed on two grounds. Firstly, did any danger exist? If not, then there was no need for the Bill. Secondly, did the Bill contain the remedy, if such danger was real?<sup>123</sup> He maintained that Britain was in no danger from the propagation of French opinions, as it was a country 'where rational liberty was enjoyed and understood'.<sup>124</sup> Grey argued that danger from France was 'much less likely to come by

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid., 31 Dec. 1792, col. 191.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., 4 Jan. 1793, cols 215-6.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., 31 Dec. 1792, col. 193.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 4 Jan. 1793, col. 220.

persons than by writings', and that the Bill would be ineffective against correspondence between the two countries.<sup>125</sup>

Opposition complaints that the ministry had failed to produce any evidence of danger from aliens were well founded. In introducing the Bill, Dundas had refused to enter into details of the grounds for allegations:

As this bill was grounded on suspicion, and authorized the executive government to act upon that principle, it would be impossible, with any degree of propriety, to lay open the particular sources of information.<sup>126</sup>

Hawkesbury said that to lay the evidence of subversive behaviour on the table might defeat the purpose of the Bill.<sup>127</sup> In supporting the ministry and the measure, Burke even went so far as to argue that 'The strong measure which ministers had been obliged to adopt sufficiently proved the exigence of the crisis'.<sup>128</sup> Pitt described the Bill as a precautionary measure, 'founded in facts of notoriety, and the most evident deductions of reasoning'.<sup>129</sup> He gave his reasoning: there was an influx of aliens; they came from France, whose principles were inimical to other governments; France was spreading those principles by art and force; and there were people in Britain who shared those principles and had contacts with France.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., cols 208-9.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 28 Dec. 1792, col. 176.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 21 Dec. 1792, col. 160.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 28 Dec. 1792, col. 181. During this speech, Burke amazed the House by casting a dagger on the floor, as an example of a Birmingham dagger being made to the order of French assassins.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 4 Jan. 1793, col. 229. As when the militia were called out, the facts were too well known to be given!

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., cols 229-30.

The issue was being made into one of confidence in the government: confidence that it had good, though undisclosed, grounds for framing the Bill, and confidence that they would execute its provisions in a fair and just manner, for the Bill conferred wide discretionary powers on the executive. There was no question of an alien being innocent until proved guilty; suspicion of wrong principles was to be sufficient ground for deportation. The Opposition had expressed its disbelief in the existence of sufficient grounds for the measure. It also expressed lack of confidence in the government's future executive actions. The Earl of Guildford doubted the propriety of delivering up refugees to the sole discretion of the executive power:

But the humanity of ministers, it was said, would be their protection. He would never consent to deliver up one man to the humanity of another . . . . Their lordships had no security but in their moderation, and ought to take care that the country was not disgraced by the inhospitable transportation of persons who had thrown themselves on our hospitality.<sup>131</sup>

Taylor 'never would agree to leave any man at the mercy of ministers, without evidence of guilt, though he did not mean to doubt their humanity'.<sup>132</sup>

Both wings of the Whig party disliked and distrusted Pitt's ministry; their differences arose from whether or not they thought the country's security was sufficiently threatened to warrant supporting a repressive measure introduced by rival politicians. The wide discretionary powers conferred on the executive government by the Bill put the rule of law at stake, as the Foxite Whigs were quick to point out. In the panic engendered by the Revolution in France and the rumoured but unverified insurrections

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<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 26 Dec. 1792, col. 162.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., 4 Jan. 1793, col. 195.

in Britain, most other members of parliament preferred practical security to this principle. The Bill passed both Houses without a division.

Pitt undoubtedly shared in the prevailing panic, but he was also shrewd enough to turn that of others to his own political advantage. He already enjoyed a commanding majority; as the rift in the Whigs exposed by this debate widened in 1793-4, he managed to reduce a small but vocal Opposition to an impotent rump.

## V

Britain and France were not yet at war when the Alien Act<sup>133</sup> passed into law in January 1793, but its provisions were framed in such a way that they could be applied to enemy agents as easily as to bearers of Revolutionary ideology. In its operation, the Act's main functions were to gather information about the identity and whereabouts of aliens entering and residing within the kingdom, to control their entry, movements and place of residence, and to provide powers for their arrest, detention and deportation.

The Act was clearly aimed at people with constitutionalist leanings as well as possible French agents, for registration clauses applied only to aliens who had arrived since 1 January 1792.<sup>134</sup> The government was anxious not to disrupt diplomatic relations or trade, so foreign representatives, their staff and mariners were exempted from the Act,<sup>135</sup> and merchants were entitled to passports allowing them unrestricted travel within the kingdom.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> 33 George III, Cap. 4. A copy of the act is printed in *Great Britain, Statutes at Large*, xvi, pp. 292-9.

<sup>134</sup> 33 George III, Cap. 4, secs 9, 19. Most constitutionalists had arrived in mid-1792: see above, p. 92.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, secs 5, 33. Denizens, naturalised aliens and aliens not more than fourteen years of age were also exempt: *ibid.*, secs 33, 34.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 10. For the definition of an alien merchant, see *ibid.*, sec. 32.

Recording of information began at the port of entry, when masters of incoming vessels had to make a deposition to 'the Collector and Comptroller, or other Chief Officer of the Customs', stating the number and description of alien passengers aboard.<sup>137</sup> On disembarkation, aliens had to make a statement of their personal particulars, including their country or place of principal residence during the past six months, to a chief customs officer, who would then issue them a certificate recording the information.<sup>138</sup> To leave the port of arrival, aliens needed a passport, which could be obtained from 'the Mayor or other Chief Magistrate of such Place, or from one Justice of Peace for the County or District, on production of the above certificate'.<sup>139</sup> Aliens had to follow the same procedure for any subsequent moves, producing their certificates or previous passports in support of their applications.<sup>140</sup> Within ten days of reaching their destination, aliens had to make a statement to a magistrate,<sup>141</sup> including details of current address, length of residence in the kingdom, and place or places of residence in the past six months. They would then receive from the examining magistrate a certificate showing particulars of the declaration.<sup>142</sup> As an additional check, after giving advance notice to a 'housekeeper', a mayor, magistrate or

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., sec. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., secs 3, 4. Servants had to give particulars of their employers as well: *ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., sec. 8.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., sec. 9. Aliens had to produce their passports on demand from magistrates or justices: *ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> If not a magistrate, then a justice of the peace, or a person authorised by either to receive it.

<sup>142</sup> 33 Geo. III, Cap. 4, sec. 19.

justice of the peace could require him to make a statement of the names, ranks and occupations of all aliens resident in his house, specifying the length of time that each had been resident. If there were none, he was so to state.<sup>143</sup> Copies of all documents mentioned above were to be sent to one of the secretaries of state, by the recording or issuing official, with the contents to be kept as confidential as possible.<sup>144</sup>

In addition to the extensive apparatus for alien registration, several provisions of the Act related to the control of aliens and the security of the kingdom. Unless brought in as merchandise, aliens' arms and munitions were to be impounded at the place of arrival,<sup>145</sup> or surrendered to a magistrate by aliens already resident in Britain. Weapons might be kept only if the owner obtained a licence from a secretary of state.<sup>146</sup> Magistrates could require aliens resident in or passing through their jurisdictions to surrender any weapons,<sup>147</sup> ask housekeepers to declare any weapons held by aliens in his household, or search for weapons in houses owned by an alien, under a warrant from a secretary of state.<sup>148</sup>

The procedure set up under the Act for the arrest, detention, trial and expulsion from the kingdom of offenders in breach of the registration

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., sec. 21. Presumably the 'housekeeper' meant the owner or lessee of an alien's place of abode.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., sec. 22. All documents were to be issued free of charge, and could be replaced if lost, stolen or destroyed, if the alien could prove his identity: *ibid.*, secs 35, 36.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., sec. 6.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., sec. 25.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., sec. 26.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., secs 27, 28. The anti-Catholic Penal Laws had provisions for the search of houses and the seizure of arms and munitions: New Catholic Encyclopaedia (New York, 1967), xi, pp. 64, 67. This may have prompted similar provisions in the Alien Act, although the need to disarm incoming French soldiers seems self-evident.



clauses of the Act, was to be used in conjunction with the powers of the Crown in further provisions related to control and security. It was these executive powers of the Crown that had come under fire from the Opposition in the debates on the Act, powers that were implicit rather than explicit in the statute. For example, the power of the Crown to prevent any alien from landing was not asserted, but assumed, by providing penalties against shipmasters who allowed aliens to land, contrary to an order from the Crown.<sup>149</sup> In the same way, the right of the Crown to order any alien to leave the kingdom by proclamation, order in council or order under sign manual, was assumed by prescribing penalties for any alien who failed to leave the kingdom if so directed.<sup>150</sup> However, it was specifically laid down that the Crown could order any alien arrived since 1 January 1792 or during the continuance of the Act, to reside in such district as the Crown thought proper,<sup>151</sup> and the power of the Crown to order the expulsion of any alien committed to gaol, admitted to bail or imprisoned for an offence against the Act, was stated to be lawful.<sup>152</sup>

As the Opposition had pointed out, these provisions denied to aliens the right of habeas corpus. They enabled the government to expel foreigners on the grounds of unstated and unproven suspicions, as these were the key powers that the government had sought, in order to stem the infiltration

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid., sec. 7.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., sec. 15.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., sec. 18. This power was invoked on 4 Feb. 1793: see below, p. 120.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., sec. 29.

of men holding revolutionary principles, or agents of the French government. The necessity for the former measure might be questioned by some, but the outbreak of war with France damped objections to the Act until after 1815.

For any alien suspected of breaches of the registration clauses of the Act, the general procedure was for him to be detained in custody, usually on the order of a secretary of state, mayor, magistrate or justice of the peace,<sup>153</sup> tried, and if convicted, ordered to leave the kingdom within a specified time.<sup>154</sup> There were several additions to and variations of this procedure. For example, convictions for the offences of not producing a passport on demand, and uttering or possessing a false passport, carried prison sentences before expulsion from the realm.<sup>155</sup> Other variations increased the power of the executive. An alien failing to produce his passport on demand was to be detained pending instructions from a secretary of state. Unless he signified that the suspect was to be released or deported, the latter would then be brought to trial in the usual way.<sup>156</sup> Although this gave the executive a means to deport aliens without trial, in practice it also enabled it to check over-zealous activities on the part of local officials, thus working to the advantage of some suspects.

Some of these powers were redundant, because the Crown had already assumed the power to order aliens out of the kingdom without recourse to trial and without nominating grounds for the order other than its being

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<sup>153</sup>See, for example, *ibid.*, sec. 15.

<sup>154</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 3.

<sup>155</sup>*Ibid.*, secs 12, 13.

<sup>156</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 11.

necessary for public safety or tranquillity. The Act provided that in cases where he anticipated non-compliance with the order, the secretary of state could grant a warrant to conduct out of the kingdom the subject of the order.<sup>157</sup> Under the terms of the Act, most aliens convicted of a breach of the Act, were required to leave the kingdom. The penalty for failure to leave when so ordered was transportation for life, and the penalty for being found in the kingdom after being transported was death.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the executive had considerable coercive powers at its disposal in the implementation of the Act.

The terms of the exemption clauses of the Act made it clear that the Act was aimed at citizens of the Republic of France. Chauvelin, the French Ambassador, protested against the Bill being applied to French citizens, on the grounds that it was an abrogation of the 1786 Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce and Navigation,<sup>159</sup> but Grenville ignored his protests, and the Bill was enacted on 8 January 1793.

The 1793 Alien Act is an example of a ministry perceiving a problem and initiating legislation to deal with it. A politician's opinion of whether or not the emigration constituted a problem of national security, apart from party considerations, was likely to depend largely on his view of the French Revolution. If he still welcomed it as bringing

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., sec. 17.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., secs 3, 38.

<sup>159</sup> Article IV of the treaty gave French and British subjects reciprocal rights of entry to the kingdoms 'without licence or passport, general or special, by land or by sea, or any other way'. See Annual Register, xxviii, 1786, State Papers, p. 268. For Chauvelin's complaints, see ibid., xxxv, 1793, History of Europe, pp. 237-8.

greater social and political justice to France, why should he try to stem the tide of men's ideas from there? If, however, he viewed Revolutionary ideas and methods as a threat to British society and his position in it, any measure which stopped their infiltration must be supported. Pitt and his ministers were of the latter persuasion, but they did not see the Revolution as a threat until events in France had moved beyond a mere modification of a system of monarchy, to a real transfer of power within the social structure. Correspondingly, they did not see the emigration as a threat until the numbers involved grew substantially, and it included men who had supported the Revolution at its inception. For Pitt, too, the essential agreement between his ministry and the Portland Whigs on the issue was too good an opportunity to be missed for sowing dissension in the ranks of the Opposition.

The Alien Act had no force in two other places that offered potential security problems for the British - the Channel Islands and Ireland. The States of Jersey issued a proclamation on the control of aliens on the Island,<sup>160</sup> and presumably similar steps were taken on the other Islands. The Irish administration quickly introduced into the Irish House of Commons 'A bill for establishing regulations respecting aliens arriving in this kingdom or resident therein in certain cases and subjects of this kingdom who have served or are serving in foreign armies'. The Bill was modelled on the British one; presumably its extension to include Irish soldiers was aimed at men such as the members of the former Irish Brigade of France. The Bill passed the Irish House of Commons on 16 January 1793, and the Lords assented to it on 31 January.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> See below, p. 120.

<sup>161</sup> Journals of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland, xv, pt 1, pp. 128, 133.

## CHAPTER 4

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIEN ACT, 1793-1802

## I

The Alien Office (or Alien Department) was the administrative body which carried out the provisions of the Alien Act of 1793 and its successors. Yet it did not exist when the Act was passed, its provenance is a matter of argument, and its exact status as an institution is difficult to define. It began within the Home Office, yet J.C. Sainty does not include its personnel in his compilation of Home Office officials, and he describes the office of Clerk for Aliens Business as 'created in 1836 for the purpose of discharging the work formerly undertaken by the distinct Aliens Department'.<sup>1</sup> Alien Office officials worked closely with the Home Office, and much of its correspondence was signed by an under secretary or the secretary. Perhaps it might best be described as an 'out office' of the Home Office, although it must be seen as an integral part of Britain's central bureaucracy.

R.R. Nelson, in his study of the early years of the Home Office, cites the creation of the Alien Office as

the sole instance in this period, as far as the Home Office is concerned, of an institutional response to a problem; that is, Parliament planned and enacted legislation that set up an office with definite duties and distinct jurisdiction in order to meet a specific need.<sup>2</sup>

It is true that within days of the promulgation of the Alien Act a special post was created to deal with matters arising from it, and

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<sup>1</sup>Sainty, Home Office Officials, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Nelson, Home Office, p. 69.

that this position was to form the nucleus of that section of the Home Office known as the Alien Office, which in turn was a forebear of Britain's present Aliens Registration Office. Yet it is difficult to justify (and Dr Nelson does not) the assertion that the Alien Office was set up under the Act. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that its creation was unpremeditated, and that it took shape as a result of the early separation of alien from routine business flowing from the unanticipated volume of paperwork engendered by the registration clauses of the Act.

The Act relied upon existing officials for its execution: customs officers, mayors, magistrates, justices of the peace and a 'secretary of state'. The latter was unspecified in the Act, because the secretaries of state 'hold a single office and their powers are equal and interchangeable'.<sup>3</sup> Thus the Act did not nominate any minister or institution as responsible for its administration, let alone create a specific office. But the choice of the Home Office as the appropriate central government agency was obvious for a law which covered aliens from the moment of arrival in the kingdom to that of departure. The choice of decentralised administrative agents was equally logical. Agents were needed in the ports and localities if effective control over aliens were to be established. Customs officers already supervised all port traffic and passengers, and mayors, magistrates and justices of the peace formed a network of men who carried out various local government functions; both groups already co-operated with the Home Office on routine business. Moreover, in the absence of either a co-ordinated police force, or a disposition to create a new administrative body, the government had little option

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<sup>3</sup> Sir Edward Troup, The Home Office (2nd edn, London, 1926), p. 1. It followed from this that in the absence of the Home Secretary the Foreign Secretary (or the Secretary for War, from July 1794) must sign any deportation orders.

in its choice.

The early appointment of William Huskisson<sup>4</sup> to deal with business arising from the Act seems to have been a casual action by Mr Secretary Dundas, made without any real appreciation of the volume of work likely to arise from its provisions, or any thought to future institutional development. Huskisson and Dundas were mutual guests at a dinner party given by Lord Gower, the former Ambassador to France. Conversation turning on a French lady's query to Gower that morning about the Act, Dundas remarked

that they were in want of a Person who could speak the Language, & direct the Execution of that Bill according to the views of Government; which were, to show every possible civility & respect to all Foreigners, whose conduct in this Country had not given rise to any suspicion, & especially to save the Ladies the trouble of appearing at the public Offices.<sup>5</sup>

Huskisson had lived some years in Paris, where he had belonged briefly to the constitutional monarchical 'Club of 1789', and had later become Gower's private secretary. His secretarial experience, his fluent French, and the patronage of Gower, were recommendations for such a position. He responded to Dundas' hints, and took the post, although describing it as 'certainly not a place that I would have asked for'.<sup>6</sup>

The post was no sinecure. Emigrant traffic was heavy in both directions at south-eastern ports. Soldiers from the disbanded armies

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<sup>4</sup> (1770-1830), Under Secretary for War 1795, Secretary to the Treasury 1804-5 and 1807-9, Treasurer of the Navy and President the Board of Trade 1823-7, Colonial Secretary and leader of the House of Commons 1827-8. He was M.P. for Morpeth 1796-1802, Liskeard 1804-7, Harwich 1807-12, Chichester 1812-23 and Liverpool 1823-30. He was noted for his talents in financial administration. He was killed when he fell under a train at the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool railway. See D.N.B., x, pp. 323-8.

<sup>5</sup> W. Huskisson to W. Hayley, 18 Jan. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 38734 f. 33.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ff. 33-4.

of the French Princes continued to pour in through Harwich and Gravesend,<sup>7</sup> while Abbé Baston recorded that after the passing of the Alien Bill,

la foule de ceux qui se hâtèrent de quitter Londres et l'Angleterre fut si grande que les paquebots suffisaient à peine à leur transport en France.<sup>8</sup>

Besides the incoming refugees, aliens already within the country had to register. All told, Huskisson and two clerks were kept busy with alien business in January.<sup>9</sup> Huskisson handled routine administrative matters, while general correspondence appears to have been the responsibility of the 'Permanent' Under Secretary, at first Evan Nepean, then John King. The Home Secretary himself dealt with policy and notables.<sup>10</sup>

This fortuitious separation of alien business at such an early stage fostered administrative specialisation in the Alien Office, as did its close links with the customs service and the embryo metropolitan police force, themselves specialist organisations. All three bodies reflected the growing professionalism of Britain's civil service. By 1802 the Alien Office had grown into a small, separate institution, subordinate to the Home Office, but with its own establishment, accounts and defined responsibilities. This chapter examines the development of alien legislation, the Alien Office and its administrative practices.

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Report from Customs House, Harwich, 2 Jan. 1793, H.O.1/1, unf.; Hume to [Nepean?], 1 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Baston, *Mémoires*, ii, p. 39.

<sup>9</sup> Huskisson to Hayley, 18 Jan. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 38734, f. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 391-2.



## II

When the Alien Act nominated customs officials to send information regarding incoming aliens to the central government, it was merely extending and formalising current practice. Early in January, James Hume of the London Customs House was sending in reports on alien arrivals from customs officers at ports such as Harwich, Dover and Gravesend.<sup>11</sup> At Gravesend, the customs officers had trouble policing traffic, obtaining accurate information and dealing with volatile French tempers. Some foreign passengers were landed before boats reached Gravesend, or along the river between there and London. The customs men could transmit only details given by the foreigners themselves,

who, being frequently much incensed at the interrogatories put to them, doubtless give such answers as are indirect, and evasive; and, many of them, upon being required to deliver their arms into the custody of the Officers, have been so enraged, as, rather than surrender them, to throw their Pistols into the water, and to break their swords in the Officers presence.<sup>12</sup>

Most new arrivals were soldiers, men of rank who had left France, family and fortune to fight for their king and way of life. They had endured poverty, discomfort, blighted hopes and defeat in the field by despised inferiors, representing a detested régime. On arrival in exile, to be questioned by petty officials and told to surrender their arms must have seemed the culminating humiliation.

The Home Office quickly disseminated printed copies and translations of the Act to customs officers through Hume, and to

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<sup>11</sup>See, for example, letters with enclosures from Hume to Nepean, 1, 2 Jan. 1793, H.O.1/1, unf.

<sup>12</sup>Hume to [?], 2 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

magistrates and justices through each county's custos rotulorum, an office usually held by the lord lieutenant.<sup>13</sup> Mayors, magistrates and justices in towns where refugees were concentrated, such as Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester, bore much of the burden of initial registrations.<sup>14</sup> The brunt, however, fell on the office of the Lord Mayor of London. The capital had the largest population of aliens of any town in England, and foreigners living in inner London had to present themselves at the Lord Mayor's office in the City, or to a justice of the peace in Westminster, to make their declarations; the office then issued them a certificate several days later.<sup>15</sup> Numbers are difficult to obtain, but on 19 February one of Lord Auckland's correspondents reported that there were 'upwards of six thousand refugees in London and its environs: the number, Mr Neve, one of the new justices, tells me it [sic] is ascertained by his and his brother justices' register'.<sup>16</sup> By the end of 1793, the Lord Mayor had appointed John Mazzinghi to take charge of the Alien's Register for the City of London.<sup>17</sup> He appears to have spent most of his time at Gravesend.

The next greatest concentration of aliens was in Jersey; almost

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<sup>13</sup>Hume to Nepean, 12 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*; Lord Howard to Dundas, 13 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*; Marquis of Salisbury to Dundas, 13 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>W. Smith to Dundas, 4 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*; R. Corbin to T. Hester, 24 Jan. 1793, T.93/53, f. 124.

<sup>15</sup>Baston, Mémoires, ii, pp. 38-9.

<sup>16</sup>Storer to Auckland, 19 Feb. 1793, Auckland, Journal and Correspondence, ii, p. 498. Whatever the accuracy of their estimate, there were aliens enough in London to keep justices busy. There were about 1200 French clergy alone on relief in London early in 1793, see Minutes 5 April 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 90, and the French were by no means the only aliens in the capital.

<sup>17</sup>Huskisson to J. Mazzinghi, 2 Dec. 1793, H.O.1/1, unf.

all of them were French refugees. Like the other Channel Islands, Jersey posed special problems for the administration of the Act. Laws framed in Westminster did not necessarily have force there, yet the island was often the initial point of entry for incoming French. To some extent the government got around the problem by using Jersey as a kind of 'quarantine station', and concentrating its attention on controlling the traffic between the island and the English coast.

Jersey was not included in the 1793 Alien Act, despite Fall's recommendation that it should be.<sup>18</sup> The ministry decided that Jersey's Code de Loix of 1635 gave the lieutenant-governor sufficient authority to effect the provisions of the Act. Under the Code, persons sheltering an alien for more than one night were required to inform the constable of the parish, who would report this to the governor.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless Dundas, sending Fall a copy of the Act, a copy of the Code de Loix, and some printed forms as used under the Act to record descriptions of aliens, instructed him to make a complete return of aliens, to send him a duplicate copy, and to make a list of persons whom he thought should be removed from the island, specifying his reasons in each case.<sup>20</sup> Fall complied. As of March 1793 there were 4,007 refugees on Jersey, of whom 2,674 lived in St Héliier, the rest being scattered between ten of the other eleven parishes. The total was made up of 2,714 clergy, 814 nobles and 479 labourers and servants.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Fall to Dundas, 28 Dec. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>19</sup>'Regulations respecting Foreigners contained in the Code de Loix of Jersey', enclosed in [Dundas] to Fall, 20 Jan. 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>20</sup>[Dundas] to Fall, 20 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>'Summary of the Lists of Aliens...', 1 Mar. 1793, enclosed in Fall to Dundas, 8 April 1793, *ibid.*

After Colonel James Craig<sup>22</sup> was appointed Commander-in-Chief of Jersey in January 1793, much of the responsibility for aliens passed to him. The outbreak of rebellions in western France in March caused him anxiety over the probable influx of French, because France was now enemy territory. In a letter to Dundas he expressed the dilemma of security versus humanitarianism which was central to the refugee problem for Britain:

I could not I think consistent with the safety of the Island permit them to land while on the other hand it would be with difficulty that I could prevail on myself to deny them that refuge of which they would stand in such great need.

Craig suggested housing new arrivals on transports, before sending them elsewhere, but this measure was not adopted.<sup>23</sup>

In May he attempted to regulate the position of aliens more strictly, but ran into difficulties with local authorities. On 6 May he issued a proclamation ordering aliens to present themselves in person before émigré commissioners,

& de leur déclarer leurs noms, l'endroit de leur naissance, leurs ci-devant professions, le temps de leur arrivée dans le pays, & le nom de la personne chez laquelle elles logent, & telles autres circonstances dont on pourra exiger la connoissance.<sup>24</sup>

Two character witnesses were needed. After the desposition, the alien would receive a certificate, to be carried with him and produced on demand. Craig

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<sup>22</sup>Sir James Henry Craig (1748-1812), later Governor-General of Canada (1807). Commissioned as general in 1812. See D.N.B., iv, pp. 1368-70.

<sup>23</sup>Sir J. Craig to Dundas, 26 Mar. 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>24</sup>Proclamation of 6 May 1793, *ibid.*

nominated six commissioners, three ecclesiastical and three lay.<sup>25</sup> Thus attestation as to character, and the use of Frenchmen to judge their fellows, came early in Jersey.

Craig soon revoked the proclamation, after complaints from the States, which issued a new one in its name on 15 May, ordering a slightly amended procedure.<sup>26</sup> These measures appear to have been successful in controlling the French while on the island; most future problems involved traffic to and from the island, with both England and France.

The declaration of war on 1 February 1793 had several short and long term effects on the administration of the Alien Act. The importance of the Act was immediately augmented; not only revolutionary ideas, but active enemy agents, had to be guarded against. It could not be left to fall into disuse when fears of revolutionary ideas might abate; the machinery which had been set in motion must continue to operate. Moreover, war gave new point to the executive powers of the Act. Invasion was a tangible threat to the security of the realm, and much could be done in the name of 'security' in wartime. The outbreak of war pressed so hard on the heels of the Alien Act that it is impossible to say what difference it made. However, the government might have found it more difficult to deport aliens without giving good grounds for its action had hostilities not broken out.

One immediate result of the war was the use of the Crown's power under the Alien Act to define the areas within which aliens could reside. By the Proclamation of 4 February 1793<sup>27</sup>, the limits were set at not more than

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Craig to Dundas, 28 May 1793, *ibid.*; Craig to [?], 20 May [1793], H.O.99/14, unf.; Proclamations of 10 and 15 May 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>27</sup> London Gazette, no. 13499, 1793, pp. 97-8.

fifty miles from London and not less than ten miles from the coast. This meant that the rush of initial registrations in January was followed by the task of issuing passports to those aliens who had to move and registering them on arrival at their destination. These refugees suffered the upheaval of leaving their place of settlement and finding a new home.<sup>28</sup> Abbé Baston described the hardships caused to the French clergy by the order to move from the coast at such short notice:

Les voitures manquèrent. La plupart des ecclésiastiques furent obligés de voyager à pied. On les insulta sur la route, et très grièvement, en qualité de Français qui avaient assassiné leur roi. Si l'injure affligeait, le motif apportait quelque consolation.<sup>29</sup>

The government relented, and allowed more time for the evacuation, but the damage was done.<sup>30</sup> In some cases, however, applications from townspeople won exemptions for refugees residing locally.<sup>31</sup> Baston thought that the ecclesiastics were given most latitude in the easing of restrictions.<sup>32</sup> The priests at Winchester were exempted from the proclamation, although those residing at Forton were not: the priests there were moved to Winchester.<sup>33</sup>

Apparently traffic between France and England was not halted by the outbreak of war, for the Home Office drafted and sent to the Postmaster-General two forms of passport, one needed by anyone embarking on a packet boat bound for France or French-held territory, and the other needed by anyone arriving from such areas.<sup>34</sup> The Home Office also attempted to take its control of entry

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Hampshire Chronicle 18 Feb. 1793.

<sup>29</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.; The Times 23 Feb. 1793; Hampshire Chronicle 25 Feb. 1793.

<sup>32</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 40.

<sup>33</sup> According to Baston, there were 263 priests at Forton by February 1793: ibid., p. 123. The Hampshire Chronicle 18 Feb. 1793 estimated that 180 priests were to be shifted from Gosport to Winchester. For further discussion, see below, pp. 216-8.

<sup>34</sup> Dundas to Postmaster-General, 25 Feb. 1793, H.O.43/4, pp. 194-5.

into the kingdom one stage further by requiring non-British passengers from Ostend to produce a passport issued by the Austrian government of the Netherlands, or its authorised delegate. This passport was to contain the name, description and nationality of the bearer.<sup>35</sup> This was the first of several such attempts to control the flow of aliens by vetting them at the ports of embarkation for Great Britain.

These precautions did not prevent the renegade French general, Dumouriez, from entering England under an assumed name in June, although he was ordered to quit the country, after his letter to Grenville seeking permission to stay revealed his presence.<sup>36</sup> The dramatist Caron de Beaumarchais<sup>37</sup> was deported in August 1793 for attempting to buy arms, subsequently confiscated by the British authorities.<sup>38</sup> The British government's distrust of Beaumarchais was not surprising, as he had exported arms to the United States during the American War of Independence.<sup>39</sup> In March 1794 the British government finally deported Talleyrand, despite his protests. He had long been under suspicion,

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<sup>35</sup> Nepean to Hume, 12 April 1793, *ibid.*, pp. 225-6.

<sup>36</sup> The Times 18-20 June 1793; Gentleman's Magazine, lxxiii, June 1793, p. 572; J.R. Dinwiddy, 'The use of the Crown's power of deportation under the Aliens Act, 1793-1826', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xli, Nov. 1968, p. 195. Dumouriez had attempted to lead a march on Paris, had failed, and had deserted to the Austrians in April 1793: *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Pierre Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-99), born Caron, but assumed the title 'de Beaumarchais' on his marriage to a wealthy widow in 1756. A man of many parts, he was in turn watchmaker, inventor, tutor to the French Royal Family, political writer, dramatist and businessman. His most successful comedies were Le Barbier de Seville (1795) and La Folle Journée, ou le mariage de Figaro (1784). See Chambers Biographical Dictionary, i, p. 103.

<sup>38</sup> The Times 20 Aug. 1793; Dinwiddy, 'Deportations', p. 202. For an account of Beaumarchais' arms dealings, see Nurpur Chaudhuri, 'Beaumarchais and his reactions to the French Revolution', Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, iii, 1975, pp. 242-55.

<sup>39</sup> The French government backed his venture with loans and supplies. The arms were traded through the clandestine company Rodrigue Hortalez et Cie: see Brian Morton 'Vergennes, Beaumarchais and Rodrigue Hortalez et Cie', *ibid.*, pp. 256-62.

but the immediate cause for deportation and whether it was justified are matters for conjecture.<sup>40</sup> The press carried occasional reports of émigrés who had been requested to leave the country, but gave few details of the grounds for the orders.<sup>41</sup> Information on alien cases or activities came from the officials who administered the Act, members of the public, and organised surveillance.<sup>42</sup>

Over-zealous officials sometimes caused problems, as when the customs officer at Falmouth wanted to class seventy-nine émigré soldiers as prisoners-of-war, or when magistrates refused to allow Louis Stephen Lucas, a priest living and teaching in Fareham, to visit Portsmouth on Sundays to attend divine worship. Lucas' case was taken up by the Town Clerk of Portsmouth, who asked permission from Dundas on his behalf.<sup>43</sup>

This was not the only occasion on which an Englishman pleaded on behalf of Frenchmen. One landlord wrote to Dundas extolling the good conduct and innocence of his former lodger, after the latter had tried to hang himself while in custody.<sup>44</sup> In January 1794 a French cook, Toussaint Brossat, was detained in Rochester for being found without a passport. John Longtry, who had examined him, thought that the lack of a passport was caused by a misunderstanding, and hoped that Dundas would order his release. Apparently his plea had no effect, for he

<sup>40</sup> Dinwiddy, 'Deportations', pp. 201-2; Duff Cooper, Talleyrand (London, 1938), pp. 70-1.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 16, 23 Feb. 1793; Hampshire Chronicle 11 Feb. 1793. For a fuller discussion on deportations, see Dinwiddy, 'Deportations'.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Dundas to Lord Mayor, 7 Dec. 1793, H.O.43/4, p. 382; Buckingham to Grenville, 4 Oct. 1793, H.M.C. Dropmore, ii, p. 437; reports on Mr Ferris, 18 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1793, reports on M. de Breuil, 17 Nov. to 1 Dec. 1793, reports on M. Duffour, 1 to 9 Dec. 1793, H.O.1/1, unf.

<sup>43</sup> S. Pellew (Falmouth) to Hume, 1 May 1793, *ibid.*; S. Barney (Portsmouth) to Dundas, 11 Oct. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> T. Emmerton to Dundas, 29 Dec. 1793, *ibid.*



wrote again to the Home Office, asking to be allowed to grant Brossat bail before his trial, as 'His health has already suffered from it, though every Indulgence has been granted him'.<sup>45</sup> Windham asked for clemency for Restiaux, a Frenchman ordered to quit the kingdom; he had lived in England for thirty years, had an English wife and family, and had lived in such remote areas that Windham thought him unlikely to have carried on a correspondence with the Continent.<sup>46</sup>

The flow of alien traffic swelled again from early 1794, with the French invasion of the Low Countries, and Dundas attempted to tighten control. In April he tried to prevent suspicious foreigners from leaving Falmouth for North America, by asking the Postmaster General to order the agent for the packet boats there not to allow any alien aboard without a passport furnished by the Home Secretary.<sup>47</sup> Controlling incoming aliens was the problem at Harwich; the mayor obeyed Dundas' injunction to apply the Act more rigorously, by warning innkeepers and people letting carriages not to hire out conveyances to aliens without passports, and by closer liaison with customs officers. As it was difficult to prevent aliens from leaving town without a passport, the mayor suggested that baggage should be held until the owner could produce a passport.<sup>48</sup>

One of Dundas' last acts as Home Secretary in July 1794 was to concert measures with Grenville to prevent the arrival of destitute

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<sup>45</sup> J. Longtry to J. Sargent, 16 Feb. 1794, H.O.1/2, unf.; Longtry to W. Pollock, 9 March 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> W. Windham to [?], 5 July 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Dundas to Postmaster General, 15 April 1794, H.O.43/5, p. 65.

<sup>48</sup> C. Cox to Dundas, 18 May 1794, H.O.1/2, unf.

emigrants in the wake of the military reverses of the allied armies in Flanders. Dundas wanted Grenville to instruct British ministers abroad not to allow emigrants to embark unless satisfied that they were 'not likely to become an immediate Burthen to the Public'. If the destitute were allowed to come, they would 'require a proportionate increase in the Sums at present allowed by Government to Persons in a similar situation'.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of Dundas' term as Home Secretary, the shape of the administration of the Alien Act, and the problems it entailed, were already clear. Alien business was dealt with separately within the Home Office, under the care of one official, appointed specifically to the task, at a rank below that of an under secretary. The office attempted to restrict the entry of undesirable or destitute aliens by preventing their embarkation for Britain, or, if that failed, by questioning at the ports of arrival. The main problems were aliens landing outside the ports, or leaving the ports before being granted passports. With aliens inside the kingdom the office concentrated on gathering information both on the total situation regarding aliens, and on the behaviour of specific individuals. However, the Home Office's prime concern being national security, it was prepared to make exceptions to the rules, to prevent hardship, if there were no apparent danger thereby.

### III

On 11 July 1794 the Portland Whigs coalesced with Pitt's ministry, five entering the cabinet.<sup>50</sup> The coalition was the occasion for an

<sup>49</sup> Dundas to Grenville, 9 July 1794, H.O.43/5, p. 273. The government had been making relief grants to the French refugees in England since December 1793.

<sup>50</sup> Portland (Home Secretary), Fitzwilliam (President of the Council), Lord Spencer (Lord Privy Seal), Windham (Secretary-at-War) and Lord Mansfield (without portfolio): O'Gorman, Whig Party, p. 209.

administrative reorganisation of several departments, and the creation of a new one, the War Department. Under these changes, the functions of the former Home Office were split. Portland became Home Secretary, responsible for domestic affairs and the colonies, while Dundas became Secretary-for-War at the head of the new department, retaining responsibility for the conduct of the war. Windham became Secretary-at-War, responsible for the army, and head of the War Office. These three departments, together with the Treasury, were those which had most to do with the French refugees in Britain.<sup>51</sup> The coalition benefitted the émigré cause in that the Portland Whigs favoured the restoration of the monarchy in France, and Windham was their particular friend.

This reorganisation provoked changes in the Home Office, not the least in personnel. Dundas took Nepean and Huskisson with him to the War Department. It was unlikely that Portland wanted to retain Huskisson, as he had objected to a former member of one of the clubs in Paris having power over French émigrés.<sup>52</sup> Two months after taking office, Portland asked William Wickham<sup>53</sup> to undertake

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<sup>51</sup>The Treasury funded and supervised the activities of Wilmot's Committee, the War Department funded welfare payments to the refugees in the Channel Islands, the War Office had charge of the émigré regiments, and the Home Office administered the Alien Act and paid the Toulonese evacuees.

<sup>52</sup>Portland to Windham, 23 March 1794, B.M. Add. Ms 37845, f. 37. In the same letter, Portland suggested that a Royalist committee should be set up to vet any French applying to ministers.

<sup>53</sup>He was personal friend of Lord Grenville's. He studied law in Geneva, then was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1786. In August 1793, Grenville had used him in a secret foreign correspondence. In May 1794 Pitt and Dundas had commended his efforts in suppressing sedition in the country. D.N.B., xxi, p. 177; Nepean to W. Wickham, 10 May 1794, Wickham Papers, Hampshire C.R.O. 38M49, dep. 6, bundle 6, unf.

the management of all matters that in any way related to the Aliens, and in particular to procure as soon as possible accurate returns of them all, and to open some channels of information by which better intelligence... might be reduced to something like a regular system.<sup>54</sup>

Portland saw the declarations as the 'key to our Security with respect to the Aliens, and asked Wickham not 'to omit any proper means of being well informed of the description & abode of all foreigners'.<sup>55</sup>

Portland had already forbidden aliens to board Post Office boats in Holland without passports from British ministers abroad or from the commander-in-chief in Flanders.<sup>56</sup> He had also expedited procedures at Harwich, the main port of entry, by sending lists of approved aliens expected there,<sup>57</sup> and instituted the practice of circulating lists of aliens who had been ordered to leave Britain, making it more difficult for them to re-enter the country.<sup>58</sup> Thus within a few months of assuming office, Portland showed several of his continuing concerns: to gather as accurate information as possible and to achieve strict control at the ports, while minimising the inconvenience of procedures under the Act for the large number of foreigners who were free from suspicion.

Under Portland's régime, that section of the Home Office which dealt with aliens began to assume a more definite identity. Expenses

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<sup>54</sup>Wickham to T. Broderick, 5 Sept. 1794, H.O.1/2, unf.

<sup>55</sup>Portland to Wickham, 6 Sept. 1794, Wickham Papers, Hampshire C.R.O. 38M49, dep. 1, bundle 40, unf.

<sup>56</sup>Portland to Post Master General, 17 July 1794, H.O.43/5, pp. 295-6. In December, Portland ordered that aliens with passports from Provence and Artois were also to be admitted: King to Mayor of Harwich, 13 Dec. 1794, H.O.5/1, pp. 115-6.

<sup>57</sup>Portland to Mayor of Harwich, 14 Aug. 1794, H.O.43/5, p. 351. Presumably these lists were compiled from names sent from embassies and consulates abroad.

<sup>58</sup>King to Mayors of Dover and Harwich, 21 Oct. 1794, H.O.5/1, p. 59; King to Baron de Nagell, 22 Oct. 1794, *ibid.*, p. 62.

under the Alien Act were rendered separately from about this time.<sup>59</sup> When Wickham became superintendent of aliens, a separate entry book was started for alien business.<sup>60</sup> The bulk of the letters went out under John King's name, with a few signed by Portland or Wickham. In October, Thomas Carter, Portland's private secretary, replaced Wickham, when the latter was sent to Switzerland on a confidential mission.<sup>61</sup> By 1795 the section was often referred to as the 'Alien Office', although it did not become a separate office until 1798.<sup>62</sup>

In 1795-6 the movements of aliens to and from Britain, and within the country, were influenced largely by the progress of the war. From late in 1794, the evacuation of Holland brought French émigrés and Dutch citizens to British ports; Harwich received by far the greatest number.<sup>63</sup> The evacuation, the subsequent gathering of émigré forces for the Quiberon expedition in June 1795, their defeat, the fiasco of Artois' occupation of the Isle of Yeu, and the despatch of several émigré regiments to Portugal and the West Indies in

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<sup>59</sup> See Great Britain, Accounts and Papers, xxxv, 1868-9, pp. 453-4.

<sup>60</sup> H.O.5/1 et seq.

<sup>61</sup> He remained there until 1797, as minister to the Swiss cantons. From there, he organised an espionage system against France which enraged the Directory: D.N.B., xxi, p. 177. For an account of these and subsequent activities on the part of Wickham, see André Lebon, L'Angleterre et l'Émigration Française de 1794 à 1801 (Paris, 1882).

<sup>62</sup> See below, pp. 157-8.

<sup>63</sup> In the period 8 Sept. 1794 to 19 Jan. 1795, the Alien Office sent eighty-seven letters giving permission for the aliens listed therein to be granted passports. Of these, seventy-three letters went to Harwich, six to Dover, five to Falmouth, and one each to Rye, Hastings and Swansea. Also the Harwich letters usually carried the longest lists of names. From February 1795 to April 1796, there were only two to five such letters a month, of which three-fifths went to Dover: see H.O.5/1. However, these figures do not include Gravesend, where Mazzinghi was employed by Mansion House as a registrar of aliens.

1796, kept the military émigrés on the move. In mid-1796 the threatened invasion of Britain by the French troops massed in Brittany prompted the government to order the evacuation of refugees from the Channel Islands, to reclaim the King's House at Winchester for use as a barracks, and to apply more strictly the geographical limitations on the residence of aliens.

Naturally, this shifting of the foreign population increased the volume of alien business both for the staff of the Alien Office, and for the customs and local government officers. In January 1795, Philip Stanhope, a clerk from the Alien Office, was sent to Harwich to ease the burden of the customs men who were beset by the flood of French and Dutch refugees from Holland.<sup>64</sup> This set a precedent for sending men from head office to deal with particular local problems. Stanhope left his mark by establishing procedures for questioning aliens on arrival. In this he was assisted by Baron de Suzannet, a member of the French Committee which handled the distribution of funds to the laity under the supervision of Wilmot's Committee. Obviously the government was continuing its practice of using approved Frenchmen to vouch for the identity and character of their fellow-exiles.

Stanhope closely questioned the French on their past movements, present contacts in England, and future means of subsistence. If they could produce some documentary support for their statements, and had some likely means of support, such as military employment, he let them pass. However, he did not enquire too closely into their means of subsistence, as otherwise he 'must have shut the door upon them all'.<sup>65</sup> Before leaving Harwich, Stanhope suggested that he and de Suzannet should compile a list of questions to be asked aliens by future examining officers, and that the French should be required to appear later before the French Committee in London, as well as to

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<sup>64</sup> King to Mayor of Harwich, 20 Jan. 1795, H.O.5/1, p. 139.

<sup>65</sup> P. Stanhope to T. Carter, 21 Jan. 1795, H.O.1/3, f. 86.

provide character witnesses.<sup>66</sup> The Baron further intended to make a list of those who had expressed their intention to serve, and give it to the émigré commanding officers so that 'they may be invited to act up to their professions'.<sup>67</sup>

The Alien Act bore especially closely on soldiers. Those travelling from Holland were expected to obtain passports prior to embarkation; failing this, they were closely questioned on arrival by a customs or Alien Office official. They had to surrender their arms on arrival, and needed passports to travel within the country, although French officers of the émigré corps on Jersey and Guernsey were allowed to cross to the islands without the usual passports.<sup>68</sup> Officers who decided to cross to the Continent to join the émigré regiments there, were entitled to an exemption from the king's head money (12/6d.), and from half the passage money, on production of a certificate from the French Committee as well as an order from the Alien Office. The procedure is not clear, and either document may have been sufficient.<sup>69</sup> As military émigrés made up the bulk of arrivals and departures in 1795-6, much of the routine alien business at the ports concerned them.

The Alien Office continued to concentrate its attention on the French. Dutch traffic was second to the French, but in alien correspondence Dutch names rarely appeared except on lists of persons to be granted passports. Alien merchants, almost none of whom were French, enjoyed favoured treatment. They were granted passports without prior permission from London, except when they came direct from France; thereafter they could travel without 'let or

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<sup>66</sup> Stanhope to Carter, 24 Jan. 1795, *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Stanhope to Carter, 26 Jan. 1795, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> King to Mayor of Dover, 7 Feb. 1795, H.O.5/1, p. 152; Portland to Mayor of Southampton, 15 April 1795, *ibid.*, p. 195; Portland to Mayor of Weymouth, 2 May 1795, *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> King to A. Todd, 7 March 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 170-71; Carter to La Marche, 21 March 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 183-4.

hindrance', unless they seemed to be behaving suspiciously.<sup>70</sup> However, all foreigners embarking for France on neutral vessels needed a specific passport from Portland or Grenville.<sup>71</sup>

In March 1795, when the heavy traffic caused by the evacuation of Flanders had abated, Portland decided that future traffic probably would be greatest between Hamburg and Yarmouth. Accordingly, he asked Grenville to apprise the British minister in Hamburg of the regulation that passports to Britain should be issued only to foreigners unlikely to become 'an immediate burthen to the public'.<sup>72</sup> John King told the Mayor of Yarmouth to expect increased traffic through the port, sent him a set of instructions for his guidance, and ordered him not to permit any aliens to land without a passport from a minister abroad. He was not to issue passports before sending the names and circumstances of the aliens to the Alien Office, except in the case of despatch carriers, or émigré soldiers on British service.<sup>73</sup>

Late in 1795, the Alien Office made several attempts to remove or check on aliens living in south coastal areas. In September, King informed the Mayor of Dover that many aliens were living in Dover without a licence, and requested him to make them conform to the statutory limits. Two months later, he ordered all priests and unmarried persons to leave Dover, to prevent a clandestine correspondence with France, but allowed well-regarded families to stay, to spare them the expense of moving.<sup>74</sup> Then he asked customs officers at Brighton, Deal and Ramsgate to report on all aliens then residing in their

<sup>70</sup> King to Mayor of Falmouth, 12 Feb., 3 March 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 154-5, 166-7.

<sup>71</sup> King to Newport, 21 June 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 215-6. Exceptions were made for prisoners-of-war, or people with passports from the Commissioners of the Sick and Hurt Office: *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Portland to Grenville, 14 March 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 178-9.

<sup>73</sup> King to Mayor of Yarmouth, 14 March 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 179-82.

<sup>74</sup> King to Mayor of Dover, 3 Sept. 1795, *ibid.*, p. 252; King to Newport, 2 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 282-4.



towns.<sup>75</sup> Portland, while anxious to prevent espionage in the coastal towns, was still relatively lenient in his application of residential limitations, especially in the case of the clergy.<sup>76</sup>

Next, Portland tightened the regulation of shipping between Britain and France or French-held territory. Such neutral vessels as traded between the two were ordered to pass through Dover, and alien passengers were forbidden to disembark at any other port.<sup>77</sup> The restriction did not apply to British subjects, unless their motives for the trip were distrusted.<sup>78</sup> This was an ad hoc innovation on Portland's part, put into practice through instructions to customs officials at the southern ports. In March 1796, he reviewed and widened the measure, and placed it on a firmer legal footing. He told Lord Mansfield, the President of the Council, that aliens on neutral ships had found it easy 'to evade the Regulations of the Act relative to Aliens, and to escape all enquiry or examination'.<sup>79</sup> He wanted an order in council made to the effect that any vessel coming immediately from enemy territory, carrying aliens other than merchants or crewmen, should be permitted to land them only at the ports of Yarmouth, Harwich, Dover, Southampton or Gravesend, 'unless such Aliens shall previously have obtained a Passport from one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, authorising him

<sup>75</sup> King to Collectors of Customs at Brighton and Deal, and V. Sayer (Ramsgate), 28 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 296-8.

<sup>76</sup> See also the case of the seven priests at Eastbourne, who were assisted by the government when faced with difficulties over residence licences: Carter to Rev. R. Sneyd, 5 June 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 206-07; Carter to Major-General Ainsley, 5 June 1795, *ibid.*, p. 208. The British government was usually less severe on the clergy in this regard. See Plasse, Clergé Français, II, pp. 14-15.

<sup>77</sup> Portland to Customs Officers at Deal, Ramsgate and Margate, 9 Jan. 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 317-8.

<sup>78</sup> King to B. Sayer (Deal), 11 Jan. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 318-9.

<sup>79</sup> Portland to the Lord President of the Council, 16 March 1796, H.O.43/7, p. 404.

to land elsewhere'.<sup>80</sup>

This was embodied in an order in council issued on 23 March 1796. The Alien Office sent copies to Trinity House, the principal pilotage and navigational aids authority of the kingdom, so that the information could be passed on to coastal pilots and masters of neutral vessels, and to the Commissioners of Customs, for directions to be given to their officers in the ports.<sup>81</sup> Copies were also sent to the customs officials and chief magistrates of the nominated ports, warning them that such aliens must not leave without a passport approved by Portland.<sup>82</sup> The chief magistrates of other towns along the south and east coasts were informed of the new ruling.<sup>83</sup>

Portland also tried to control departures from England. In this, he was concerned with efficiency, rather than form, and allowed some discretion to the port officials. By a direction of 26 November 1795, magistrates were forbidden to issue passports for aliens to pass to Jersey and Guernsey. This included foreign soldiers in British pay, but officers who could show that they were travelling to join their corps had no difficulty in obtaining passports from the Alien Office, and John King allowed the Mayor of Southampton to use his discretion in permitting such officers to embark without prior recourse to the office.<sup>84</sup> Thomas Carter told Hobler of the Mansion House

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid. However, despite this measure, problems were still occasioned by Frenchmen arriving from France on neutral ships: see King to Chief Magistrates of Harwich, Yarmouth, Gravesend, Dover and Southampton, 18 July 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 57-8.

<sup>81</sup> King to D. Court, 26 March 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 399-400; King to Hume, 26 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 400-01. King later asked Court (Trinity House) to stress to the pilots that aliens passing from enemy territory and arriving on the Thames were allowed to land only at Gravesend: King to Court, 28 April 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 9-10.

<sup>82</sup> King to Collectors and Chief Magistrates of Yarmouth, Harwich, Gravesend, Dover and Southampton, 26 March 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 402-3.

<sup>83</sup> King to Chief Magistrates of Lowestoft, Southwold, Dunwich et al, 26 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 403-4.

<sup>84</sup> King to Mayor of Southampton, 1 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 371-2.

Alien Office<sup>85</sup> that although aliens were required to produce their old passports before being issued with new passports to leave the kingdom, the Lord Mayor might grant passports if convinced by the evidence presented, to save the delay of applying first to the secretary of state's office.<sup>86</sup> Again, Carter approved of Mazzinghi's action in allowing a party of German labourers to embark for Hamburg, as it was desirable to allow aliens to embark for neutral ports, even without proper passports, 'if there is no reason to suspect them of mischievous intentions'.<sup>87</sup> The object of giving discretionary powers was, of course, the saving of time and money. The Alien Office was interested in suspicious characters, not respectable aliens leaving the country on legitimate business.

The destination of departing aliens was an important factor, and those who were bound for France were obviously of most concern. The requirement for such travellers to have passports from a secretary of state did not prevent some from evading the act by boarding at Southend ships that had been cleared at Gravesend, a practice which the Alien Office endeavoured to stop.<sup>88</sup> Even British subjects departing for enemy ports were to be detained if found not to have the proper licence for the journey.<sup>89</sup>

Evasion of the act by incoming aliens continued to be a problem. Carter complained that aliens frequently left the ports before being granted a passport, and he instituted a search in London for three who had left Dover,

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<sup>85</sup> At this time, the Lord Mayor appears to have had at least two employees working on alien business: Hobler, at Mansion House, and Mazzinghi, at Gravesend.

<sup>86</sup> Carter to M. Hobler, 12 March 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 383-4.

<sup>87</sup> Carter to Mazzinghi, 15 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>88</sup> King to Chief Officer of Customs at Southend, 20 June 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 43.

<sup>89</sup> Carter to Mazzinghi, 8 April 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 416-8.

with the aim of sending them back there as an example to others.<sup>90</sup> In March 1796 Carter sent James Walsh from the Alien Office to assist customs officers at Dover, Deal, Ramsgate and Margate, 'in superintending the arrival & departure of Foreigners'.<sup>91</sup> Stanhope had been sent to Harwich for a few days in January 1795, when it was inundated with refugees from Holland, but this was the first appointment of someone from the London office to work on a regular basis in a country centre.

The need for accurate information on aliens residing in Britain led to several calls for information by the office, particularly in regard to aliens living in the coastal areas. In April, John King requested lists of French clergy residing in Plymouth and Lulworth,<sup>92</sup> together with information on the state of their licences to reside there.<sup>93</sup> A far bigger task was occasioned in July, when Portland wanted the police magistrates and Lord Mayor's office to extract fresh declarations from aliens living in London, without the 'hand of government' being apparent.<sup>94</sup>

Alien Office business increased sharply from this point, as July 1796 also saw the government order the French refugees to evacuate the Channel Islands, then under threat of French invasion. I shall discuss this evacuation more fully in Chapter 8, but as the Alien Office was involved in the resettlement of the evacuees, an outline of the part it played will be useful here.

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<sup>90</sup> Carter to N. Conant, 14 March, 7 April 1796, H.O.5/1, pp. 386-7, 414; King to Marquis de Spinola, 20 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 393-4.

<sup>91</sup> Carter to Newport, 19 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 391.

<sup>92</sup> A colony of French Trappists had been formed at Lulworth, on land owned by the Welds, a prominent Catholic family: Weiner, *French Exiles*, p. 58.

<sup>93</sup> King to Mayor of Plymouth, 19 April 1796, H.O.5/1, p. 424; King to Jean Baptiste (Lulworth), 19 April 1796, *ibid.*, p. 425.

<sup>94</sup> Carter to Lord Mayor, 21 July 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 58-9. This is reflected in Alien Office accounts: expenses for June were £25, while July stood at £328.6.6: see H.O.5/22.

Most lay evacuees landed initially in Southampton. To save duplication of work, those arriving with a Channel Islands certificate were not required to make fresh declarations, although Dundas urged special care in taking declarations from the French Royalists who had recently been deported to the Channel Islands from France, under terms of surrender to Hoche.<sup>95</sup> The Prince de Bouillon<sup>96</sup> warned that Hoche might have included Republican spies in their number.<sup>97</sup> The Home Office assumed responsibility for the resettlement of the non-military refugees. Most of those at Southampton eventually moved to London of their own accord. The Home Office took a more direct part in resettling six hundred priests in the northern counties. French refugees were no novelty, and sometimes were resented in the home counties, so the Alien Office arbitrarily shipped some of the clergy northwards, where they were almost unknown,<sup>98</sup> and it now had to prepare the way for their reception.

First, the Alien Office wrote to several port towns in the north, telling them to expect the arrival of French clergy, and asking the mayors to assist them.<sup>99</sup> The list of host towns was subsequently reduced and altered, and the office issued more specific instructions to Berwick, Scarborough, Hull and Newcastle, the intended landing points for the priests.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>95</sup> King to J. Smith (Southampton Customs), 1 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 67.  
King to Mayor of Southampton, 19 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 102-3.

<sup>96</sup> Captain Phillippe d'Auvergne, R.N., Prince de Bouillon (1754-1816). He commanded the naval station at Jersey, directed the 'correspondence' with the Royalist rebels in Western France, and had charge of the distribution of relief allowances to French refugees in Jersey: see below, pp. 288-9.

<sup>97</sup> Prince de Bouillon to Dundas, 29 Aug. 1796, W.O.1/921, pp. 631-2.

<sup>98</sup> Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 508.

<sup>99</sup> King to Mayors of Berwick, Newcastle, Stockton-on-Sea, Whitby, Scarborough, Kingston, Grimsby and Boston, 6 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 75-6.

<sup>100</sup> King to Mayors of Stockton, Boston and Whitby, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 105; King to Town Clerk of Newcastle, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 105-7; King to Mayor of Berwick, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 108-9; King to Bailiffs of Scarborough, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 109-11; King to Mayor of Hull, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

The office wanted these towns to provide transit accommodation for the clergy, until they could be dispersed inland.<sup>101</sup> Authorities in the north proved helpful in providing accommodation. In response to a request from Portland, General Sir William Howe,<sup>102</sup> the army commander in the northern districts, offered the temporary use of the Sunderland barracks,<sup>103</sup> and the barracks at Scarborough were also used to house priests.<sup>104</sup> The Corporation of Hull went so far as to defray the expense of lodging a hundred French priests in local inns.<sup>105</sup> Not all evacuee clergy went north. The earliest to arrive went to Southampton, and some priests too ill to continue their journey were allowed to disembark at Southampton and Portsmouth.<sup>106</sup>

One new feature of the evacuation was Portland's initiative in obtaining a grant of approximately one pound per head towards the expense to the refugees of being moved from their place of settlement.<sup>107</sup> Similarly, when the colony of priests was ordered to leave Winchester in August 1796, he asked the Treasury for a grant of £500 for removal expenses.<sup>108</sup> These were the first occasions on which the government agreed to lift some of the burden of incidental expenses incurred by the refugees compelled to leave their area of residence. Carter also promised La Marche that he would try to find alternative

<sup>101</sup> King to Town Clerk of Newcastle, 22 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 105-7.

<sup>102</sup> (1729-1814), the noted soldier in North America in the Seven Years War and the War of Independence. *D.N.B.*, x, pp. 102-5.

<sup>103</sup> Portland to Sir W. Howe, 10 Aug. 1796, H.O.43/7, p. 527; King to Mayor of Newcastle, 25 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 118.

<sup>104</sup> C. Greville to Bailiffs of Scarborough, 27 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>105</sup> King to Mayor of Hull, 24 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>106</sup> King to Mayor of Southampton, 6 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 76-7; Greville to Mayor of Portsmouth, 14 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>107</sup> Carter to La Marche, 12 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 88-9.

<sup>108</sup> Carter to La Marche, 18 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 99-100; Treasury Minutes, 7 Oct. 1796, T.29/69, p. 393.

accommodation for the priests moved from Winchester, and successfully persuaded Windham to provide houses at Thame and Reading.<sup>109</sup>

Although the resettlement of refugees from the Channel Islands and Winchester preoccupied the Alien Office in August and September 1796, ordinary business continued. In September it struck one of its recurrent problems; the over-zealousness of local officials in applying the act. Bath magistrates proposed expelling aliens who did not possess licences to dwell there, Bath being outside the area in which aliens were permitted to reside. However, the Alien Office considered the town to be very suitable for the residence of refugees, and Portland thought it inadvisable to disturb them.<sup>110</sup> Carter privately asked Patrick Colquhoun, the London magistrate, to try to curb the magistrates' enthusiasm. He told him that Portland opposed the indiscriminate expulsion of all aliens without valid licences.

What the Duke wishes is, that the same line of conduct should be observed towards these unfortunate people at Bath that has been adopted here; that is, that they should be required to give in their declarations, that any suspicious Characters should be scrutinized, and that, if they do not give a satisfactory account of themselves, that they should be detained, 'till there is time to procure the King's Order for sending them out of the Kingdom, which will be granted without<sup>111</sup> hesitation upon the requisition of the Magistrates.

This is a fair summary of how the Alien Act was administered in practice in the first eighteen months of Portland's term at the Home Office.

1797 was a year of fluctuating fortunes for the French refugees, and their movements to and from Britain corresponded to the state of affairs in France. The watershed was the coup d'etat of 18 Fructidor (4 September 1797),

<sup>109</sup> Thame had places for 127 priests, and Reading 244. Preference was given to the infirm. See Carter to La Marche, 18, 27 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 99-100, 120-1.

<sup>110</sup> Portland to Dr Harrington, 14 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>111</sup> Carter to P. Colquhoun, 15 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 144-5.

in which moderate members of the Directory were replaced by radicals. Previous to Fructidor, the worsening financial situation in Britain, and the easing of hostility towards émigrés in France, had tempted some refugees to return home. The British government was happy to see them leave, and assisted their departure by arranging for their conveyance from Jersey to the French coast, where they were landed clandestinely.<sup>112</sup> From late 1796, there was considerable traffic from England to Jersey, both of refugees returning to the island, and of those using it as a staging post on their way back to France. After Fructidor, the revised Directory sharply reversed policy towards the émigrés, and many of the latter left hurriedly to escape persecution, death, deportation or imprisonment.<sup>113</sup> Once again, Britain prepared to receive an influx from France.<sup>114</sup>

The increased traffic made control and identification of travellers more difficult. The use of passports by someone other than the holder was a problem, and in January the Alien Office belatedly directed that passports were to be signed by the holder.<sup>115</sup> On Jersey, General Andrew Gordon, the Commander-in-Chief, reported that emigrants were using passports containing alterations and erasures, but Greville explained that the alterations were often made by the Alien Office when extending the period of the passport, to save issuing a new one.<sup>116</sup> Passports issued were valid only for a period of several days, so that if a traveller were delayed before embarkation, he might need an extension.

<sup>112</sup> Greville to Captain W. Otway, 18 Aug. 1797, H.O.5/3, pp. 54-5; Windham to Pitt, 2 Sept. 1797, H.M.C. Dropmore, ii, p. 367; Bouillon to Windham, 24 July 1797, B.M. Add. Ms 37846, f. 55. Also, see below, p. 271.

<sup>113</sup> N.C.M.H., ix, pp. 291-2.

<sup>114</sup> Portland to General A. Gordon, 20 Sept. 1797, H.O.99/1, pp. 320-1.

<sup>115</sup> King to Newport, 12 Jan. 1797, H.O.5/2, p. 256.

<sup>116</sup> Gordon to Greville, 1 Feb. 1797, H.O.98/7, unf.; Greville to Gordon, 11 Feb. 1797, H.O.99/1, pp. 298-9.



Earlier, Gordon had complained to Bouillon that some emigrants arriving with passports from Portland were not included on the lists forwarded to him, so that he had been forced to send them back.<sup>117</sup> Obviously, there were many loopholes in the passport system.

Control over emigrants passing through the ports was still a problem. In November 1796 Portland attempted to restrict passengers to France to travelling on the Post Office packets.<sup>118</sup> In January 1797 Carter pointed out to Walsh, now stationed at Yarmouth, that although he had detained no-one on suspicion in all his time there, several dangerous persons had passed through there unhindered.<sup>119</sup> Carter told Gravesend officials that no aliens arriving 'from any neutral any more than enemy's Ports are to be suffered to proceed to London 'till their declarations shall have been sent to the Duke of Portland's office, and permission granted them to come up'.<sup>120</sup>

The system of asking new arrivals to nominate referees continued, although John Wilmot's offer of the services of the French Committee in vetting aliens was not accepted.<sup>121</sup> Madame de La Tour du Pin described the proceedings at Dover when she and her husband arrived from France after Fructidor:

<sup>117</sup> Gordon to Bouillon, 15 Dec. 1796, H.O.69/9, f. 113.

<sup>118</sup> King to Newport, 29 Nov. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 221.

<sup>119</sup> Carter to Walsh, 20 Jan. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>120</sup> Carter to Mazzinghi, 15 March 1797, *ibid.*, p. 337. However, this did not apply to despatch carriers and soldiers with certificates from their receiving officer, passing through Great Yarmouth: King to Mayor of Yarmouth, 29 March 1797, p. 352.

<sup>121</sup> J. Wilmot to C. Long, 8 March 1797, P.R.O.30/8/190, ff. 141-2.

When they saw my passport, which I presented at the office charged with examining them -- the Aliens' Office -- I was asked if I was a subject of the King of England. When I said that I was, I was told I would have to find someone of standing in England to vouch for me. When, without hesitation, I named my three uncles -- Lord Dillon, Lord Kenmare and Sir William Jerningham -- the tone and attitude of the officers changed at once. These formalities occupied the whole morning.<sup>122</sup>

Refugees who could not produce passports or referees were sent back to the Continent. However, many of them were destitute, so the government had to pay for their passages. In order to curtail this expense, the Alien Office ordered that such aliens should not be allowed to disembark at all, so that the shipmasters who had accepted them on board without the necessary documents would be liable for the expense of the return voyage.<sup>123</sup>

As well as these piecemeal attempts to tighten existing regulations, Portland set in motion a comprehensive review of the alien situation early in 1797. The Alien Office asked La Marche to send a return of the number of emigrants on the relief lists, distinguishing the clergy, the laity, women and children, showing the district in which they lived, and the number resident in each district.<sup>124</sup> This was followed by a request to the Lord Mayor and the magistrates of the police offices in Westminster and Middlesex, to furnish the Alien Office with monthly returns of aliens living within their districts. In April Greville sent out forms on which future returns were to be made, and noted that after the first return, only subsequent changes needed to be shown. John King also asked magistrates of police offices to make returns showing the annual figures of outward passports that

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<sup>122</sup>La Tour du Pin, Memoirs, p. 313. Actually, her claim to British nationality was dubious: the Dillons were an Irish family which had followed James II into exile.

<sup>123</sup>Carter to Mazzinghi, 27 May 1797, H.O.5/2, pp. 412-3.

<sup>124</sup>Carter to La Marche, 20 Feb. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 290.

had been issued to date.<sup>125</sup> This comprehensive enquiry by the Alien Office may have been inspired by the House of Commons' request for an account of the number of foreigners who had entered Great Britain since 1 May 1792.<sup>126</sup>

The renewed influx of French refugees after Fructidor caused the Alien Office to review its policy. Its instructions to Jersey, Guernsey and English ports regarding new arrivals, showed its stance: humanity demanded that the refugees should be given asylum from persecution, refugees who had been in Britain before were favoured over those who had not, continued residence in Britain was dependent on good conduct, and the government refused to grant any financial assistance to them. In Jersey, Gordon was given discretion in allowing admissions, with these guidelines.<sup>127</sup> This policy did not apply to persons banished by the French government. Boats arriving with such déportés were to be sent away from the British coast.<sup>128</sup>

Good behaviour was a condition for the continued residence of all aliens, not just new arrivals. Late in 1797, the Alien Office made it clear that several sorts of offences by aliens would result in their immediate deportation. Greville asked Wilmot's Committee to make it known to all refugees in London, particularly those receiving relief,

that it is His Grace's [Portland's] firm determination to send away every Alien without distinction who shall be found by the officers of Police in any public Gaming House or who shall be known to be a frequenter of such places.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>125</sup> King to the Lord Mayor, 2 March 1797, H.O.43/8, p. 528; Greville to Magistrates of Police Offices, 5 April 1797, H.O.5/2, pp. 362-3.

<sup>126</sup> King to Chief Magistrates of Corporate Towns, 25 March 1797, *ibid.*, pp. 359-60. The exact sequence of events is not clear.

<sup>127</sup> Portland to J. Binstead (Lymington), 2 Oct. 1797, H.O.5/3, p. 88; Portland to Gordon, 24 Sept. 1797, H.O.99/1, pp. 321-4; Portland to General H. Dalrymple, 3 Oct. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 326; Portland to Gordon, 17 Oct. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>128</sup> King to Mayors of Harwich, Yarmouth, Gravesend, Dover and Southampton, 20 Oct. 1797, H.O.5/3, p. 102.

<sup>129</sup> Greville to G. Hughes, 17 Nov. 1797, *ibid.*, pp. 134-5.

Following reports that suspicious foreigners, thought to be bringing forged banknotes into the country, had made clandestine landings and departures near Deal, the Alien Office issued an order that any alien found carrying forged notes would be deported or prosecuted.<sup>130</sup> In one case of fraud, a Toulonese refugee receiving an allowance as such, who obtained a second payment from Wilmot's Committee, was ordered out of the kingdom.<sup>131</sup> The need for tightening-up probably indicates the growing acclimatisation of the refugees.

The importance of a good reputation for the refugee community as a whole was soon underlined. Napoleon Bonaparte returned to Paris in December 1797, and sailed from Toulon for Egypt in May 1798. In the months between, Great Britain mobilised her resources to meet possible invasion.<sup>132</sup> This threat highlighted the problems of having a large number of French refugees in the country, who were both objects of fear and distrust to the home population, and persons in great need of protection from the invaders -- a repetition of their situation in the Channel Islands in 1793 and 1796. In April, when Lord Minto<sup>133</sup> offered to raise an emigrant corps for the defence of Great Britain, Dundas was 'apprehensive that, amidst the existing prejudices, it may receive a clamour and ferment very prejudicial to themselves [the emigrants]'.<sup>134</sup> In parliament, Windham and Pitt spoke out

<sup>130</sup> King to Chief Officer of Customs at Deal, 17 Oct. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 99; Greville to Newport, 18 Nov. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>131</sup> Carter to Hughes, 5 Dec. 1797, *ibid.*, p. 160; King to Otway, 11 Jan. 1798, *ibid.*, p. 196; King to Hughes, 11 Jan. 1798, *ibid.*, pp. 196-7.

<sup>132</sup> Sydenham, First French Republic, p. 164; Raymond Postgate, Story of a Year: 1798 (London, 1969), pp. 16-17.

<sup>133</sup> Formerly Sir Gilbert Elliot.

<sup>134</sup> Dundas to Grenville, 20 April [1798], H.M.C. Dropmore, iv, p. 174. The offer was declined: Grenville to Minto, 28 April 1798, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 142.

in defence of them, and the former was strongly against sending them out of the country en masse.<sup>135</sup> The ministers recognized the danger in which an invasion would place the French exiles. Dundas thought 'that there should be an allotment made for the aged, infirm, or infant émigrés in some safe central places'.<sup>136</sup>

What was done, in fact, was to remove almost all French from the coastal areas, which would both prevent any collusion with the invaders and remove them from immediate danger -- the same expedient that had been adopted in Jersey in 1796. When ordering the evacuation, the Alien Office stressed that it was a precautionary measure, and that the refugees were to be treated with every attention. Émigré soldiers, and refugees living or working in British families, were exempted, and those with teaching posts were granted an extra month in which to move.<sup>137</sup> The Duke of Richmond recommended exemptions for several aliens, but Portland refused the request.<sup>138</sup> The removal date was set at 25 May. Wickham, who had replaced Charles Greville as Under Secretary of the Home Office in February,<sup>139</sup> promised Wilmot 'that he would endeavour to obtain some small Relief for such of the Emigrants as may be particularly distressed by this measure'.<sup>140</sup> The relief committee

<sup>135</sup> parl. Hist., xxxiii, 24 April 1798, cols 1454-7; Entry 28 April 1798, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. 101. Pitt and Windham defended them again in July: Entry 19 July 1798, ibid., p. 111.

<sup>136</sup> Dundas to Grenville, 15 April 1798, H.M.C. Dropmore, iv, p. 169.

<sup>137</sup> Wickham to La Marche, 25 April 1798, H.O.5/3, p. 318; Portland to Magistrates at Newport and Yarmouth, 26 April 1798, ibid., p. 320; Portland to Lords Lieutenant of Essex, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Suffolk and Norfolk, 30 April 1798, ibid., pp. 325-6; Portland to Duke of Richmond, 15 May 1798, ibid., pp. 347-8.

<sup>138</sup> ibid.

<sup>139</sup> On 28 February King instructed Newport to send future letters to Wickham; thereafter, Wickham seemed to handle most alien business in King's place: see King to Newport, 28 Feb. 1798, ibid., p. 262.

<sup>140</sup> Minutes 12 May 1798, T.93/2, f. 54.

subsequently ordered half a guinea extra relief for the 196 refugees moved from the coast. It calculated the expenses of the move at £147.1.9, but it is not clear whether it or the government bore the cost.<sup>141</sup> The government also revised the provisions of the Alien Act as part of its review of the emigré problem, and in response to the threat of a French invasion.

### III

It seems likely that the new Alien Bill was drafted by William Wickham, who continued to take an interest in alien business and intelligence operations in his new post of 'Parliamentary' Under Secretary.<sup>142</sup> The Bill was debated in the House of Commons in April 1798, passed without difficulty and became law on 1 June 1798.<sup>143</sup> Its major innovation was that by royal proclamation, aliens might be required to obtain licences for residence from authorised persons.<sup>144</sup> These licences were to contain a far more comprehensive range of information on the aliens, including personal particulars, and details of their entry into and subsequent stay within the kingdom. Aliens in breach of the 1793 Act who applied properly for residence licenses were not liable for prosecution under the former Act.<sup>145</sup> The questions

<sup>141</sup> Account for clergy removed from coast, Minutes 8 June 1798, *ibid.*, f. 106b; Account for laity removed from coast, *ibid.*, f. 107b. In all, sixty-three clergy and 133 laity were moved: Southampton (109), Dover (50), Lewes (13), Ramsgate (23) and 'sundry places' (4).

<sup>142</sup> He was appointed on 1 March 1798: Sainty, Home Office Officials, p. 14. Portland had offered to hold the post open for him while he served abroad, and had installed his son-in-law, Charles Greville, to serve in Wickham's absence: Portland to Wickham, 12 June 1795, Wickham, Correspondence, i, pp. 87-8; Wickham to [?], 27 March 1831, *ibid.*, pp. 5, 7.

<sup>143</sup> See Parl. Hist., xxxiii, cols 1454-8; and 38 Geo. III, Cap. 50.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 1.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 2. See also 38 Geo. III, Cap. 77, sec. 3.

asked of an applicant were obviously designed to provide a history of his movements over the previous six years or so, as well as points of reference for the information to be checked. Incoming aliens were expected to stay in their place of arrival until they had 'obtained such Licence to reside in this Kingdom',<sup>146</sup> and could be prosecuted if found without a licence, or outside their appointed district.<sup>147</sup>

Overseers of the poor and schoolmasters in Scottish parishes were added to the people authorised to take declarations given by housekeepers. They were to send copies of such licences to a secretary of state via the clerks of the peace, and justices of the peace at the quarter sessions.<sup>148</sup> The effect of this was to draw another set of unpaid officials into the administration of the Act. The exemptions granted under the 1793 Act to alien merchants and aliens resident in Great Britain before 1 January 1792 were repealed.<sup>149</sup> The former in particular was not surprising, as it was an obvious weakness in security in wartime.

A clause was introduced whereby aliens who had left their countries because of the troubles in France, or conquest by her, were not liable to be arrested for debts or activities contracted outside the king's dominions.<sup>150</sup> This was at least partly in response to the embarrassment of Monsieur<sup>151</sup> over debts incurred abroad. Lord Grenville promised Minto, an advocate of Artois' cause, that such a

<sup>146</sup> 38 Geo. III, Cap. 50, sec. 11.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., secs 3, 5.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., sec. 14.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., sec. 7.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., sec. 9.

<sup>151</sup> The Comte d'Artois was then living in Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh, where writs for debt could not be served: Weiner, French Exiles, pp. 131-2.

clause would be inserted, and that

It has been judged more dignified for Monsieur to make this power general rather than to bring forward his individual case, and there are indeed some other instances in which justice seems to require that such a protection should be granted.<sup>152</sup>

The Act regularised and extended existing procedures by forbidding aliens to leave the kingdom without a passport, which had to be shown to the customs officer and the ship's master before embarkation. The penalty for a master knowingly allowing an alien to embark without a passport was £500.<sup>153</sup> Passports were already required for travel to enemy territory, and in February, King had complained that shipmasters evaded the regulation, and let aliens without passports travel to France on neutral vessels. He had tried to stop this by urging Treasury officials to greater accuracy when issuing certificates showing the ships' ports of call.<sup>154</sup> The severe penalty on masters represented another attempt to prevent them from evading the regulations.

The new Act embodied most of the provisions of the old; and the changes made were designed to increase the information available to the Alien Office, to improve documentation, to regularise or extend existing modifications and to close remaining loopholes.

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<sup>152</sup>Grenville to Minto, 28 April 1798, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 142.

<sup>153</sup>38 Geo. III, Cap. 50, sec. 8. The penalty for an alien leaving without a passport was set at not more than one year's gaol or seven years' transportation. The rule also applied to discharged soldiers: see Wickham to E. Woodford, 28 July 1798, H.O.5/4, pp. 61-2.

<sup>154</sup>King to Rose, 9 Feb. 1798, H.O.5/3, pp. 229-30.



The 1798 Alien Act came into effect on 1 June, and the following month Portland set about preparing the proclamation by which the residence licences were to be ordered. He outlined his proposals to the Attorney General and Solicitor General, who would be responsible for drafting the proclamation. By these, aliens would have to register within three weeks of the proclamation. Those residing in the City of London were to register with the Lord Mayor, those in Greater London<sup>155</sup> with one of the seven public offices, those in cities or corporate towns with the mayor or chief magistrate, and those living elsewhere were to register with the nearest justice of the peace. All aliens entering the kingdom thereafter were to register with the chief magistrate, or failing that with the collector of customs in the port or arrival. Magistrates were to send their declarations to the Home Secretary and to issue the alien with a provisional licence valid for up to one month.<sup>156</sup>

The Under Secretaries John King and William Wickham, and Charles Flint, now superintendent of aliens in place of Thomas Carter, were empowered to issue the licences of residence, while Portland would continue to sign passports and deportation warrants.<sup>157</sup> The form of the permanent licence was not specified, but would give the alien permission 'to reside within a County or other large district'.<sup>158</sup> The permanent licence was to be sent to the office where the original declaration had been made, and the alien would call there for it on a

<sup>155</sup> Defined in the proposal as that area outside the City of London, but inside the Bills of Mortality, or within ten miles thereof.

<sup>156</sup> Portland to the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, 2 July 1798, H.O.5/4, pp. 4-5.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.; Wickham to Newport, 9 July 1798, *ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>158</sup> Wickham to Conant, 9 July 1798, H.O.5/5, p. 1-3.

pre-arranged date, before the provisional licence expired.<sup>159</sup>

Under the 1798 Act, the Crown retained the power to exempt aliens from the provisions of the Act.<sup>160</sup> This power was used to exempt the French bishops, the Duc d'Harcourt and his household, the general officers of the French Royal Army and Navy, and French magistrates.<sup>161</sup> The royal princes Artois, Berri and Bourbon, and three officers serving them, were also exempted.<sup>162</sup>

After the 1798 Alien Act, as before, Alien Office policy tended to develop through ad hoc responses to particular problems. In 1799, several of these problems concerned incoming aliens. As much of the traffic came via Hamburg, Portland repeated the strategy of insisting that aliens should get passports from the minister there,<sup>163</sup> as a prerequisite for embarkation on Post Office boats.<sup>164</sup> The next checkpoint for incoming aliens was the port of entry in Britain. However, there was continuing trouble over pilots in the Thames landing alien passengers clandestinely, before declarations were made, and one pilot was suspended by Trinity House after a complaint from Portland.<sup>165</sup> He also complained to the Postmasters General that masters on the packet boats between Cuxhaven and Yarmouth were allowing aliens to land before declarations were

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<sup>159</sup>Portland to Lord Mayor, 6 July 1798, H.O.5/4, p.16.

<sup>160</sup>38 Geo. III, Cap. 50, sec. 2.

<sup>161</sup>Portland to the French Bishops, 7 July 1798, H.O.5/4, p. 20; Portland to Duc d'Harcourt, 7 July 1798, *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>162</sup>Portland to d'Harcourt, 7 July 1798, *ibid.*, pp. 22-3 (another letter).

<sup>163</sup>Sir James Craufurd, British resident at Hamburg 1798-1803.

<sup>164</sup>Portland to Postmasters-General, 24 April 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 345.

<sup>165</sup>Greville to Court, 25 Nov. 1797, H.O.5/3, p.145; Portland to Elder Brethren of Trinity House, 16 Sept. 1799, H.O.5/5, pp. 52-3; King to Court, 18 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

taken, and warned that future offenders would be prosecuted.<sup>166</sup>

Once landed, aliens had to remain at their port of entry until permission to proceed was granted. In August 1798, Wickham stressed to Newport that no person 'under any pretence' was allowed to leave Dover for London without permission from a secretary of state, and that those who arrived from France claiming to have information for the government, were to commit it to writing for immediate despatch.<sup>167</sup> In the case of du Buc, a Frenchman who had left Harwich without permission, Wickham refused even to show to Portland a letter written on his behalf, as du Buc had 'personally' insulted the Duke. According to Wickham,

so indecent were the terms of the letter he wrote to the Duke of Portland on his last leaving England, and when he thought himself out of his Grace's power, that there would be an end at once of the Authority which Parliament has vested in the Government of the Country over Foreigners if it were to pass unnoticed, and (as far as can be) unpunished.<sup>168</sup>

Obviously du Buc had good reason not to wait for permission!

One special case of incoming aliens was a group of French priests who had been deported to Cayenne,<sup>169</sup> intercepted by British ships on their return, and landed in Liverpool in August 1799. The priests were detained there while

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<sup>166</sup> Portland to Postmasters-General, 8 April 1799, H.O.5/4, pp. 327-8.

<sup>167</sup> Wickham to Newport, 25 Aug. 1798, H.O.5/5, pp. 15-16. See also Flint to Mayor of Dover, 8 July 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 445. 'Permission' included that sent from the Alien Office before their arrival, but such arrival had to be notified subsequently. However, in instructions to Falmouth over a year later, King applied the rule to subjects of states at war with Britain: King to Mayor of Falmouth, 25 Nov. 1799, H.O.5/5, p. 167.

<sup>168</sup> Wickham to G. Thelluson, 7 March 1799, H.O.5/4, pp. 286-7. See also: Portland to Mayor of Harwich, 7 March 1799, *ibid.*, p. 284.

<sup>169</sup> Capital of Guyane.

one of them was sent to London to explain their circumstances. Thereafter, they were well-treated. They were allowed to travel to London at the expense of the Bishop of St Pol de Léon, or to stay in Liverpool if they so desired.<sup>170</sup> Two further groups of Cayenne deportees were diverted to Plymouth in 1801, of which the second was detained in prison there. The Alien Office directed that the first group should be granted a small subsistence allowance and paid their travel expenses to London, and it ordered the release and similar treatment of the second.<sup>171</sup> Another group arrived at Plymouth soon after, for whom the Alien Office passed responsibility on to the Commissioners of the Transport Service, who had charge of the Toulonese refugees.<sup>172</sup>

The situation of aliens once within Britain depended on their own behaviour, and British needs. The priests posed special problems, and the Alien Office was quick to deal with possible trouble. When King heard that a priest in Lincoln had been making converts and had applied to Lord Southampton 'for permission to allow any of the Men of His Reg<sup>t</sup> that might be so disposed to attend the Roman Catholic Chapel', he ordered that the request be refused and the name of the priest given to him, so that he could be deported 'without delay'.<sup>173</sup> However, after further investigation, and testimonials in favour of the culprit, the order was cancelled, and he was allowed to return to Lincoln.<sup>174</sup> Two priests were deported who had been

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<sup>170</sup> King to Mayor of Liverpool, 24 Aug. 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 505; King to Mayor of Liverpool, 31 Aug. 1799, H.O.5/5, pp. 26-7.

<sup>171</sup> King to Mayor of Plymouth, 9, 10, 11 Feb. 1801, H.O.5/6, pp. 279, 280, 283. There were five in the first group and eighteen in the second.

<sup>172</sup> King to Mayor of Plymouth, 13 March 1801, *ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>173</sup> King to Colonel Brownrigg, 6 July 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 437; King to Mayor of Lincoln, 6 July 1799, *ibid.*, p. 438.

<sup>174</sup> King to Mayor of Lincoln, 6 Aug. 1799, *ibid.*, p. 479; Portland to Ellison, 15 Aug. 1799, *ibid.*, p. 495.

troublesome to their prior, and resisted both his efforts and those of Lord Arundell to expel them from their community. On hearing of the case, Portland despatched a messenger to escort them out of the kingdom.<sup>175</sup>

In 1800 the Alien Office made a further attempt to remove aliens from the coast. The Chief Clerk, Brooke, was sent to the south coast to ensure that their removal was effected.<sup>176</sup> The measure was directed at the coasts of Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. This time, even aliens living with English families were sent away, and not even the Duke of Marlborough could secure an exemption for his family's tutor.<sup>177</sup>

However, permission was later given to several aliens to reside in Southampton and Gosport.<sup>178</sup> The zeal with which the order was put into effect could prove embarrassing: the son of Count Starhemberg, the Austrian Ambassador, and his two servants, were arrested at Eastbourne. Flint hastily ordered their release, with apologies, and sent them a licence which would 'remove further difficulties along the coast'.<sup>179</sup>

These measures were designed to prevent 'dangerous correspondence' and illegal traffic between British and French territory.<sup>180</sup> A year later, similar trouble arose. This time, Portland stopped issuing passports for the Continent, forbade the entry of passengers from France or Holland, sent Brooke and Stow to superintend the coast from Whitstable to Lydd, enlisted

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<sup>175</sup> Entry 27 Oct. 1799, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. 160.

<sup>176</sup> [?] to Chief Magistrates of Margate, Ramsgate, Deal et al., 12 July 1800, H.O.5/5, pp. 460-1.

<sup>177</sup> Portland to Duke of Marlborough, 14 July 1800; Flint to Neville, 16 July 1800, *ibid.*, p. 466.

<sup>178</sup> Ford to La Marche, 10 Oct. 1800, H.O.5/6, p. 91; Ford to Curry, 23 Oct. 1800, *ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>179</sup> Flint to Chief Magistrate of Eastbourne, 19 July 1800, H.O.5/5, pp. 471-2.

<sup>180</sup> Portland to Mayors or Chief Magistrates of divers ports, 24 July 1800, *ibid.*, pp. 484-5.

the services of revenue officers in this area, and arranged for a revenue cutter to cruise between Dover and the North Foreland.<sup>181</sup> The ban on passengers entering the country caused problems at Gravesend. Arrivals from Holland were detained on the ships, and their discomfort, and the inability of some to pay their passage back, stressed by Walsh, induced Portland and Pelham to make some exceptions to the rule.<sup>182</sup>

Portland's actions caused only a temporary halt in the flow of refugees back across the Channel to France. Small numbers had been returning for several years, but the major exodus began in 1800, and rose to a peak in 1801, with the Concordat and the preliminary peace negotiations. It had declined considerably by the end of 1802, when signs of a renewal of hostilities became apparent. Meanwhile, for the first time the Alien Office had to concentrate more on outgoing than incoming alien traffic, and it modified its policy accordingly.

From 1800, French refugees who wished to pass to France were granted passports to do so, but 'on the express condition that they should not come back'.<sup>183</sup> The Alien Office sent to its agents at the ports of Hamburg, lists of those granted such passports, to prevent their return to Britain. It also sent lists to Wilmot's Committee, so that those receiving allowances would be struck from the relief lists.<sup>184</sup> A number of those embarking at

<sup>181</sup> Flint to J. Walsh and B. Stow, 20 July 1801, H.O.5/6, p. 476; Flint to Walsh, 21 July 1801, *ibid.*, p. 478; Portland to Treasury Commissioners, 23 July 1801, *ibid.*, pp. 482-3; Portland to Treasury Commissioners, 31 Oct. 1801, H.O.5/7, pp. 152-3.

<sup>182</sup> Flint to Walsh, 31 July 1801, H.O.5/6, p. 499; Flint to Walsh, 3, 8, 15 Aug. 1801, H.O.5/7, pp. 2, 17, 30-1.

<sup>183</sup> R. Ford to Stow, Walsh and G. Hake, 4 Sept. 1800, H.O.5/6, pp. 36-7.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*; Flint to Hughes, 21 June 1800, H.O.5/5, p. 430; Ford to J. Glennie (Hamburg), 5 Sept., 25 Nov. 1800, H.O.5/6, pp. 39, 78.

Jersey expressed a desire to return if they found their situation not to their liking. Portland ruled that they could not re-enter Britain without previously obtaining his express permission to do so, and clearly preferred that they should not return. Priests' applications for passports were referred to the Bishop of St Pol de Léon before being granted.<sup>185</sup>

As France and Britain were then still at war, returning refugees could travel only on specified neutral vessels to Calais or Rotterdam,<sup>186</sup> or go to Jersey and be dropped clandestinely on the coast by one of Bouillon's boats. The traffic through Jersey was halted in February 1801, when Bouillon complained that it was interfering with the operation of the correspondence,<sup>187</sup> but it was reinstated in March after Portland had

received strong representations from the Bishop of St Pol de Léon and other Diocesians stating that it appeared to them advisable to allow the greater part of the French Clergy at present in this Country to return to France by the shortest & least expensive route.<sup>188</sup>

The French bishops were not without influence, and Portland did not want to discourage the return movement. Bouillon found his task burdensome. He wrote of the returning French:

like the 'Mouches du Coche', they come from all Quarters of England by day & by Night as to a Charing Cross Messagerie for passages over; would to Heaven they had staid at Home in the origin...<sup>189</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Ford to Gordon, 27 Nov. 1800, *ibid.*, p. 182; Ford to Dalrymple, 15 Dec. 1800, *ibid.*, p. 201.

<sup>186</sup> King to Hume, 12 Jan. 1801, H.O.43/12, p. 390. Once peace preliminaries began, Pelham ordered that only British vessels be allowed to carry passengers to France, in reply to a similar measure by France: Flint to Stow, 5 Nov. 1801, H.O.5/7, p. 157.

<sup>187</sup> Flint to Bouillon, 26 Feb. 1801, H.O.5/6, p. 306.

<sup>188</sup> Flint to Bouillon, 27 March 1801, *ibid.*, pp. 336-7.

<sup>189</sup> Bouillon to Woodford, 20 April 1801, B.M. Add. Ms 37851, f. 179.

In 1802, the reluctance of some French clergy to leave Jersey for France caused problems. When they resisted ecclesiastical pressure to return, Lord Pelham,<sup>190</sup> now Home Secretary, ordered Gordon to 'take such measures for enforcing their departure as you shall judge necessary, allowing them such reasonable time as you, in your discretion, may think requisite for their preparation, and no more'.<sup>191</sup>

Once the preliminary Peace of London was signed on 1 October 1801, the Alien Office had to begin drafting a new Alien Act. Flint tendered a summary of how the 'Police des Étrangers' had operated in Paris under the Ancien Régime. Aliens had had to declare the motive of the journey, intended duration of stay, acquaintances known, and intended places of residence. A check had then been kept through district officers and hotelkeepers, and where discrepancies with the declarations had occurred, a closer watch had been ordered. Flint thought that this might be helpful when considering the formation of a surveillance system for aliens in Britain.<sup>192</sup> Apparently a plan of stationing a branch of the Thames Police at Gravesend was mooted, for an officer of this force protested against it, and suggested that when a suspicious alien arrived at Gravesend, the agent there should warn the Alien Office and the police in the area of his intended residence. If the alien did not disembark at Gravesend, he might not land until the ship was visited by a Thames Police boat, and a declaration taken. He also suggested that the Lord Mayor

<sup>190</sup> Thomas Pelham (1756-1826), later second Earl of Chicester, M.P. Sussex 1780, Irish Secretary 1795-8, Home Secretary under Addington 1801-3: D.N.B., xv, pp. 697-9.

<sup>191</sup> Pelham to Gordon, 23 June 1802, H.O.99/2, pp. 92-3. See also: King to Gordon, 12 April 1802, *ibid.*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>192</sup> Flint to Pelham, 12 Nov. 1801, H.O.1/4, unf. An unsigned memorandum suggested a simplified version of the 1793 Act. See: 'A Sketch of some Regulations proposed to be made in regard to Aliens', und. [probably late 1801], *ibid.*



and each of the police offices should keep a register of aliens, and set out a proposed form for it. This form was adopted for a customs' register of aliens in the 1802 Act. He thought that two constables from each office should have responsibility for supervising aliens.<sup>193</sup>

The 1802 Alien Act<sup>194</sup> set down a simplified version of former provisions for registration. When aliens made their declarations on arrival, customs officers were to register these in a 'Book of Certificates and counterparts', according to a prescribed form. A copy of this, excluding the section for 'remarks', was to be issued to the alien in the form of a certificate.<sup>195</sup> The customs officers were required to make an alphabetical list and index of aliens' names.<sup>196</sup> Aliens were required to produce their certificates to a magistrate within a week of their arrival at their destination.<sup>197</sup>

An innovation in the Act was the clause granting limited extradition rights. This stated that, according to the treaty with the French Republic, his Catholic Majesty and the Batavian Republic, aliens could be extradited on request for crimes of murder, forgery or fraudulent bankruptcy, where it was considered that evidence against them was sufficient for a conviction in an English court at law.<sup>198</sup> However, the clause regarding non-liability for overseas debts was retained and made perpetual.<sup>199</sup> As the Act of Union with Ireland

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<sup>193</sup>W. Bragge, 'Observations &c', 7 Dec. 1801, *ibid.*

<sup>194</sup>42 Geo. III, cap. 92.

<sup>195</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 8. These were the headings suggested by Bragge.

<sup>196</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 9.

<sup>198</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 21.

<sup>199</sup>*Ibid.*, sec. 23.

had now been passed, a clause was inserted stating that powers given to the Lord Lieutenant or other Chief Governor of Ireland, or his Chief Secretary, should not extend to aliens in Great Britain.<sup>200</sup>

The provisions of the 1802 Alien Act, including the simplified registration system, were framed for a peacetime situation, and in the expectation that most of the French refugees in Britain would soon return to France. When hostilities resumed in 1803, a stricter act was passed,<sup>201</sup> which remained in force until 1816.

#### IV

The passing of the 1795 Alien Act also marked a new stage in the development of the Alien Office. The increase in business attendant on the licensing provisions of the Act was difficult to conduct in the cramped quarters of the Home Office proper,<sup>202</sup> so the Alien Office moved to new premises in Crown Court, Westminster.<sup>203</sup> The new office was headed by Charles William Flint, who was appointed Superintendent of Aliens on 5 July 1798. He had been the confidential secretary in Switzerland of Wickham, the new Under Secretary.<sup>204</sup> In his first accounting of the expenses of the Alien Office, covering 1797-9, Flint explained that there was no separate office to execute the Alien Act in 1797, but noted that on the passing of the 1798

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<sup>200</sup>Ibid., sec. 27.

<sup>201</sup>42 Geo. III, cap. 92.

<sup>202</sup>Alien business had been carried out in 'the smallest garret in the Home Office': Wickham to Pelham, 8 Jan. 1802, quoted in Chapter 2 of a forthcoming book on radicalism in London 1796-1821 by J. Ann Hone.

<sup>203</sup>The Times 6 July 1798.

<sup>204</sup>Nelson, Home Office, p. 126. Flint (1777-1834) later served in the Irish Office in London, of which he became Under Secretary in 1827. He was knighted in 1812: *ibid.*

Alien Act, 'The present Alien Office was formed with a regular Establishment from 1st June 1798'.<sup>205</sup>

Office expenses were calculated under two heads: establishment (mainly salaries) and contingent expenses, 'including Agents at the Outports, Messengers Bills and expenses incurred in carrying Aliens out of the Kingdom'. Contingent expenses were particularly heavy in 1799, because of the cost of fitting up the office, paying for stationery and printing formerly paid for by the Home Office, 'and by the increased number of Aliens sent out of the Kingdom'.<sup>206</sup>

Deportation costs, and the employment of additional agents on the coast, were the reasons advanced by Flint for the increased expenses of 1800-01.<sup>207</sup> Total expenditure for the period 27 September 1794 to 19 March 1800 was estimated at £18,035.16.10.<sup>208</sup>

Deportation costs varied from case to case. Obviously, an alien who had to be escorted to his port of departure cost more than one who was asked to quit the kingdom within a given time. King instructed the town clerk of Southampton that deportees were to pay their own passage if they could afford it; if not, the mayor was to advance the money, then draw on the Home Office for it.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Account of the Expenses of the Alien Department, 1797-9, 17 April 1800, H.O.5/5, p. 346.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Account of Expenses of Alien Department in 1800, 12 Feb. 1801, H.O.5/6, pp. 285-6; Account of Expenses of Alien Department in 1801, 8 March 1802, H.O.5/7, p. 272. Annual figures on Alien Office expenditure are fragmentary. The highest estimate that I have for a year's outlay is a total of £8,188 for the year to 5 Jan. 1801, which was almost double that of the previous year (see *ibid.*). The peak of expenditure was probably in 1801 or 1802. For partial figures see Accounts and Papers, xxxv, 1868-9, pp. 448-9, 453-4; Alien Accounts, H.O.5/22.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> King to Ridding, 31 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 127.

However when the wife of one deportee wanted to accompany her husband into exile, but could not afford the passage, Portland directed 'that every expence for her passage, and maintenance while on board shall be provided by you in the same manner as for her husband and children'.<sup>210</sup> The allowance made for aliens who could not maintain themselves while awaiting deportation varied from five shillings a day for 'Persons of a superior Class', to three shillings and sixpence for 'Persons of the common Class'. Dover magistrates were told that the Alien Office would pay one and sixpence a day towards the cost of detaining any alien who could not pay his own expenses.<sup>211</sup>

Much of the administrative burden of the Alien Act fell on the officials in the ports, but the Alien Office seems to have been reluctant to offer them much financial recompense. In the case of Charles Cox, the Mayor of Harwich, in January 1795 the office granted him indemnification for expenses, but in December it refused him an allowance to provide an office and clerk to transact alien business. However, a year later, King referred to a gratuity which Cox had been granted for such business.<sup>212</sup> Presumably a gratuity was preferred to an allowance, as being more flexible and less of a regular perquisite.

The office establishment remained small. The early superintendents had been served by temporary clerks as needed; eventually two clerks were placed on the establishment.<sup>213</sup> By 15 October 1795 Charles M. Lullin had been appointed Chief of Passports and Licences; he retired

<sup>210</sup> Flint to Walsh, 2 March 1798 [should be 1799] H.O.5/4, pp. 281-2.

<sup>211</sup> Flint to Walsh, 31 May 1799, *ibid.*, pp. 388-9; Ford to Stow, 2 Dec. 1800, H.O.5/6, p. 187.

<sup>212</sup> King to Cox, 10 Jan. 1795, H.O.5/1, p. 132; Portland to Mayor of Harwich, 31 Dec. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 314-5; King to Cox, 16 Dec. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 236. On recompense for expenses, see also: Wickham to Newport, 6 Feb. 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 268.

<sup>213</sup> Nelson, Home Office, p. 126. Dr Nelson gives no date for these appointments.

in 1816.<sup>214</sup> Henry Brooke served as Chief Clerk from about June 1798 to 1813.<sup>215</sup> He occasionally made trips to the ports on alien business.<sup>216</sup> Flint's term of office as superintendent was broken by the appointment of Richard Ford from 7 August 1800 to January 1801; Flint resumed on 19 February.<sup>217</sup>

By 1802 there were four men working for or with the Alien Office as Inspectors of Aliens: Benjamin Fuller Stow (Dover), Samuel Humphrey Pellew (Falmouth), George Hake (Harwich) and James Walsh Jnr (Gravesend).<sup>218</sup> This embryo inspectorate, which foreshadowed the increasing specialisation characteristic of the nineteenth century, developed in stages between 1793 and 1802. The first step came from outside the Alien Office, when the Lord Mayor appointed John Mazzinghi as recorder of aliens at Gravesend in 1793,<sup>219</sup> and in 1795 Philip Stanhope of the Alien Office temporarily assisted customs officers in Harwich.<sup>220</sup> But in 1796 matters were put on a more formal footing by appointing inspectors who interviewed new arrivals, sent lists of arriving and departing aliens, and ensured that suspicious foreigners and their baggage were sent to the magistrates at Great Marlborough Street for a thorough examination. They might also assume command of Customs cutters when necessary.<sup>221</sup> The inspectors were paid a salary

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> [?] to Chief Magistrates of Margate, Ramsgate, Deal et al., 12 July 1800, H.O.5/5, pp. 460-1; Pelham to Brooke, 14 Oct. 1801, H.O.5/7, p. 137.

<sup>217</sup> Nelson, Home Office, p. 126.

<sup>218</sup> Pelham to Lords Commissioner of the Treasury, 30 June 1802, H.O.5/7, pp. 407-10. See also Nelson, Home Office, pp. 127-8.

<sup>219</sup> See above, p. 117.

<sup>220</sup> See above, p. 129.

<sup>221</sup> Nelson, Home Office, pp. 127-8.

of £100 a year.

Those appointed in 1796 were James Walsh Jr, commander of a Customs cutter, who was inspector of aliens at Yarmouth 1796-1798, and Peter Newport, Collector of Customs at Dover, who assumed the additional duties of inspector there.<sup>222</sup> The fact that Walsh succeeded Mazzinghi at Gravesend after the latter was dismissed in December 1798, and that Walsh was an employee of the Alien Office in 1802,<sup>223</sup> suggests that responsibility for Gravesend had passed to the Alien Office, possibly in 1796. George Hake succeeded Walsh at Yarmouth, but had moved to Harwich by 1802.<sup>224</sup> Stow became collector of customs and inspector of aliens at Dover after the death of Newport in 1799, and by early 1800 the collector of customs at Falmouth served also as inspector of aliens.<sup>225</sup> The close links between the customs service and the Alien Office in personnel and functions at ports, were obvious. Under the 1802 Alien Act, customs officers became responsible for the execution of the Act at the ports, so Hake and Walsh were commissioned into the customs service.<sup>226</sup>

Another important, though less apparent, connection was that between the Alien Office, the police offices and Britain's security and intelligence operations. An examination of the superintendents

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.; Pelham to Lords Commissioner of the Treasury, 30 June 1802, H.O.5/7, pp. 407-10.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., Nelson, Home Office, p. 128.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., pp. 127-8.

<sup>226</sup> H. Brooke to Walsh, 26 June 1802, H.O.5/7, pp. 395-6; Pelham to Lords Commissioner of the Treasury, 30 June 1802, H.O.5/7, pp. 407-10. Stow and Pellew, of course, already held customs commissions: *ibid.*

of aliens leads in this direction. To recapitulate:<sup>227</sup>

Superintendents of Aliens 1793-1802

William Huskisson (10 Jan. 1793 - 11 July 1794)

William Wickham (11 July 1794 - 9 Dec. 1794)

Thomas Carter (9 Dec. 1794 - Feb. 1798)

Charles William Flint (5 July 1798 - 7 Aug. 1800; 19 Feb. 1801 on)

Richard Ford (7 Aug. 1800 - Jan. 1801).

William Wickham's career shows his close involvement with security matters. In August 1792 he was appointed magistrate at Whitechapel in East London, one of the new police offices created under the 1792 Middlesex Justices Act,<sup>228</sup> where the registration of aliens would have been one of his duties from January 1793. From August 1793 to mid-1794 Grenville employed him in a secret 'Foreign Correspondence', which he continued during his term as superintendent of aliens,

to which place I was appointed (inter alia) with the express view of enabling me to extend and enlarge my foreign communications and correspondance [sic], for which that office furnished singular facilities and advantages that could have been obtained in no other way.<sup>229</sup>

As Under Secretary of the Home Office 1798-9, between his two intelligence missions in Switzerland, Wickham supervised Alien Office activities. Flint worked for Wickham on his first mission in Switzerland,<sup>230</sup> and must have had considerable knowledge of intelligence operations there.

Richard Ford's brief tenure as superintendent of aliens must be seen in the context of a much longer association with the Home Office as magistrate first at the Shadwell Public Office from 1792 and then

<sup>227</sup>Based on Nelson, Home Office, p. 126.

<sup>228</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>229</sup>Wickham to [?], 27 March 1831, Wickham, Correspondence, i, p. 5.

<sup>230</sup>See above, p. 162.

at Bow Street, where he subsequently was appointed chief magistrate in 1801. He assisted the Home Secretary in the prosecutions of members of the Society for Constitutional Information and the London Constitutional Society and in the treason trials of 1794. He also attended the Home Office regularly on police business and to assist in matters relating to treason and sedition. Moreover, there is some indication that in 1797 Ford was involved with the secret correspondence to France.<sup>231</sup> As a magistrate, he would have registered aliens under the Act from 1792, and in 1795 Portland informed him of public houses frequented by aliens or undesirables, to aid him in decisions when licensing hostelries. So Ford's two roles may have been interconnected.<sup>232</sup>

The Alien Office made full use of Bow Street and the seven new metropolitan public offices. Magistrates registered aliens there from 1793, and transmitted licences to them from 1798. The magistrates assisted Alien Office officials to question suspicious foreigners, as when Ford joined Brooke and Flint in interrogating François Barthélemy, the former French ambassador to Switzerland, in 1799.<sup>233</sup> The Thames police helped to monitor alien traffic beyond Gravesend.<sup>234</sup> The Alien Office asked police assistance when trying to find aliens who left the ports without permission.<sup>235</sup> The favours were not all one way, however, for it seems likely that the Alien Office had a covert role to play in domestic intelligence, not provided for in the Alien Acts.

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<sup>231</sup>Ford's association with the Home Office is detailed in Chapter 2 of J. Ann Hone's forthcoming book on radicalism in London 1796-1821. See also Nelson, Home Office, pp. 115-6.

<sup>232</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>233</sup>Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>234</sup>See above, p. 155.

<sup>235</sup>See above, pp. 134-5.



R.R. Nelson suggested the existence of this hidden function when quoting a letter written by Wickham in 1801, pointing out the advantages that the secrecy of the office's operations provided for 'Observations & Information', and also

that in observing Foreigners resident here, much curious information respecting the ill intentioned of our Own Countrymen and Concerning Foreigners resident abroad, has been, and must continue to be indirectly obtained.<sup>236</sup>

Ann Hone, in investigating the 'case for conspiracy' among London radicals, and the government's domestic intelligence system, shows clearly the nexus between the Home Office, the Alien Office and Bow Street in intelligence operations. She concludes that a conspiracy to effect change by force did exist, although its scope is not known, and that 'the government had a comparatively efficient domestic intelligence system' between 1798 and 1802, in which the Alien Office played its part.<sup>237</sup> This hidden function was most evident between 1794 and 1801, when Portland was Home Secretary, and it seems likely that he appointed Wickham, Flint and Ford to the post of superintendent of aliens with this function in mind, thus influencing the nature and operations of the developing Alien Office. Finally, in this vein, it may be worth noting that a later superintendent of aliens was John Reeves, a noted anti-radical, and that he presided over 'a new section of the home office dealing with immigration and internal security'.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Wickham to Portland, 3 Jan. 1801, quoted in Nelson, Home Office, p. 130.

<sup>237</sup> See Chapter 2 of her forthcoming book on radicalism in London 1796-1821.

<sup>238</sup> J.R. Torrance, 'Sir George Harrison and the growth of bureaucracy in the early nineteenth century', English Historical Review, lxxxiii, no. 326, Jan. 1968, pp. 79-80. Reeves was a member of the ultra-conservative Loyalist Association: *ibid.*, p. 79.

The staff of the Alien Office was small, but it would have been far greater had it had to provide personnel to deal with all aspects of the acts. Instead, much of the administrative burden was dispersed onto Crown and local government officials throughout the kingdom. Of the former category, customs officers, police officers and representatives of the Crown in Jersey and certain posts abroad, carried the greatest load, and some customs officers worked directly for the Alien Office. Much of the paperwork required under the extensive registration clauses of the successive Acts was done by the network of local government officials, especially the mayors, town clerks, magistrates and justices of the peace. This spread of effort inhibited the growth of a fully professional organisation to deal with alien business, and kept government costs to a minimum. It also concealed a very real growth in the function and business of the central bureaucracy, for alien administration was certainly organised and directed by the ministry and Whitehall. This suggests that the eighteenth century practice of 'farming out' administration may have masked the development in real terms of its central bureaucracy.

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The 1793 Alien Act had been drawn up by Pitt's ministry to guard against the infiltration of revolutionary ideas and practices. The outbreak of war soon after added the function of detecting enemy agents among the hordes of Royalist refugees who took up most of the time and effort of the Alien Office. The Act was inadequate and difficult to implement; the problems of gathering adequate, accurate information, controlling ingress and egress, and keeping a check on alien movements within the kingdom, were constant. Home Office and

Alien Office officials made an ad hoc series of practical modifications and additions to the regulations, and the 1798 and 1802 Alien Acts were attempts to codify these and adapt the whole to the changing needs of the alien situation.

The development of the Alien Office itself was an unplanned outgrowth of attempts to implement the acts. The volume of Home Office correspondence arising from their administration made it sensible to concentrate routine work within the office. The development started with the appointment in 1793 of William Huskisson to handle alien business. Under Portland, his successors assumed the title of superintendent of aliens, and clerical assistance was increased, forming a separate section for alien business within the Home Office. From 1795, the section was given a separate financial allocation, and it sent agents to the ports to supervise border formalities in liaison with the custom officials. Paperwork increased under the terms of the 1798 Alien Act, and Portland provided for this by giving the section a formal identity as the Alien Office, with a separate office establishment. There is some evidence to suggest that under Portland the office extended its surveillance of suspicious foreigners to include local radicals.

In a way, the weaknesses of alien administration in Britain were also its strengths. The loopholes in the original Act led to ad hoc responses to problems as they arose, but this did lend flexibility to the administration. Some of the continuing problems with alien business arose from the failure to enforce rigorously regulations such as the prohibition of aliens residing near the coast. However, Portland's determination to ease the situation of aliens, except when security might be at stake, softened the impact of the Acts on them. Portland's

concern with the intention rather than the letter of the law seems justified. John Dinwiddy has pointed out that few French agents were able to establish themselves in Britain,<sup>239</sup> in contrast to British efforts in France. For all their clumsiness and inefficiency, the Alien Acts and Alien Office were remarkably effective in maintaining national security, which was, after all, their raison d'être.

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<sup>239</sup> Dinwiddy, 'Deportation', p. 211.

PART III: REFUGEE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 5THE ROLE OF BRITISH CHARITY IN FRENCH REFUGEE RELIEF, 1792-3

British administration of relief to the French refugees from September 1792 to the close of 1802 was largely a story of how a reluctant government was drawn increasingly into a welfare field by the charitable associations and government officials who witnessed the plight of the refugees and who put in hand the first attempts to organise aid. This chapter and the next cover the period to December 1793, when the government agreed to fund Wilmot's Committee as part of its attempt to achieve a comprehensive settlement of relief matters in England and Jersey. Chapter 5 deals with the impact of the Revolution and the emigration on the imagination of the British, the initial voluntary responses to the refugee influx, and the primacy in the efforts of organised charity of Wilmot's Committee, which is examined in detail. Chapter 6 first examines the impact of the emigration on Jersey and the development of its relief administration, with emphasis on the early involvement of the government. The second part draws together the experience of relief administration there and on the mainland in an exploration of why the British government decided to grant aid to the French.

## I

Interest in the French Revolution and the ensuing emigration was high in England in the months succeeding the fall of the Bastille, and occasionally afterwards, as when the royal couple were apprehended at Varennes in 1791. However, once the new régime in Paris seemed firmly established, and fewer aristocratic luminaries were included in the continuing trickle of émigrés into England, their news value abated.

in 1792 the influx of émigrés, particularly ecclesiastical ones, began to increase steadily, but went largely unnoticed, except by people particularly involved with them, such as Burke, interested Roman Catholics and the émigré community.

This changed when the dramatic events of August and September 1792 again rivetted Englishmen's attention on France. In August, Paris mobs attacked the Tuileries and massacred the Swiss guards. The imprisonment of the King, the subsequent abolition of the monarchy and the deportation of the non-juring clergy shocked the English; the Revolutionaries had undermined the very foundations of French society: the monarchy and church. The unexpected victory of the French Republican armies over the Duke of Brunswick's invading forces in September crushed hopes of an immediate restoration of the old order in France. It seemed that democracy had run amuck and that the direst predictions of Jeremiahs such as Burke had come true.

Stories were circulated of terrible happenings in France. The Duc de Rochefoucauld had been pulled out of his coach and murdered before the eyes of his wife and mother.<sup>1</sup> The Princesse de Lamballe had been murdered, and her head impaled on a pike and paraded through the streets of Paris.<sup>2</sup> The mob had invaded a Carmelite monastery in Paris and slaughtered many of its occupants; one venerable survivor arrived in England in a habit stained with the life-blood of his confrères.<sup>3</sup> Above all, there was the news of the September massacres, when over a

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<sup>1</sup>G. Francklyn to Lord Hawkesbury, 11 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 38228, ff. 53-4.

<sup>2</sup>Gaetano Salvemini, The French Revolution 1788-1792 trans. I.M. Rawson (London, 1954), p. 312.

<sup>3</sup>Plasse, Clergé Français, 1, pp. 155-9.

thousand inmates of Parisian prisons were slaughtered by the Paris mobs.<sup>4</sup>

These stories had a profound effect on the English, particularly those who had some personal knowledge of the people involved. Lord Auckland wrote from The Hague:

it strikes more particularly those who know France and its interior.... Eleanor and I were so familiarised to all the scenes which have gone forwards, by having travelled so much through the provinces, by having lived so much with the unfortunate prisoners of the Temple, by knowing personally many of the victims of the late atrocities, and by having lived in friendship and correspondence with some of them to the last hour, that our life is embittered by the details which we receive, and we can talk of nothing else.<sup>5</sup>

Alarm for the safety of friends was not unmixed with fears of similar occurrences in England. 'Fanny Burney wrote from Essex:

Our time was almost all corroded by the general alarm for the political safety of all manner of people; the successes of the fiends of France filled us with incessant horror, and the necessity of guarding against the contagion of plunder and equality, amongst the poor and wicked, or the duped and the dupers, occupied us perpetually.<sup>6</sup>

The institutions of monarchy, aristocracy and the Catholic Church had been challenged and defeated by the lower orders and the irreligious. If this could happen in France, the most powerful nation in continental Europe, then no established order in Europe could feel secure.

Refugees fled France in the wake of these events; four thousand poured into the south coastal areas of England in the space of six weeks,

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<sup>4</sup> Salvemini, French Revolution, pp. 310-12. A few months later, Stanley (Thomas' Relief Committee) wrote of those 'who have more immediately interested ourselves on their Behalf since the Murders of the 2<sup>d</sup> of Sep<sup>r</sup>': Stanley to [Dundas?], 18 Dec. 1792, H.O.42/23, f. 427.

<sup>5</sup> Auckland to Elliot, 29 Sept. 1792, Minto, ii, pp. 66-7.

<sup>6</sup> Entry 24 Sept. 1792, d'Arblay, Diary and Letters, v, p. 115.



beginning late in August. These refugees were markedly different from previous arrivals. The clergy had been forcibly ejected from France, while the others had left there in panic. They had made little or no preparation for escape or exile. Consequently they had fewer resources to draw upon and were visibly more destitute. This was particularly true for the clergy. They had been given two weeks to leave France of their own accord, before facing deportation or imprisonment.<sup>7</sup> Most were harassed and despoiled by officials and people along the road to exile, and some were beaten or killed.<sup>8</sup>

Lay people leaving France had troubles of their own. They were barred from crossing the Channel in the regular packets, and usually had to pay extortionate prices for passages.<sup>9</sup> Often the refugees could not leave openly, because of the hostile populace. The Times reported their plight on 15 September 1792:

The French emigrants who arrived in London on Wednesday morning report, that before they were so fortunate as to procure shipping, they had secreted themselves in woods and other lonely and unfrequented places for three days and nights, where they suffered extreme inconvenience from the constant alarm and agitation they were under, the cold and dampness of the weather, and the want of provisions and every other accommodation. They say, that had it not been for making incursions at night into vineyards and gardens for fruit they must have exposed themselves to the most imminent danger of being massacred, or have perished for want of food.

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<sup>7</sup>Abbé Louis Kerbiriou, Jean-François de La Marche Évêque-Comte de Léon (1729-1806): étude sur un diocèse Breton et sur l'émigration (Quimper, 1924), pp. 389-90.

<sup>8</sup>Abbé Barruel, The History of the Clergy during the French Revolution trans. from the French, 3 vols (London, 1794), iii, pp. 191-5; Abbé Meignan, Un Prêtre Déporté en 1792: épisodes de l'histoire de la Révolution et de l'histoire des missions (Paris, 1862), pp. 136-8; Plasse, Clergé Français, i, pp. 98-100; Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 391.

<sup>9</sup>Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 77-8; Sheffield to Auckland, 3 Oct. 1792, Auckland, Journal and Correspondence, ii, p. 449.

The press carried reports of the flood of French into the south coastal towns. On 3 September 1792 the Hampshire Chronicle described the situation in Portsmouth:

Cargoes of unhappy Frenchmen arrive daily at this port, who get away in the middle of the night in English vessels.... They are uniform in their deplorable description of their country. History furnishes no instances of similar anarchy and distress, nor were such cruel barbarities ever practised in the most savage nations.

By 13 September, there were nearly three hundred distressed clergy in the town.<sup>10</sup> Other towns, such as Brighton, Eastbourne and Dover, received similar influxes.<sup>11</sup>

Many of the incoming refugees had dramatic stories to tell. The Vicomtesse de Lesmaison's party 'had an extraordinary escape and passage in an open boat to Eastbourne, where they found the utmost attention from the bathers'.<sup>12</sup> Her sister, Madame de Balbany, was one of several refugees shipwrecked near Newhaven.<sup>13</sup> The Duc de Liancourt had been hunted from Rouen to Abbéville to the coast before escaping to England,<sup>14</sup> Madame de Broglie and her young son had crossed the Channel in an open boat and the Marquise de Bouillé had come in the guise of a sailor.<sup>15</sup> Madame Charles de Noailles had tried to ensure a

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<sup>10</sup>Trigge to [Dundas?], 13 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, ff. 539-40.

<sup>11</sup>The Times 16 October 1792 gives tables of Customs House returns of French entering the country.

<sup>12</sup>Sheffield to Auckland, 3 Oct. 1792, Auckland, Journal and Correspondence, ii, p. 448.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 448-9.

<sup>14</sup>W. Cunningham, Alien Immigrants to England (1st pub. 1897, 2nd edn, London, 1969), p. 257.

<sup>15</sup>Phillips to Burney, [?] Sept. 1792, d'Arblay, Diary and Letters, v, p. 116; Hampshire Chronicle 3 Sept. 1792.

safe passage for her baby daughter by entrusting her to the care of an Englishwoman at Le Havre, and then had disguised herself as a sailor and hidden on an English boat, with the connivance of the captain. She managed to rejoin her baby in Brighton.<sup>16</sup> The Prince de Poix was arrested, escaped disguised as a National Guardsman, was hidden in Paris by a friend, and got out of France after paying an exorbitant amount for a passport.<sup>17</sup>

The French arrived in various stages of shock, exhaustion and destitution. Their immediate needs were food, shelter, clothing and possibly transport to London. In the longer term they needed housing, clothing, medical care and some means of subsistence. Their presence in large numbers, their very obvious needs and the sensationalist touch added by their stories of persecution and escape, created sufficient public sympathy for their plight to demand some sort of action. As the government was unwilling to assume responsibility for their care, it was left to the British public, in cooperation with the refugees themselves, to respond to those needs.

## II

The French refugees were assisted in England on three different levels: individual kindnesses, small-scale local organisations in areas receiving the emigrants, and London-centred national organisations. Informal charity, such as personal gifts or the offer of hospitality, began with the emigration itself, and probably lasted past the

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<sup>16</sup> Baron Roger Portalis, Henri-Pierre Danloux Peintre de Portraits et son Journal Durant l'Émigration (1753-1809) (Paris, 1910), p. 156.

<sup>17</sup> The Times 4 Oct. 1792.

Restoration in 1814.<sup>18</sup> However, with one exception, all organised attempts to assist the refugees had their genesis in the peak influx of September 1792.

The exception was the small organisation started in mid-1792 by Jean-François de La Marche, Bishop of St Pol de Léon, and two Catholic friends, Father Thomas Meynell, a former Jesuit, and Mrs Dorothy Silburne, a widow who lodged the Bishop at her home in Queen Street, Bloomsbury.<sup>19</sup> La Marche not only initiated the first attempt to organise relief for the refugee clergy in Britain, but he remained the dominant French administrator in the whole field of refugee welfare there until his death in 1806. He was peculiarly fitted for the task by his background and abilities.

La Marche was a Breton ex-soldier of strong faith and decided views, importunate, stubborn, and with marked talents for administration. His commitment to his episcopal duties in Brittany, and his involvement in welfare projects there, had given him a wealth of administrative experience to draw upon in exile. The enquiry into mendicity in the diocese of St Pol de Léon which he instituted in 1774, at the start of his episcopate, illustrates his concern with and pragmatism in welfare matters. He sent a questionnaire to each of his curés and rectors, designed to find out the number and type (i.e. whether children, aged, able-bodied, infirm, unemployed, etc.) of beggars and the reasons for beggary in each parish. He sought the opinions of the parish clergy on the best means of suppressing the practice,

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<sup>18</sup>For example, see Burney to [?], [?] Oct. 1792, d'Arblay, Diary and Letters, v, pp. 133-4; Baston, Mémoires, ii, pp. 42-5; La Tour du Pin, Memoirs, pp. 326-32; Cunningham, Alien Immigrants, p. 258.

<sup>19</sup>Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 52-3.

wanted to know what provision was made for the poor in the way of hospitals and funds, how the schemes were administered, and their strengths and weaknesses. Further, he asked how such schemes could be improved, or how new ones could be set up if none existed. He followed up the enquiry by instructing his curés to set up poor relief offices in the parishes, composed of clergy and volunteers, who would visit the poor districts to investigate and report on the situation and conduct of the needy before distributing alms. He held quarterly meetings with hospital boards and the Dames de la Charité, and helped to found a midwifery course in St Pol de Léon. La Marche reminded the rich of their obligations to the poor and enjoyed considerable success in raising funds and goods for the poor, besides being a considerable benefactor himself.<sup>20</sup>

One of La Marche's prime interests was education, whether primary, secondary or vocational training for the Church. He re-established the Collège de Léon, and spent two hundred thousand francs of his personal fortune on this project, and on bursaries for poor students.<sup>21</sup> One of his most effective projects, however, was his introduction of the potato to Breton agriculture; he first instituted its cultivation on his episcopal estates, then distributed the mature potatoes to Breton farmers, thereby helping to reshape the economy of the region.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 148-9, 180-2, 190-2. For a list of his benefactions see *ibid.*, pp. 193-6.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197. See *ibid.*, pp. 204-23 for his association with the Collège de Léon, and *ibid.*, pp. 224-33 for his involvement with primary education.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 183-7, 189-90, 195. See Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', pp. 175-88 for a detailed discussion of La Marche's background, activities (particularly religious) in exile, and an assessment of his contribution and character.

La Marche was politically active, too. In the 1780s he pressed the States of Brittany to introduce a parish-based poor relief system; it was still being periodically debated and deferred when the Revolution came. He was more successful in his campaigns for the construction of retaining walls against encroaching sand, the diminution of the capitation tax and the easing of the corvée.<sup>22</sup>

La Marche's ability to pursue political avenues for the welfare of his charges was a great asset in exile.

La Marche was the first French bishop to arrive in England, after his outspoken opposition to the Constituent Assembly had earned that body's displeasure. He evaded its 'invitation' to Paris by decamping before the arrival of his military escort, hiding, then sailing aboard a smuggling vessel to Cornwall, where he landed in March 1791.<sup>23</sup> His early arrival later proved of great benefit, for in this period he established a network of acquaintances in English social, political and Catholic circles. Among these were the Marquis and Marchioness of Buckingham, Edmund Burke, Philip Metcalfe,<sup>24</sup> two great Catholic families, the Arundells of Wardour and the Welds of Lulworth, Father Meynell and Dorothy Silburne. La Marche and his Catholic friends were the first to recognise the problems posed by the growing number of impoverished French clergy arriving in England in 1792. Father Meynell and Mrs Silburne took up a collection amongst their friends and raised four hundred guineas,<sup>25</sup> which the trio

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<sup>23</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 342-7.

<sup>24</sup> (1733-1818), M.P. for Plympton Erle. He was a wealthy distiller, a close friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and was well-known in literary circles. He supported Pitt's administration, and held an administration seat. Namier and Brooke (eds), History of Parliament, iii, p. 155.

<sup>25</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 353-4, 356-7; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 52-3; Barruel, History of the Clergy, iii, p. 220.

used to assist needy clergy. Mrs Silburne's house became the centre from which their activities were conducted. In July La Marche began a register in which he recorded the names and dioceses of the clergy in London, noting those in need of assistance. By August he had gathered twelve hundred names, of whom four hundred were granted a small weekly allowance.<sup>26</sup>

This early organisation was important for several reasons. First, it laid the foundations for later expansion by beginning the administrative procedures of registering the priests, judging their needs and establishing machinery for distributing funds. Secondly, La Marche assumed his role as the link between English fund-raising and the French operation of welfare services, and no one ever challenged his primacy as such. Thirdly, the house in Queen Street served as a reception-point in the capital to which clergy could be directed on or before their arrival there, a vital function, as most of the clergy were near-destitute and unable to speak English. Finally, the very existence of the organisation meant that potential benefactors could direct their donations to a place where they could be used immediately for the benefit of the refugees.

When refugees flooded into south coastal areas in September 1792, some Englishmen responded immediately. Sussex gentry and holiday-makers fed, lodged and passed on to London the two hundred and fifty refugees, mainly Norman priests, who arrived at Eastbourne in September.<sup>27</sup> As the influx

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 220-1; Plasse, *Clergé Français*, i, pp. 172-3; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 52; Kerbiriou, *La Marche*, p. 390.

<sup>27</sup> Bayham and Thornton to Dundas, 9 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 472; C. Lewis to King, 9 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 473.

continued, Lord George Cavendish put tents in the park of the Eastbourne estate to house the new arrivals.<sup>28</sup> Lord Sheffield<sup>29</sup> wrote from Sussex:

I have been particularly occupied (I did not want extra work) in favour of the French clergy. About 1,200 have landed in this country. I have been useful .... On Sunday last, notice was given me that a small French vessel with emigrants, women and children, were [sic] wrecked near Newhaven. I sent my Swiss servant to interpret and conduct them here. 30

At Brighton, the Prince of Wales and Mrs Fitzherbert graciously welcomed nearly forty nuns from Montargis, possibly the first nuns seen in England since the Reformation.<sup>31</sup>

Purely individual efforts were not sufficient to assist the refugees pouring into the south coastal areas. Small local subscriptions to relieve the immediate problem in the locality were set on foot in a number of country centres, including Dover, Lewes, Bath, Bristol, Portsmouth and Winchester.<sup>32</sup> Broadly, the money raised could be used in two ways. First, the refugees could be sent out of the kingdom, thereby relieving the British

<sup>28</sup> Hampshire Chronicle 24 Sept. 1792.

<sup>29</sup> John Holroyd-Baker, 1st Baron Sheffield (1735-1821), M.P. for Bristol. He usually supported Pitt. Created Earl of Sheffield (Irish peerage) in 1816. See D.N.B., ix, 1094-6.

<sup>30</sup> Sheffield to Auckland, 3 Oct. 1792, Auckland, Journal and Correspondence, ii, pp. 448-9.

<sup>31</sup> Entry und., W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. c. N.B. The section of the diary with alphabetical pagination was probably written retrospectively several years after the event. See also Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 74.

<sup>32</sup> Fector and Minet to Wilmot, 25 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 9; unidentified news clipping, ca 20 Sept. 1792, T.93/40, f. 359; J. Bowles to [Hester?], 3 Oct. 1792, T.93/53, f. 129; Trigge to Hester, 14 Nov. 1792; ibid., f. 548; Hampshire Chronicle 8 Oct. 1792.



of any responsibility for their future welfare. Secondly, the practical and immediate needs of the refugees could be met by the provision of accommodation, food, clothing and medical care, or the money with which to pay for them.

At Dover a subscription was started for the explicit purpose of shipping refugees out of England. Two shipowners assisted the project by offering free passages on their boats.<sup>33</sup> However, the first Dover subscription was the only one which concentrated solely on sending the French out of the kingdom. The second Dover subscription was started by a local citizen who strongly criticised the tactics of the first. William Brooksbank was first confronted with the refugees' plight while staying at his brother-in-law's house, on the Dover-Canterbury road. Here, he

had frequent Occasion to see and lament the Distress of these unfortunate Men [the clergy], Some almost without Clothes, Many without Money, and not a few hiring themselves as Day labourers in the Hoppicking. 34

He and his brother-in-law, Oliver Strang, went daily out onto the road and distributed alms to those whose need seemed most pressing.<sup>35</sup> When Brooksbank returned to Dover, he was horrified at the hardships that the first Dover plan had inflicted on some of the priests. With the help of two friends, two clergymen and Dover's principal apothecary, he turned his energies towards finding alternative means of assisting the refugees there. Accommodation was obviously a pressing need, so they tried to secure a large room or barn, without success. On being applied to, the local

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<sup>33</sup>Fector and Minet to Wilmot, 25 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 9.

<sup>34</sup>W. Brooksbank to B. Watson, 10 Oct. 1792, T. 93/40, f. 104.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

publicans and landlords made it clear that they had already made enough concessions to the refugees and that they would give no further assistance. The would-be benefactors then held a conference with a number of French priests living in Dover. Two doyens of the clergy agreed to draw up a list of their fellows in Dover, dividing them into three categories: those who needed no assistance, those who had limited means, and those who had none at all. Bodriss, the apothecary, undertook to give his services to the refugees free of charge.<sup>36</sup> Several features of Brooksbank's efforts in Dover are worth noting: the concentration on the clergy, the attempts to meet the immediate needs of shelter and medical care, the consultation and co-operation with the refugees themselves and the keeping of records.

In Sussex, like Dover, the lead in organising relief was taken by a local resident who had witnessed the refugees' plight, and proffered them what personal assistance he could. Alarmed by murmurs in the district against the number of refugees and their possible effect on prices, Lord Sheffield 'promoted a Meeting for the purpose of combining the exertions of the County in favour of these persecuted People' and quieting 'the prejudices & uneasiness of the ignorant in respect of them'.<sup>37</sup> The meeting, held at Lewes, elected a committee composed of Lord Sheffield and members from Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton and Cuckfield Place. It had three main aims: first, to correspond with other parts of the county and the London committees, to protect and succour the refugees on arrival and to see to

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., ff. 104-05.

<sup>37</sup> Sheffield to [Dundas], 21 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 581.

their safe conveyance to London and elsewhere; secondly, to ascertain the numbers of those landed, to show the absurdity of blaming them for current shortages and high prices; and thirdly, to organise and promote a subscription for 'discharging the necessary expences in the County'.<sup>38</sup>

As in Dover, attempts to help the refugees were the result of the problem becoming too large to be left to individual charity. The operation mounted in Sussex was on a larger scale, with a more formal association, and fund-raising as one of its aims. The committee saw a responsibility towards distressed refugees in the district, but envisaged that they would soon move out of the locality. Quieting any local unease at their presence was a further object, as local notables such as Lord Sheffield were natural guardians of public peace.

Many refugees soon passed from these local areas to London, where friends or La Marche might give them practical help, and where two national subscription committees were trying to deal more comprehensively with the problem. The Dover and Sussex committees quickly got in touch with the national committees; the one in Dover offered to distribute any funds sent from London, while the Sussex one resolved to send any surplus funds to London.<sup>39</sup> Lord Sheffield became a member of both London committees.

Several subscriptions were started in the capital, but only two of them operated on a national scale, those organised by Sir George Thomas and John Wilmot, respectively. A third, the Mansion House Committee, formed in

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<sup>38</sup> Unidentified news clipping, ca 20 Sept. 1792, T. 93/40, f. 359.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.; Brooksbank to Watson, 10 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 105.

the City under the auspices of the Lord Mayor, amalgamated with Wilmot's Committee on 6 October, bringing with it nearly £2,000 in subscriptions.<sup>40</sup>

Sir George White Thomas<sup>41</sup> called meetings on 12 and 26 September 1792, to form a committee to aid all French refugees in need, whether laity or clergy.<sup>42</sup> One was formed on the latter date, with Lord Sheffield in the chair. The committee included five members of parliament in Thomas, Sheffield, Stanley and the evangelical brothers Samuel and Henry Thornton. Four members also joined Wilmot's Committee: Sheffield, Henry Thornton, Sir William Pepperell<sup>43</sup> and John Julius Angerstein.<sup>44</sup> Few records of Thomas' Committee survive. Meetings were held every Wednesday at the Marine Society's Office in Bishopsgate Street. It advertised and published its subscription lists in the press, nominating Lloyd's Coffee-House and certain specified banks as places at which donations would be received.<sup>45</sup> The Committee was less successful than Wilmot's in raising funds. In the twelve months of its existence, it raised about £11,000, of which £1,000 had been donated by George III.<sup>46</sup> Whilst initially setting out to relieve

<sup>40</sup> Minutes 1, 5, 8, 17 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 14, 18-23, 28; Watson to Wilmot, 6 Oct. 1792, T. 93/52, f. 130; Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 235n.

<sup>41</sup> (? 1750-1821), lawyer, M.P. for Chichester 1784-1812. His family had West Indian connections: History of Parliament, iii, p. 631.

<sup>42</sup> St James's Chronicle 13 Sept. 1792; The Times 12 Oct. 1792; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 131, 134-5.

<sup>43</sup> He was a barrister from Massachusetts and was prominent in the American Loyalist colony in Britain. See Mary Beth Norton, The British-Americans: The Loyalist exiles in England 1774-1789 (London, 1974), pp. 162, 186, 305n.

<sup>44</sup> (1735-1823), merchant, Lloyd's underwriter, evangelical, philanthropist and prominent patron of the arts: D.N.B., i, p. 416.

<sup>45</sup> The Times 12 Oct. 1792.

<sup>46</sup> R. Butler to Hughes, 5 Dec. 1799, T. 93/52, f. 267.

both laity and clergy in England and Jersey, lack of funds forced it first to stop assisting any clergy, and then to abandon the laity in Jersey, before it failed altogether in September 1793.<sup>47</sup>

Wilmot's Committee was built on the organisation started by the Bishop of St Pol de Léon in mid-1792. When the Bishop's slender resources proved unable to cope with the flood of deported clergy in September, he turned to Edmund Burke and his friends for financial assistance, and Burke decided that a general subscription was needed if sufficient funds were to be raised.<sup>48</sup> With his usual energy, and the particular help of Walker King and Philip Metcalfe, Burke set about the work of raising funds and forming a committee to manage affairs. As well as the many letters that he wrote to his friends trying to interest them in the venture,<sup>49</sup> Burke composed an address to the public, 'Case of the Suffering Clergy of France, Refugees in the British Dominions', which was published in the press.<sup>50</sup> The London Chronicle of 13-15 September 1792 announced the

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<sup>47</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 404-05; Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 99.

<sup>48</sup> Burke to W. King, 7 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 198; Burke to R. Burke Jr, 9, 10 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>49</sup> See his correspondence for September in *ibid.* Members of the Committee drawn in through the Burke connection included Portland, Fitzwilliam, Angerstein, Rev. T. Burgess, Walker King, Metcalfe, Colonel Ironside, Dr French Laurence and William Wilberforce. According to E.M. Wilkinson, Burke suggested to Wilberforce that he should join the Committee as a counterstroke to his being made a citizen of France: Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 128.

<sup>50</sup> Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 219n; Charles Butler, Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics, since the Reformation 4 vols, (3rd edn, London, 1822), iii, p. 325.

forthcoming address, mentioned that a subscription for the clergy had been opened, named four banks at which donations would be received, and gave notice that 'a Meeting should be held, and a Committee appointed, for the purpose of superintending the distribution'. The Committee's skilful use of publicity was under way. Metcalfe recruited his fellow-politician John Eardley Wilmot, who had decided independently that some plan to help the distressed French clergy was necessary.<sup>51</sup> Wilmot's zeal and industry quickly won Burke's admiration.<sup>52</sup> He was a man of known administrative ability, a lawyer, Master in Chancery, member of parliament for Coventry and a former parliamentary commissioner for enquiring into American Loyalist claims.<sup>53</sup> When the first meeting of the Committee was held at Freemasons' Tavern in Bloomsbury on 20 September 1792, Wilmot took the chair.<sup>54</sup> He continued to preside over the Committee in its various forms until his resignation in 1806.

After its amalgamation with the Mansion House Committee, the membership of the Committee showed a variety of names drawn from England's social, commercial, religious, professional and political establishment.<sup>55</sup> The list was headed by the Duke of Portland, the Marquis of Buckingham, Earl Fitzwilliam

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<sup>51</sup>Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 124.

<sup>52</sup>Burke to W. King, 16 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 213.

<sup>53</sup>See above, pp. 21-2.

<sup>54</sup>Minutes 20 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 3.

<sup>55</sup>For a printed list of members, see *ibid.*, f. 2.

and the Earl of Radnor, but names of men active in business and community affairs were much more numerous. There were fourteen members of parliament<sup>56</sup> and twelve Anglican ministers, of whom two, Drs Cooke and Willes, were from Oxford University.<sup>57</sup> Dr Richard Brocklesby and Sir George Baker were prominent physicians, the latter being President of the Royal College of Physicians and one of the King's doctors.<sup>58</sup> Because of the amalgamation, prominent names from the City appeared on the list, including Lord Mayor Hopkins, Aldermen Combe and Skinner, Brook Watson, later Lord Mayor, Angerstein of Lloyd's and a number of bankers in Edward Forster, Samuel Bosanquet, Sir James Sanderson, Henry Thornton, Sir Richard Carr Glyn and Culling Smith.<sup>59</sup> At least six members were lawyers: Sir William Scott, the Advocate-General, Dr French Laurence, Judge of the Cinque Ports;<sup>60</sup> Charles Butler, soon to become the first practising Roman Catholic to be admitted to the English bar since 1688;<sup>61</sup> William Baker;<sup>62</sup> Sir William Pepperell and John Wilmot.

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<sup>56</sup> James Baillie, William Baker, Edmund Burke, Isaac Hawkins Browne, Robert Banks Jenkinson, Phillip Metcalfe, William Moreton Pitt, Sir James Sanderson, Sir William Scott, Lord Sheffield, Henry Thornton, Brook Watson, William Wilberforce and John Eardley Wilmot.

<sup>57</sup> The Bishops of Durham and London, and the Reverends Burgess, Cooke, Dampier, Gregory, Griffith, Jackson, King, Powlett, Sawbridge and Willes.

<sup>58</sup> John Brooke, King George III (St. Albans, 1974), p. 508.

<sup>59</sup> Most of them allowed their banks to be used as reception points for donations. For a list of such depots, see The Times 15 Oct. 1792.

<sup>60</sup> H.O.42/21, ff. 593-4.

<sup>61</sup> Butler (1750-1832) never practised as a barrister; his main business was conveyancing. He was a friend of Charles Fox, and shared his political views. He was very active in Catholic affairs, and a prolific writer on legal and religious subjects: D.N.B., iii, pp. 497-9.

<sup>62</sup> Thomas William Baker (1743-1824) married into the Penn family, and acted for them in their application to the American Loyalist Claims Commission for losses sustained to property in America: W. Baker to F. Montagu, 3 May 1790, P.R.O. 30/8/111, ff. 52-3. Presumably this would have brought him into contact with Wilmot and Pepperell.

Angerstein and Sir Thomas Bernard were notable philanthropists, and Bernard, Wilberforce and William Moreton Pitt later founded the Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor. Together with Angerstein, Thornton, and Pepperell, they were active in the evangelical movement.<sup>63</sup> As might be expected, people with strongly conservative political views were well-represented. Apart from Burke and his friends, a number of men active in the Loyalist Association movement of 1792-3 were also on the Committee: Lord Sheffield, Forster, Bosanquet, William Baker and John Bowles.<sup>64</sup> Thus, although the politicians were drawn from both parties, no radicals from the Foxite group were members, although some were contributors.

Many members lent their names to the Committee, but rarely, if ever, attended meetings.<sup>65</sup> The initial meeting aside, of the sixty-one members listed, only thirty-three attended any meetings. On the assumption that the men most active in the Committee's administrative affairs were those who attended the most meetings, a breakdown of attendances in the period 24 September 1792 to 26 December 1793 may be useful:<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ford K. Brown, Fathers of the Victorians: the age of Wilberforce (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 87-9.

<sup>64</sup> Austin Mitchell, 'The Association Movement of 1792-3', Historical Journal, iv, no. 1, 1961, pp. 59-62; Donald E. Ginter, 'The Loyalist Association Movement of 1792-3 and British public opinion', ibid., ix, no. 2, 1966, pp. 181, 185-6.

<sup>65</sup> This includes Buckingham and Sheffield, who actively assisted refugees outside the framework of the Committee.

<sup>66</sup> There were seventy-nine meetings in the period. The figures are compiled from the names listed in the minutes of each meeting; see B.M. Add. Ms 18591-2.



59	John Eardley Wilmot
42	Sir William Pepperell
40	Rev. Dr Walker King
37	Dr Richard Brocklesby
36	Philip Metcalfe
27	Rev. Dr Gregory
23	John Bowles
18	Rev. G. Griffith
16	Charles Butler
16	Thomas Bernard
16	Rev. Dr Jackson
14	Sir George Baker
13	Culling Smith Sr

The five most active members were then Wilmot, Sir William Pepperell, Rev. Dr Walker King, Dr Brocklesby and Philip Metcalfe. Pepperell was a barrister, an evangelical and a prominent American Loyalist. As a foundation member of the board of Loyalist agents and later its chairman, he had been engaged in supplying the information on which American Loyalist claims were decided by the board on which Wilmot had been a commissioner. The agents had worked closely with the commissioners.<sup>67</sup> Thus Wilmot and Pepperell were well known to each other, and had worked together on a task involving the adjudication of claims for compensation and pensions, gaining invaluable experience for the work of the refugee relief committee. Wilmot and Metcalfe generally supported Pitt in the Commons, and presumably had government connections. Walker King was Dean of Rochester and a brother of John King, the Under Secretary to the Home Office who later dealt with much of the business arising from the Alien Act of 1793. Richard Brocklesby was a lifelong friend of Burke's and a member of the governing body of Middlesex Hospital, which soon became the main centre for French refugees in need of hospital care.<sup>68</sup> One member who attended only nine meetings

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<sup>67</sup> Norton, British-Americans, pp. 192-6.

<sup>68</sup> D.N.B., ii, pp. 1282-3; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 257.

in the period was nonetheless important in the Committee's links with the ministry. Robert Banks Jenkinson, later second Earl of Liverpool and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, was the son of Lord Hawkesbury, then in Pitt's cabinet as President of the Board of Trade. Jenkinson himself was a 'coming man' in politics, and an associate of Pitt's, so business requiring Pitt's attention was often transmitted through him.<sup>69</sup> The experience and personal contacts of these members proved invaluable in the administrative work of the Committee.

### III

In dealing with the French refugee clergy, Wilmot's Committee faced two options: it could remove the clergy from Britain, or it could try to make their situation there more tolerable. Both methods were tried. The most successful scheme for removing the clergy was one for sending them to the Continent. The idea was suggested to both the government and Wilmot's Committee on 25 September 1792 by Fector and Minet, who were party to a similar scheme in Dover.<sup>70</sup> On 26 September Wilmot's Committee resolved first to ask the Bishop of St Pol de Léon to encourage and assist any clergy who wanted to pass to Flanders and Holland, and secondly, to apply to the government for free passages on the Post Office packet-boats for them.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Minutes 27 May, 19 Aug., 28 Nov. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms. 18591, ff. 109, 115-6, 132. For Jenkinson, see D.N.B., x, pp. 748-52.

<sup>70</sup> Fector and Minet to Pitt, 25 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 638; Fector and Minet to Wilmot, 25 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 9. Also, see above, p. 179. Fector and Minet owned a merchant and banking firm with shipping interests. Nepean used the firm in the winter of 1792-3 as an agent to hire captains of cutters to gather intelligence, and the firm purchased small foreign craft, secretly on behalf of the government, to prevent their future use against England: Nelson, Home Office, pp. 81-2.

The government gave its immediate consent, and La Marche directed the arrangements thereafter.<sup>71</sup> Figures given in the Committee's monthly accounts indicate that over 550 clergy had been sent abroad by the end of 1793, at a cost of about £1,075 to the Committee. This suggests that departing clergy were given a small sum to help them on their way.<sup>72</sup>

The Committee also considered schemes for settling the clergy abroad. The obvious place of settlement was Canada, where they would be welcomed by the French Canadian ecclesiastical authorities. Both Thomas' Committee and Wilmot's Committee approached the government with schemes for settling refugees in Canada, but the former's plan came to nothing. The Wilmot group's plan fared little better. In December the Committee despatched to Canada a mission of four priests as a trial project.<sup>73</sup> After an initial warm welcome in Canada, enthusiasm for the project cooled there, and the priests in England proved reluctant to venture so far afield, so the scheme lost impetus. In the event, only forty-three priests had gone to Canada by 1802.<sup>74</sup>

The major part of the Committee's activities was necessarily centred on relieving the needs of those French ecclesiastics who remained in England

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<sup>71</sup> Minutes 9, 10 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 9-10.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes 29 Oct. 1792, 11 Jan., 5 April, 10 May, 17 June, 12 Aug., 23 Sept., 7 Nov. 1793, B.M. Add.Ms 18591, ff. 36, 65-6, 90, 103, 110, 114, 124, 128.

<sup>73</sup> Minutes 10, 14 Dec. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 54, 56. This mission is described in detail by M.G. Hutt in his article 'Abbé P.J.L. Desjardins and the scheme for the settlement of French priests in Canada, 1792-1802', *Canadian Historical Review*, xxxix, no.2, June 1958, pp. 93-124.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 121-2.

and Jersey. Judging by subsequent developments, the Committee thought its basic concerns to be the subsistence, accommodation, clothing, medical care and burial of refugee clergy. Its main responses to these needs took the form of the payment of allowances to destitute refugees and the provision of various welfare services. To sum up, it might fairly be said that the four matters which absorbed the Committee's administrative energies were fund-raising, decisions on eligibility, the distribution of allowances and the provision of welfare services. Certainly these were the areas which most necessitated policy decisions and the keeping of records and accounts.

Subscriptions had been directed to four banks even before the Committee had been formally constituted, and one of the Committee's first tasks was to extend and formalise the collection of funds. Accordingly, it persuaded additional bankers to receive donations, and by 15 October was able to advertise a list of twenty-six banks, together with Lloyd's, as receiving depots in London.<sup>75</sup> In its advertisements the Committee requested managers of any local subscriptions in the country to send the funds and lists of subscribers to one of these banks.<sup>76</sup>

To persuade the public to subscribe to the relief fund, the Committee had to keep prospective subscribers informed of developments, and convince them that the cause was worthy, that the recipients were deserving and grateful, that the funds were managed economically and efficiently and that the subscribers were praiseworthy benefactors. Advertising in the press

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<sup>75</sup> Minutes 26 Sept., 8 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 10, 23-4; The Times 15 Oct. 1792.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.; Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 12.

was the backbone of the Committee's publicity, and the publication of subscription lists the key component of the advertisements. The inclusion of a subscriber's name proved that the donation had been received, made public the beneficence of the donor, and allowed some the pleasure of seeing their names in distinguished company. The publication of the lists was obviously important, as the Committee received several complaints that names had been omitted.<sup>77</sup> The advertisements were also used to publicise various of the resolutions passed at committee meetings.<sup>78</sup>

The cause of the French refugees, both laity and clergy, was aided by newspaper articles dwelling on their plight, the justice of their cause and their gratitude or deserving nature. For example, it was useful when the French clergy were commended both for refunding allowances when circumstances permitted, and for voluntarily allocating a portion of their allowance to assist those French laity brought to the edge of starvation by the cessation of lay relief late in 1793.<sup>79</sup> But Wilmot's Committee was not content to rely on such general and haphazard publicity, and took the initiative in publicising the refugee's plight and the Committee's work on their behalf. It resolved to publish in the press information on the number

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<sup>77</sup> Sir R.C. Glyn & Co. to [Hester], 26 Oct. 1792, T.93/52, f. 161; Sir James Sanderson to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 6 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 21; Lord Cremorne to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 8 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 23; Rev. J. Gardiner to Hester, 22 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 33.

<sup>78</sup> Such advertisements were a common form of publicity, and Thomas' Committee also used them. Advertisements for the two committees can be seen side by side in The Times 12 Oct. 1792.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Oct. 1792, 14 Oct., 1793. For examples of general publicity see *ibid.*, 19 Sept. 1792, 28 Feb., 23 May, 8 July 1793.

of refugee clergy in Britain, and the assistance given to them,<sup>80</sup> to print copies of receipts and expenditure and circulate them to members of the Committee and members of parliament,<sup>81</sup> and to publish in the press selected resolutions and statements of accounts.<sup>82</sup> The Committee also arranged for the printing of a general list of subscribers and a list of the Committee members.<sup>83</sup>

When Thomas Bowdler<sup>84</sup> sent the Earl of Bathurst a favourable account of a visit to the King's House at Winchester, where a colony of refugee clergy had been set up,<sup>85</sup> the Committee arranged to have the letter published in the newspapers, and decided to print seven hundred copies of it, along with its own address to the public and a letter to the Committee from Abbé Martin,<sup>86</sup> the head of the Winchester community.<sup>87</sup> Bowdler's letter

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<sup>80</sup>Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, 12 April 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 11-12, 93-4.

<sup>81</sup>Minutes 14, 21 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 67, 69.

<sup>82</sup>Minutes 27 March, 12 April, 6 May 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 86, 93-4, 100.

<sup>83</sup>Minutes 1 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 15; *ibid.*, f. 2.

<sup>84</sup>(1754-1825), M.D. Edinburgh 1776, wrote on politics, best-known for his expurgated version of Shakespeare, published in 1818: *D.N.B.*, ii, pp. 952-4.

<sup>85</sup>See below, p. 210 et seq.

<sup>86</sup>Noël-Paul Martin, born at Sequeville-en-Bessin (diocese of Bayeux) in 1745. In 1767 he entered the congregation of Eudistes. When the Revolution broke out he was the superior at the grande séminaire de Lisieux: Burke, *Correspondence*, vii, p. 395.

<sup>87</sup>Minutes 18, 25 Feb. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 74, 80. A copy of Bowdler's letter appeared in The Times 19 Feb. 1793.

stressed the very points that it wanted known: its own economy and good management, and the grateful, deserving recipients who would suffer if future support were not forthcoming. Also featured in its advertisements were extracts from a sermon to the House of Lords, and from Hannah More's<sup>88</sup> 'Address to the Ladies of Great Britain'; both commended the French clergy to Christian charity, as being martyrs to their religious conscience.<sup>89</sup>

The gratitude of the French clergy for the reception accorded them in England was further emphasised by a pamphlet written by the Bishop of St Pol de Léon in 1793 and published in both English and French.<sup>90</sup> It took the form of an address to the refugee French clergy in England, and served both as an exhortation to good conduct on their part, and as an exercise in public relations. He urged the clergy to reassure their benefactors by their conduct:

More faithful than ever in our duty towards God, let us convince this generous nation, that we think ourselves strictly bound to respect and to observe its laws; that a constitution to which England owes a long series of prosperity, is entitled to our fidelity and submission.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> (1745-1843), a prolific writer of moral and religious tracts, who moved in literary and evangelical circles. In 1792 she wrote an anti-Revolutionary tract called 'Village Politics', which enjoyed a moderate success. She involved herself in the education of the poor, for the good of their souls and the preservation of their station in life. For a comment on her activities in Mendip see J.L. and Barbara Hammond, The Town Labourer (1760-1832) 2 vols (2nd edn, London, 1949), ii, pp. 55-60. See also D.N.B., xiii, pp. 861-7.

<sup>89</sup> Minutes 1 March, 12 April 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 81, 93.

<sup>90</sup> I have used the English version: John Francis de La Marche, Letter of the Right Reverend John Francis de La Marche, Bishop of Léon, Addressed to the French Clergymen Refugees in England trans. from the French (London, 1793).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 14-15.

La Marche well knew that it was vital that the French priests should refrain from proselytising while in England, and made this clear to refugees and hosts alike.

While much of its funds came from London, Wilmot's Committee was successful in its bid to attract subscriptions from outside the capital and received sums raised in at least twenty towns,<sup>92</sup> as well as many individual donations. E.M. Wilkinson has examined the subscription lists in some detail, paying special attention to the contributions made by the universities, the Anglican clergy, members of parliament and children.<sup>93</sup> Individual donations varied from names great in the land such as Earl Fitzwilliam, Henry Dundas and the Archbishop of Canterbury, each giving £100, to the 2/8d donated by 'John Walford Esq.<sup>r</sup>' being all that remains of the 3500 Verdict Money Rec.<sup>d</sup> of Thomas N. Cooke Esq.<sup>r</sup> for Crim. Con. with Sophia W.'<sup>94</sup> It is interesting to note, as E.M. Wilkinson points out, that many of the first contributors were Roman Catholics: she calls the public appearance of their names 'a novel and significant phenomenon', as was their joint participation with Protestants in a public venture.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>An undated list is given in T.93/25, pp. 1-29. These are distinct from individual subscribers living in the country. Bath, Winchester, Portsmouth and Norwich sent in group subscriptions several times. The largest sum entered is £410.18.3½ from Dublin. The list is certainly incomplete, as places such as Bristol and Dover are omitted.

<sup>93</sup>Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 140-51. The master list of subscriptions for the relief of the French clergy from 8 Aug. 1792 to 29 July 1795 is in T.93/8, ff. 1-89. See also Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', pp. 39-41.

<sup>94</sup>Entry 18 Oct. 1792 in *ibid.*

<sup>95</sup>Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 141.



The monthly totals of the subscription lists tell much of the financial story of Wilmot's Committee. Over £12,000 was raised in the two months to 31 October 1792, when the impact of the emigration on public consciousness was greatest. Income dropped in the winter months, then rose to £3,528 and £3,160.15.6 in March and April respectively. At the end of April 1793, the progressive total of subscriptions stood at £23,567.11.10. But by December it had increased to only £26,050.13.2. Approximately £2,500 had been raised in a period of eight months, a figure which included £600 raised by a Ladies' Committee, organised by Mrs Crewe, the Whig hostess.<sup>96</sup> Obviously the subscription lists had lost impetus as a means of raising funds. This happened even earlier with Thomas' Committee, which was struggling to keep going by March 1793.<sup>97</sup> For Wilmot's Committee, the end of April was a critical time. The balance in hand on 1 May was £1,163.7.0, and the cost of supporting 3,107 French clergy for the month of April had been £4,520.10.8.<sup>98</sup> Fortunately for the refugees, the Committee had already set in motion a further scheme for raising funds: a collection in the Anglican parishes.

The method of raising funds under a church brief was not new, but merely little used in the period. It had been more common a century earlier, and in fact the Huguenot refugees had then been assisted by just such a

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<sup>96</sup> See below, pp. 198-9.

<sup>97</sup> The Times 20, 25 March 1793. George III came to the rescue of Thomas' Committee in this month, with an unpublicised donation of £1,000: George III to Pitt, 18 March 1793, P.R.O.30/8/103, f. 486.

<sup>98</sup> Minutes 10 May 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 103.

collection.<sup>99</sup> The remarkable feature of the 1793 collection was that it was taken by Anglican clerics on behalf of their French Roman Catholic counterparts. Moreover, the initiative came from several Anglican clergymen, who suggested to Wilmot that a collection for the priests could be taken 'after the Sermon to be preached on the Approaching Feast day the 19th April next'.<sup>100</sup> On 22 March 1793, the Committee decided to submit the idea to the Anglican hierarchy and to William Pitt, and to suggest a similar collection to the pastors and ministers of Dissenting congregations.<sup>101</sup> A few days later the affair took on even more of an ecumenical hue when the Committee resolved

That the Bishop of S.<sup>t</sup> Pol de Léon be requested to concert with the Abbé Beauregard to fix on some day for preaching a Sermon in one of the Catholic Chapels and to make a Collection afterwards for the Relief of the French Clergy. 102

Pitt willingly gave his consent to the scheme. The Anglican bishops agreed, with the proviso that the King's sanction should first be obtained.<sup>103</sup> George III did approve, and the collection was eventually taken under the authority of the 'King's Letter' of 17 April 1793.<sup>104</sup> Dr John Douglass, the

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<sup>99</sup> William A. Shaw, 'The English government and the relief of Protestant refugees', English Historical Review, ix, no. 36, Oct. 1894, pp. 662-6.

<sup>100</sup> Minutes 22 March 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 85.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Minutes 27 March 1793, *ibid.*, f. 86.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, Minutes 5 April 1793, *ibid.*, f. 89.

<sup>104</sup> Minutes 12 April 1793, *ibid.*, f. 92; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 335. A full discussion of the collection taken under the 'King's Letter', and the attitudes of the Anglican clergy and parishioners towards it, is given in Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', pp. 45-54.

Roman Catholic Vicar Apostolic of London, endorsed the Roman Catholic collection, set on 29 April, and asked the Vicar Apostolic of the northern district to organise collections there.<sup>105</sup>

The collection in the parishes was a financial windfall for the Committee, and surpassed the total amount raised by subscriptions. By 1 November 1793, it was reported, the sum raised stood at £40,012.5.11½.<sup>106</sup> Presumably this referred only to funds collected in the Anglican churches, and sums raised in Dissenting and Roman Catholic congregations were entered in the subscription lists. The lists for April and May 1793 include many collections from such congregations, and a distinction is made between subscriptions, and collections in the parishes, in the Committee's accounts.<sup>107</sup> It is difficult to provide accurate figures for the Committee's finances. I have based the monthly totals above on a computation of the subscription lists, but these are often less than the sums listed under 'receipts' in the accounts entered in the minutes. The total of the subscription lists to July 1795 is £26,901.6.8.<sup>108</sup> Later, in his memoirs, Charles Butler put the total of subscriptions raised at £33,775.15.9½.<sup>109</sup> This may include the further subscriptions from a drive in 1796, although he implies otherwise. Butler set the total of the parish collection at £41,304.12.6¾.<sup>110</sup> Perhaps it would be fair to say that the Committee raised approximately £70,000 from all sources in the period to December 1793, when responsibility for funding passed to the government.

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<sup>105</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, pp. 29-30.

<sup>106</sup> Minutes 24 Oct. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 125.

<sup>107</sup> See T.93/8 passim, and the summary of receipts from subscriptions and collections, 19 Feb. 1801, T.93/50, f. 540.

<sup>108</sup> T.93/8, f. 89.

<sup>109</sup> Butler, Historical Memoirs, iii, p. 325.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

One contribution to the fund deserves special mention: the £600 donation from the 'Ladies' Committee', late in 1793. The Committee was formed on the initiative of Mrs John Crewe.<sup>111</sup> Having seen at Eastbourne 'a great number' of French clergy 'suffering all the evils of banishment and beggary with silent resignation', she evolved a plan to raise funds to assist them. She enlisted the aid of Dr Charles Burney.<sup>112</sup> He acted as secretary to the Ladies' Committee when it was formed, while 'The Marchioness of Buckingham was nominated chief, at the desire of Mrs Crewe'.<sup>113</sup> The co-operation of these two women, the former the Roman Catholic wife of a prominent supporter of the government, and the latter the wife of a Whig politician and herself a fervent Whig, is a further illustration of the way in which the cause of the French refugees overrode barriers of religion and politics.<sup>114</sup> Mrs Crewe was anxious that the plan should obtain the sanction of Wilmot's Committee, so Dr Burney approached his friend Windham, who then wrote to Wilmot respecting the scheme, while leaving Dr Burney to carry out the actual negotiations with Wilmot.

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<sup>111</sup>d. 1818. Born Frances Ann Greville, Married John, later Lord, Crewe. She was a famous Whig hostess, and close friend of Burke, Fox and Sheridan: D.N.B., v, p. 84. She continued to take an interest in émigré affairs and freely offered her services and advice on their behalf.

<sup>112</sup>(1726-1814), musician, author and prominent member of London literary circles. He was the father of Fanny Burney, and a close friend of Dr Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Edmund Burke: see D.N.B. iii, pp. 415-18.

<sup>113</sup>Frances d'Arblay, Memoirs of Doctor Burney 3 vols (London, 1832), iii, p. 185.

<sup>114</sup>A list of some members of the Committee is given in d'Arblay, Diary and Letters, v, p. 227. Among the names are Lady Spencer, Lady Camelford (Lord Grenville's mother-in-law), Lady C. Douglas (wife of Sylvester Douglas, later Lord Glenbervie), Miss Trimmer and Lady Pelham (wife of Lord Pelham, later Home Secretary under Henry Addington). Hannah More was invited to join, but declined on the grounds of ill-health, although commending the plan: *ibid.*

The latter gained the backing of his committee for the project. The original intention of the scheme was to supplement the allowances of the clergy, but in the end the money was paid into the general subscription fund. The plan was based on the chain-letter principle: a committee of ten ladies would each ask another ten ladies to gather two hundred subscriptions of up to one guinea each.<sup>115</sup> Theoretically, this would raise up to 20,000 guineas. The £600 actually raised fell far short of that. Fanny d'Arblay, who wrote a pamphlet in support of the appeal,<sup>116</sup> had an explanation for the relative failure of the scheme:

The world is so full of claims, and of claimants for whatever has money for its object, that the benign purpose of these ladies was soon inoffensively thwarted from misapprehension, envy, or ill-will, that sought to excite in its disfavour the prejudices ever ready, of John Bull against foreigners, till his justice is enlightened by an appeal to his generosity. 117

This suggests that prejudice may have inhibited donations; not mentioned, but probably of greater importance, was that one hundred ladies belonging to interlocking circles of acquaintanceship would have found it difficult to tap 20,000 potential donors between them, particularly as they proposed to concentrate on female donors.

The bulk of the money raised by Wilmot's Committee was spent in paying monthly allowances to the clergy. An examination of the Committee's

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<sup>115</sup> Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 421n.

<sup>116</sup> Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy: earnestly submitted to the humane consideration of the ladies of Great Britain (London, 1793).

<sup>117</sup> d'Arblay, Doctor Burney, iii, p. 185.

accounts for the period 29 October 1792 to 1 November 1793 shows this quite clearly: £56,982-0-7½ was paid in allowances, from a total expenditure of £61,829-7-8½.<sup>118</sup> A breakdown of expenditure shows the following:

Relief allowances:

London	£26,381-13-3	
Winchester & Forton	9,992- 7-0½	
Jersey	13,476- 6-0	
Other places	7,131-14- 4	£56,982- 0- 7½
To send abroad:		698-14- 2
Clothing:		1,833-17- 3½
Medical & Funeral:		1,033- 4-11½
Administration:		1,069- 7-10
Miscellaneous:		203- 2-10
		<hr/>
Total expenditure		£61,820- 7- 8½
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The Committee's financial difficulties were exacerbated when the numbers granted assistance increased by one-third during the twelve months to December 1793:<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup> The accounts are given in Minutes 11 Jan., 5 April, 10 May, 17 June, 12 Aug., 23 Sept., 7 Nov. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 65-6, 90, 103, 110, 114, 124, 128. The figures given are based on adding together the amounts given under each category in the accounts, then adding these sub-totals to obtain the total expenditure. The figure obtained by this method is £143-1-0 less than that obtained by adding the Committee's own estimated totals of monthly expenditure.

<sup>119</sup> The figures for the country and Jersey in December 1792 are stated as estimates only, and all figures for March 1793 are probably estimates, although not identified as such. The figure of 409 for 'other places' in June 1793 is my estimate, based on the allocation of money. For the relevant accounts see Minutes 11 Jan., 5 April, 12 Aug., 23 Sept. 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 65-6, 90, 114, 124; Minutes 9 Jan. 1794, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, f. 20.

<u>Month:</u>	<u>London:</u>	<u>Winchester and Forton:</u>	<u>Jersey:</u>	<u>Other Places:</u>	<u>Total:</u>
Dec. 1792	901	231	900	800	2832
Mar. 1793	1200	800	800	300	3100
June "	1343	652	1014	409	3418
Sept. "	1316	652	1014	452	3434
Dec. "	1280	680	1600	452	4012

The drop in country numbers was due to the transfer of clergy from there to Forton Hospital and Winchester,<sup>120</sup> the movement of clergy from country areas to London following the proclamation of 4 February 1793,<sup>121</sup> and departures abroad. The rise in Jersey numbers is probably due to the fact that the clergy who settled there had brought little with them, and when their resources were expended, lack of employment opportunities left them little recourse but the relief fund. The total increase in numbers, in place of the expected decrease, hastened the exhaustion of the Committee's funds.

When the Committee first discussed the proposed structure of the relief organisation, it asked La Marche to continue his relief work 'in the same manner he has hitherto', but to render accounts to the Committee.<sup>122</sup> In effect, the Committee added itself to La Marche's existing organisation, and made itself paymaster, policy-maker and final arbitrator. La Marche continued to organise the distribution, to keep a record of expenditure and to be responsible for the investigation of the identity and circumstances of applicants for relief. With these tasks to accomplish, and the necessity to keep in close touch with the Committee, he became the key link between these two levels of administration. He held the same administrative position

<sup>120</sup>After March, the figures represent Winchester only, as Forton Hospital was closed to the refugees.

<sup>121</sup>See above,

<sup>122</sup>Minutes 24 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 6.

vis à vis Thomas' Committee in questions concerning the relief of the clergy, was active in all matters pertaining to the French clergy in England and Jersey, and took an interest in the affairs of the French laity. Little wonder, then, that he soon became the most important and influential member of the French community in Britain.

The funds, once collected, were deposited with the Committee's bank, Messrs Wright and Co., Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. There were two accounts: one general one, and one in the name of La Marche to which funds could be transferred from the general account to meet those disbursements which were his responsibility.<sup>123</sup> La Marche ran the distribution from Mrs Silburne's house in Bloomsbury, with the aid of Abbé Meslé de Grandclos and Mrs Silburne.<sup>124</sup> Allowances were paid monthly, and clerics who lived in London usually collected theirs in person. As local charitable resources in the country areas were exhausted or turned over to Wilmot's Committee,<sup>125</sup> small groups of French clergy there came under La Marche's control. He sent money to a local agent, sometimes an interested Englishman,<sup>126</sup> or more often, a French cleric.<sup>127</sup> The mode of transmitting the funds is not entirely clear.

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<sup>123</sup> Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 12.

<sup>124</sup> Baston, *Mémoires*, ii, p. 21.

<sup>125</sup> See, for example: Sneyd to [Wilmot], 27 Sept. 1792, T.93/40, f. 364; J. Combs to Wilmot, 22 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 1; W. Dighton to Hester, 5 Nov. 1792, T.93/52, f. 19.

<sup>126</sup> For example, Rev. Ralph Sneyd for Lewes and Eastbourne and William Poole for Exeter. See T.93/40, ff. 167-83, 369.

<sup>127</sup> For example, M. de la fosse Bellacour, curé de Fontonelle (Guildford); M. Dubrun, curé de St Vallery (Tunbridge Wells); M. Bigorne, curé de Bélon and M. Simon, curé de Biencourt (Lenham); M. Postel and J. Cooke, prêtre Dr de Sorbonne (Canterbury); M. Lambert (Dover); and M. Regnault; and M. Gaillard (Farnham). See T.93/40, ff. 5-8, 67-166, 413, 483-6; T.93/41, ff. 5-6; T.93/44, ff. 6-14; T.93/45, ff. 265-9.



La Marche apparently sent drafts on Wright's bank, probably to local banks, for the agents to draw on. In at least one case, however, a local intermediary was used. At Lenham, in Kent, the money remitted from London passed through the hands of Lady Dering. The local agent, Abbé Simon, wrote to the Bishop, 'Je viens de recevoir de Mylady Dering les vingt six guinees que M.<sup>r</sup> Wright a remis a M.<sup>r</sup> hammerly son Banquier'.<sup>128</sup>

Eligibility for assistance from the Committee was determined on two basic grounds: being certified as a French ecclesiastic of good standing, and having less than one guinea in financial resources. Proof of identity was required, in the form of a certificate from the bishop or vicar-general of the applicant's diocese. If this were not possible, one from any vicar-general, or an ecclesiastic already known to the Committee, would do. An applicant would receive his first allowance a week after he had presented his certificate to the central office.<sup>129</sup> Any country applicant was told to write to La Marche in Bloomsbury,

specifying his late Situation in France and the diocese to which he belonged and that the Bishop having made Enquiry sufficient to satisfy him that the Ecclesiastick so applying is a proper Object of this Subscription will be authorized by the Committee to administer the necessary Relief. 130

Before he could receive relief, he had to have a certificate 'légalisé et mis en règle' by Abbé de Grandclos in London, and the local agent had to

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<sup>128</sup> Abbé Simon to La Marche, 6 Dec. 1793, T.93/44, f. 14. See also Simon to La Marche, 24 July 1793, *ibid.*, f. 7.

<sup>129</sup> Baston, *Mémoires*, ii, p. 21.

<sup>130</sup> Minutes 17 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 28.

receive permission from La Marche to admit the cleric to relief.<sup>131</sup> Questions of current circumstances and behaviour might be referred to the local agent. Dr Cooke said of one priest: 'a l'egard de M. le Maigre, il m'est revenu qu'il est mauvais sujet et veritable imposteur, il parle, dit-on, de se faire Protestant'.<sup>132</sup> The rule requiring resources to be expended before relief could be applied for, undoubtedly caused hardship. At least one priest gave this as a reason for leaving Britain. He still possessed twenty-five guineas, and thought that the money would last longer in another country.<sup>133</sup>

One group of French ecclesiastical refugees posed special problems of eligibility: the group of nearly forty nuns from Montargis. Dr Douglass interested himself on their behalf, and obtained Dundas' permission for them to move from London to Bodney Hall in Norfolk.<sup>134</sup> When this plan was first mooted, La Marche persuaded the Committee to donate fifty guineas towards the cost of their establishment, and he asked Thomas' Committee to do the same.<sup>135</sup> There the matter rested until September 1793, when he procured

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<sup>131</sup>J. Cooke to [La Marche], 10 Nov. 1793, T.93/40, f. 8.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid.

<sup>133</sup>Baston, Mémoires, p. 55.

<sup>134</sup>Entry und., W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. c-d.

<sup>135</sup>Minutes 24 Dec. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 58.

a further twenty guineas for the nuns from Wilmot's Committee, upon the understanding that no further aid would be forthcoming.<sup>136</sup> However, when the prioress, Madame de Levis de Mirepoix, later requested an allowance of £35 per month for the community, to supplement their earnings from teaching, the Committee complied.<sup>137</sup> Although the Committee obviously thought that the nuns did not fit its brief, there was no organisation more competent to deal with their problems, and the Committee chose not to stand aside when appealed to for help.

Deciding on the level of allowances to successful applicants proved difficult. As Burke later said: 'What is enough? It is a word of large import with regard to ourselves, very limited to others'.<sup>138</sup> He entered freely into the controversy. Originally, the allowance had been fixed at half a guinea a week.<sup>139</sup> Burke argued that this was insufficient, in view of the misery of many of the clergy, who were inadequately clothed and lived in cramped lodgings:

There are I believe, some hundreds who have not a second shirt. I am well informed, that some of them lie stark naked abed for a whole day whilst their shirts are at wash. Few indeed have a Bed to themselves; but lie, almost always two, sometimes three in a bed, and that too in the small miserable beds, which are in the small Chambers of our poorer houses in London. 140

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<sup>136</sup> Minutes 2, 23 Sept. 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 120, 123.

<sup>137</sup> Minutes 7 Nov. 1793, *ibid.*, f. 128. The nuns were then at Diss, in Norfolk.

<sup>138</sup> Burke to Mrs J. Crewe, ca 15 Sept. 1793, Burke, *Correspondence*, vii, p. 425.

<sup>139</sup> Burke to Earl Fitzwilliam, 5 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, p. 229; Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 12.

<sup>140</sup> Burke to Fitzwilliam, 5 Oct. 1792, Burke, *Correspondence*, vii, p. 230.

Because of the prohibition on wearing ecclesiastical garb in France, their clothing was motley, and made them an object of ridicule in the English streets. Burke proposed that the allowance should be at least sixteen shillings, and that each priest should on request be given two new shirts.<sup>141</sup> By this time, however, the Committee had concurred with his earlier suggestion to Wilmot that the matter should be left to the discretion of La Marche.<sup>142</sup> The Bishop brought matters back to the beginning by setting the allowance at two guineas per month. This continued until August 1793, when the rising costs of relief forced the Committee first to try to extend the period of the allowance to six weeks, and then to settle on two guineas per five weeks.<sup>143</sup>

The distribution of clothing was in Mrs Silburne's charge.<sup>144</sup>

She was helped in her task by several priests, and was rigorous in allotting clothing on the basis of need. Abbé Baston wrote in his memoirs that clothing from the Committee was often obtained at a humiliating price:

Il semble qu'un ecclésiastique, contraint par la misère d'articuler, en présence de quatre ou cinq personnes, qu'il a besoin d'une culotte (il faut qu'on me pardonne d'avoir nommé cette pièce de garde-robe) aurait dû être cru sur parole. Mais non; un tailleur désigné ad hoc inspectait l'état de la culotte en exercice. Il ne suffisait pas de n'en avoir qu'une, il était nécessaire qu'elle fût mauvaise. 145

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230-31.

<sup>142</sup> Burke to Wilmot, 2 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, pp. 225-7; Wilmot to Burke, 6 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, p. 234; Burke to Wilmot, 6 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 9828, ff. 149-50.

<sup>143</sup> Minutes 12, 19 Aug. 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 113-14, 116.

<sup>144</sup> Minutes 26 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 34.

<sup>145</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 22.

He attributed this exactitude to the fault of over-zealous underlings.

On 28 September 1792, the Committee resolved 'That, the Bishop of St Pol de Léon be desired to procure Medicines Advice and Assistance to be administered to such of the Clergy as may be in want and to pay for the same'.<sup>146</sup> This was the first step in the establishment of a medical service which came to assume a scope and complexity scarcely envisaged by its founders. The Committee did not leave all the work to La Marche. It resolved to ask the governors of the public dispensaries in and around London to extend their services to any French clergy within their district who were in need of assistance.<sup>147</sup> Favourable responses were received from the Eastern, Surrey and Lincoln's Inn Dispensaries, and the Finsbury and Westminster Dispensaries agreed to consider the proposal.<sup>148</sup> The later sequence of development of the dispensary service for the French refugees is not clear. Originally drawing on the charitable dispensaries already in existence in London, it later developed its own service, run by the French themselves. Writing in 1802, Abbé Lubersac mentioned the earlier establishment of dispensaries

qui furent et sont encore administrées par des ecclésiastiques même, qui étoient versés dans la pharmacie et manipulation des remèdes: ces pharmacies,

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<sup>146</sup> Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 13.

<sup>147</sup> Minutes 15 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 27.

<sup>148</sup> S. Wegener to Hester, 19 Oct. 1792, T.93/52, f. 151; J. Bulcock to Hester, 20 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 155; R. Geldall to [Hester?], 1 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 13; A. Rhodes to Hester, 1 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 11; J. Gray to Hester, 30 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 39.

toujours en activité, délivrent encore, journellement, aux malades et gratis, tous les remèdes qui leur sont nécessaires; bien entendu, sur les ordonnances et demandes signées des médecins et chirurgiens connus et avoués du comité Anglois. 149

According to Abbé Kerbiriou, there was a system of medical depots, dispensaries and pharmacies, and home-visiting of the sick by charitable people and doctors, set up as an adjunct to the treatment of French refugees at Westminster Hospital.<sup>150</sup> There must also have been hospital visiting at Guy's, as in 1793, Lady Sheffield died of a chill contracted while visiting sick refugees there.<sup>151</sup> In Jersey, Abbé Carron<sup>152</sup> established an association 'dont le but était de visiter des malades de les veiller et de les soigner'.<sup>153</sup>

Medical advice might be given free, as by the Dover apothecary, or in return for a small retainer, as later became common.<sup>154</sup> One London physician, Dr Saumarez, initially made no charge for attending the French clergy, but found the call on his services such that he neglected his private practice, and was forced to ask the Committee for compensation if he were to continue to attend the refugees.<sup>155</sup> Two further English doctors,

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<sup>149</sup> Lubersac, Journal Historique, pp. 23-4.

<sup>150</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 452.

<sup>151</sup> Gentleman's Magazine, lxxiii, May 1793, p. 477; d'Arbly, Diary and Letters, iv, p. 371n.

<sup>152</sup> Guy-Toussaint-Julien Carron de La Carrière (1760-1821) of Rennes. Before the Revolution he had founded a clothing workshop for poor women. He was a prolific writer: D.B.F., vii, pp. 1263-4.

<sup>153</sup> Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 453.

<sup>154</sup> See below, p. 268.

<sup>155</sup> Dr Saumarez to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 16 May 1793, T.93/52, f. 113.

Vaughan and Oliphant, offered their services to sick clergy accommodated in Westminster Hospital, which had put several beds at the disposal of the Committee.<sup>156</sup>

As a receiving centre for sick refugees, the Westminster Hospital was soon surpassed by the Middlesex Hospital. In April 1793 the Committee applied to the governors of the latter to appropriate a vacant ward for the care of the French clergy.<sup>157</sup> The court of the Middlesex decided to allocate two wards in the west wing to the refugees, on condition that the Committee paid eight shillings a week for the medicines, maintenance and general care of each patient, provided and paid the nurses, or paid eight shillings a week for any nurse provided by the hospital, and paid any burial expenses.<sup>158</sup> It made similar arrangements for the care of the French laity.<sup>159</sup>

Wilmot's Committee appointed La Marche to decide who should be admitted to hospital care.<sup>160</sup> He already had charge of funeral arrangements for deceased French clergy.<sup>161</sup>

In the fifteen months of its life as a private charity, Wilmot's Committee worked in tandem with the Bishop of St Pol de Léon to ease the plight of refugee clergy in Britain. Besides its key function of raising the money which enabled the destitute to survive in exile, the Committee

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<sup>156</sup> Minutes 9 Nov. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 38; Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 452.

<sup>157</sup> Minutes 22 April 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 95.

<sup>158</sup> Minutes 6 May 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 99-100.

<sup>159</sup> Minutes 20 May 1793, *ibid.*, f. 107.

<sup>160</sup> Minutes 10 May 1793, *ibid.*, f. 103.

<sup>161</sup> Minutes 22 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 30. Funerals were to cost no more than £6.7.3: *ibid.*

helped to co-ordinate the growth of auxiliary relief services by tapping the resources of existing charitable institutions such as the hospitals and dispensaries. Such assistance was supplemented by the honorary or paid services of people such as doctors and apothecaries, and the volunteer labour of both French and English people, who distributed funds, made or collected clothing, and visited the sick, both at home and in hospital. This co-operation between French and English was a hallmark of refugee relief in this period.

#### IV

While the main expedient of Wilmot's Committee was the payment of allowances designed to cover board and lodging for the clergy, it did try an alternative means of providing these essentials by setting up community accommodation schemes at Gosport and Winchester. The latter establishment lasted until 1796; in the period to 1793 it was successful in the sense that the inmates were adequately housed and fed at a cost to the Committee no greater than the equivalent in individual monthly allowances. It was able to do so, however, largely through direct and indirect subsidies from the government, which was progressively drawn into the project through the combined efforts of the Committee, the clergy, and Englishmen of influence in the community.

This trend was set at the beginning, when both public and private requests persuaded the government to make two buildings available to the clergy. Lord Hood led the way on 20 September 1792 by asking permission to open Forton Hospital near Gosport for their use. The following day a deputation from Wilmot's Committee applied to the government for the use of some public buildings to house the refugees. Grenville and Dundas decided to allow the French to occupy Forton and the King's House at Winchester,



partly because they could thereby keep a better check on them,<sup>162</sup> and gained the King's assent to the offer on 23 September.<sup>163</sup>

The government's offer of the King's House was understandable. A specific application had been made for the use of Forton, which was in the charge of the Sick and Hurt Office of the Navy Board, and had last been used to house French prisoners of war. The King's House at Winchester was held by the same office, and had last been used for the same purpose. Both were large and currently empty establishments, and they were under one control.<sup>164</sup> Thus, the ministers' choice of Winchester as a second station was not surprising.

Events moved swiftly thereafter, and the government became increasingly involved. On 24 September the Committee deputed one of its members, John Pugh, to inspect the King's House and to investigate sources of cheap supply for it.<sup>165</sup> On the same day, La Marche wrote to Dundas asking for furnishings,<sup>166</sup> but Dundas was wary of promising further assistance:

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<sup>162</sup> Dundas to George III, 22 Sept. 1792, George III, Later Correspondence, i, p. 616.

<sup>163</sup> Hood to [Grenville?], 20 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, ff. 578-9 (sent on to Dundas with additional notes from Grenville); Minutes 24 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 4; Dundas to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 22 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 5; Dundas to George III, 22 Sept. 1792, George III, Later Correspondence, i, p. 616; George III to Dundas, 23 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> The Barrack-Master's Office was another possibility, but more likely to have its buildings in use.

<sup>165</sup> Minutes 24 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 5-6.

<sup>166</sup> La Marche to Dundas, 24 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 612.

I would wish to know what has been reported as to the state of the House and likewise what would be the expence of the bedding they suggest. When we last met in Cabinet on this business it was not the Idea that Government should begin to take upon itself any part of the Expence. If a contrary Idea gets abroad it is holding out a general Invitation. 167

However, he did agree 'that the necessary and proper Repairs ... will be done at the Expence of Government'.<sup>168</sup> The Treasury had sent two surveyors from the Board of Works to report on the state of the building. They found the roof good, but recommended new floors and windows. They thought that it could be fitted up to take about five hundred clergy at a cost of £500.<sup>169</sup> On hearing this, the Committee formally requested the government to repair the building at Winchester and to provide bedding and bedsteads there.<sup>170</sup> In conformity with Dundas' views, the government agreed to put the building in good repair, but refused to supply beds or bedding.<sup>171</sup> Undaunted, some unidentified French clergy enlisted the aid of the Duke of Richmond,<sup>172</sup> who told Dundas that the Navy Board or Sick and Hurt Board must have plenty in store. He urged Dundas: 'Pray do the Thing handsomely & don't let any bit of stinginess of Pitts prevent you'.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Memo. from Dundas, [ca 25 Sept. 1792], *ibid.*, ff. 629-30.

<sup>168</sup> Memo. from Dundas, [ca 25 Sept. 1792], *ibid.*, f. 628.

<sup>169</sup> Minutes 26 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 7-8.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 8-9.

<sup>171</sup> Minutes 28 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 11.

<sup>172</sup> Master-General of the Ordinance.

<sup>173</sup> Duke of Richmond to Dundas, 30 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 691.

When the government initially refused to assist with beds or bedding, the Committee turned to the private sector and hired twenty sets from John and Coutts Trotter.<sup>174</sup> Abbé Conceyl, head of the colony at Forton, suggested that the Committee should consult Lord Hood before despatching any contracted bedding, as Hood thought it might be possible to secure some from 'l'hospital d harland', if the Admiralty would lend them.<sup>175</sup> Perhaps succumbing to the combined persuasions of Richmond and Hood, the government gave way and gave 'Orders at Haslar Hospital for the delivery of whatever Beds and Bedding except Sheets that may not be wanting in the Hospital at Portsmouth'.<sup>176</sup>

The repairs to the King's House at Winchester were considerable. On 15 November Churcher, from the Board of Works, had eight men, excluding bricklayers, working under his direction. A fortnight later he had seventeen in his employ. Evidently the workmen were making furniture, for Churcher asked the Committee to take over responsibility for this, so that his men could concentrate on repairs. A few days later the government gave orders for beds to be made to make up the number needed at Winchester.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Minutes 5 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 17-18. Each set comprised a cot, mattress, pillow, a pair of sheets and four blankets, hired monthly at a rate of three farthings a day: *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Abbé Conceyl to [Committee at Freemasons' Tavern], 8 Oct. 1792, T.93/52, f. 134. Presumably he meant Haslar Hospital.

<sup>176</sup> Minutes 17 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 27-8. The Committee arranged to transport two hundred sets to Winchester. After a further request from the Committee, another three hundred sheets and pillowcases were appropriated from Haslar Hospital for use at Forton and Winchester: Minutes 12, 19 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 39, 43; Corbin to Hester, 22 Nov. 1792, T.93/53, f. 68.

<sup>177</sup> Corbin to Hester, 15, 18, 29 Nov., 10 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 60, 64, 73, 82; Minutes 14 Dec. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 55. Treasury orders for repairs continued in 1793. Five orders were placed in the space of one month alone: Long to Sir W. Chambers, 15, 20 March, 1, 3, 15 April 1793, T.27/43, pp. 187, 190, 198, 203, 218.

While repairs went forward, La Marche directed clergy to Winchester in batches, as successive rooms were put in order.<sup>178</sup>

The question of staff next arose. Clearly the Committee needed an agent in the town by now, so it asked Robert Reeks Corbin, a member of the fund-raising Committee in Winchester, and already active in the Committee's affairs there, to act in this capacity. He accepted.<sup>179</sup> On Corbin's recommendation, the Committee appointed J. Wingrove as steward, and authorised Corbin to employ a doorkeeper, two cooks and a porter.<sup>180</sup> The Committee also laid down a set of rules for the steward and cook.<sup>181</sup> However, changes were made once the colony of clergy was established, with Abbé Martin as its head. Martin and La Marche wanted the priests to play a more active part in victualling and running the establishment. Under a plan drawn up between them and the Committee in December 1792, Martin was to have authority over all employees, two clergy were to supervise the kitchens, one cleric was to buy provisions, and each fortnight one cleric would be rostered to care for the sick. Strict accounts were to be kept, and shown weekly to Martin.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Minutes 2, 19, 23, 30 Nov., 10, 14 Dec. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 37, 43, 45, 48, 55, 56. George Rose (Treasury) sent the Committee a copy of the progress report on repairs sent on 28 November by John Soane of the Board of Works. Soane estimated that accommodation for 350 priests would be ready by the end of January. Figures show that the building was near capacity (700) by the end of 1793: 1792: Dec: 160; 1793: March: 400; June: 652; Sept.: 652; Dec.: 680. See *ibid.*, ff. 65-6, 90, 114, 124; B.M. Add. Ms 18592, f. 20.

<sup>179</sup> Minutes 22 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 29; Corbin to Hester, 23 Oct. 1792, T.93/53, f. 50.

<sup>180</sup> Minutes 24 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 31.

<sup>181</sup> Minutes 12 Nov. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 40-1.

<sup>182</sup> Minutes 4 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 60-1.

The steward and cook were paid off at the end of December<sup>183</sup> and replaced by priests. Provisions and services for the community were supplied locally under contracts negotiated by Corbin, according to tenders accepted by the Committee.<sup>184</sup> The Committee received three sets of accounts from Winchester: Corbin's; working accounts, including the distribution, from Abbé Bonnière; and monthly house accounts, rendered by Martin.<sup>185</sup>

As to medical care, Corbin reported to the Committee that all the surgeons at the hospital, and the physicians Messrs Lyfords, William Wickham and Dr Littlehales, had agreed to attend the clergy free of charge, and he thought that the other physician, Dr Scott, would do the same. However, medicines would have to be purchased, and he suggested contracting with one of the doctors for them.<sup>186</sup> Following this, Wickham sent a list of charges for medicines to Wilmot, pointing out that they were lower than those to his private patients, and suggesting that a contract would be 'the most eligible method' of agreement. He reported that diarrhoea had been the most common complaint among the sick, and urged that a room 'be appropriated to the use of the Sick only, as at present they very much disturb the rest of the others'. Corbin then set aside a room for an infirmary.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Minutes 17, 24 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 56-7; Corbin to Hester, 31 Dec. 1792, T.93/53, f. 109.

<sup>184</sup> Minutes 22, 24 Oct. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 29, 31.

<sup>185</sup> The accounts are contained in T.93/46.

<sup>186</sup> Corbin to Hester, 31 Oct. 1792, T.93/53, f. 56.

<sup>187</sup> W.N. Wickham to Wilmot, 13 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 28; Corbin to Hester, 14 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 87.

By the end of 1792 much had been accomplished at Winchester. One hundred and sixty clergy had been installed. The Committee had chosen a reliable agent in Corbin, and he had appointed staff, organised the supply of goods and services to the King's House and kept the Committee informed of all developments. The government had agreed to lend the building to the Committee, commenced putting it in good repair, and provided much of the necessary beds and bedding. It hardly deserved Burke's strictures on 'official dilatoriness'.<sup>188</sup>

The outbreak of war with France in February 1793 brought abrupt changes in the settlement at Winchester, as well as in the general situation of the French refugees. Winchester was exempted from the King's Proclamation under the Alien Act, but Forton Hospital was not, so the Committee proposed to move some of its occupants to Winchester and bring the rest within the limits named in the proclamation.<sup>189</sup> Abbé Baston, then resident at Forton, estimated that there were 263 priests at Forton by February 1793, of whom 183 came from the Norman dioceses of Bayeux, Coutances and Lisieux.<sup>190</sup> The transfer would cause pressure on the accommodation at Winchester, but the government was not unmindful of this. The Board of Works ordered Churcher to repair another wing, to accommodate a further two hundred people.<sup>191</sup> The Admiralty gave permission for the transfer of bedding from Forton to Winchester

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<sup>188</sup> Carl B. Cone, Burke and the Nature of Politics: the age of the French Revolution (University of Kentucky, 1964), p. 406.

<sup>189</sup> Minutes 8 Feb. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 71-2.

<sup>190</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 123.

<sup>191</sup> Corbin to Hester, 8 Feb. 1793, T.93/53, f. 128.

and Haslar Hospital was ordered to yield up more.<sup>192</sup> By 26 February 1793 there were 264 clergy at Winchester, and accommodation was ready for two hundred of the clergy from Forton. Corbin reported that up to six hundred could be housed there if repairs were continued, which would be necessary if all the clergy from Forton were accepted.<sup>193</sup> The government then ordered additional rooms to be fitted out to receive another sixty priests.<sup>194</sup>

The proposed transfer of clergy from Forton to Winchester was complicated by the transfer of several hundred clergy from Jersey to England in February 1793. In this month, several clerics from Jersey arrived at Winchester and applied to Martin for admission. He accepted some of them, but was then instructed by the Committee not to do so in future without first informing La Marche.<sup>195</sup> Late in March, Nepean told Wilmot that four to five hundred French clergy had arrived in Portsmouth from Jersey, and asked how many of them could be housed at Winchester. Theodore John Hester, the Committee's paid secretary, visited there and reported that two hundred could be received immediately, if bedding were provided and the transfer of clergy from Forton delayed pending further repairs. If an unlimited order for repairs were given, all from Jersey might be housed within two weeks. Nepean ordered two hundred beds to be sent to Winchester, and the Treasury

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<sup>192</sup> Corbin to Hester, 24 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*, f. 141.

<sup>193</sup> Corbin to Hester, 26 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*, f. 143.

<sup>194</sup> Corbin to Hester, 22 March 1793, *ibid.*, f. 159.

<sup>195</sup> Corbin to Hester, 17 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*, f. 136; Minutes 18 Feb. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 76-7.

ordered repairs sufficient to accommodate another two hundred men.<sup>196</sup>

The government was being drawn further into the field of refugee welfare, as the difficulties at Winchester were a direct result of its actions in removing the French from Forton and Jersey. Corbin and Martin went to Portsmouth to settle arrangements for the transfer of Jersey clergy to Winchester, only to find that all but thirty of them had left the town. As many of them were able to support themselves and did not intend to settle in the King's House, Corbin and Martin expedited the transfer of the clergy from Forton instead. By 21 April, there were 595 men, including servants, at the King's House.<sup>197</sup>

The combination of the two colonies was not without difficulties. In April and May about sixty of the community left for the Continent, and according to Baston, one of them blamed the bringing of the refugees from Forton en bloc, thus swelling numbers, cramping accommodation and making the air stuffy through inadequate ventilation.<sup>198</sup> The defections annoyed the Committee, as the rapid turnover increased costs, so it asked La Marche to give first preference to the clergy in London when arranging passages to Ostend.<sup>199</sup>

One benefit for the colony at the King's House arising from the outbreak of war was the establishment in Winchester of the headquarters of the Buckinghamshire Militia, commanded by the Marquis of Buckingham himself.

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<sup>196</sup> Minutes 1 April 1793, *ibid.*, ff. 87-8; Long to Chambers, 3 April 1793, T.27/43, p. 203.

<sup>197</sup> Corbin to Hester, 4, 7, 21 April 1793, T.93/53, ff. 163, 165-6, 169. The agent for prisoners at Forton was anxious to clear the clergy, as he needed room for the sick: Corbin to Hester, 7 April 1793, *ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>198</sup> Corbin to Hester, 29 April 1793, *ibid.*, f. 175; Minutes 3 May 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 98; Baston, *Mémoires*, ii, p. 112.

<sup>199</sup> Minutes 3 May 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 98.



Hitherto, Buckingham's interest in the refugee clergy had derived largely from the influence of his wife, and his aid had been primarily financial. But, from the time of his residence in Winchester, he and his wife became major benefactors of the colony. Their assistance was personal and financial. The Marchioness went frequently to the King's House, visiting the sick, bringing fish on fast days and providing materials for hobbies and workshops. She set up a tapestry workshop which occupied the spare time of some two hundred of the ecclesiastics and provided materials for knitting. Her husband bought from the priests six hundred pairs of gloves for his troops, and provided furnishings, tools, books and flannel for clothing. The Buckingham were concerned to make life as comfortable as possible for the clergy, but they also believed in the maxims of 'self-help'.<sup>200</sup>

Lord Buckingham was a valuable patron, as well as a direct line of communication with the ministry on occasion. Not only was he the elder brother of Lord Grenville, the Foreign Secretary, but as head of the family, he occupied a position which Grenville deeply respected. Although he could not always fall in with Buckingham's wishes, he listened to his views. When the French colony heard rumours that the King thought that they had not shown sufficient distress at the plight of Queen Marie-Antoinette, they urged Buckingham to send Grenville a letter from La Marche pleading to the contrary. The Marquis endorsed their case.<sup>201</sup> When one of the priests was brutally murdered and robbed, Buckingham earnestly tried to detect the culprit, whom

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<sup>200</sup> Baston, Mémoires, ii, pp. 120-2; Lubersac, Journal, pp. 4-5.

<sup>201</sup> Buckingham to Grenville, 1 Sept. 1793, H.M.C. Dropmore, ii, p. 420.

he thought to be one of his soldiers. At the victim's funeral, six hundred priests from the King's House were joined by officers of the Bucks Militia in the procession.<sup>202</sup> More important, when a proposal was made in November 1793 that the clergy should be moved from the King's House to make room for the quartering of troops, Buckingham added his protests to those of Wilmot's Committee, and Dundas agreed to shelve the plan.<sup>203</sup>

When the government came to the financial aid of the relief committees in December 1793, the King's House had 680 clergy living within its walls, close to its full complement. It was a well-run establishment, with a strong community life, largely due to the efforts of the clergy themselves. They owed their material circumstances to the combined efforts of Wilmot's Committee, Corbin, La Marche, the Buckinghams and the government. The latter had shown itself a responsive body, by yielding in an ad hoc manner to the petitions of the Committee, La Marche, and men of influence such as Buckingham, Richmond and Hood. The Treasury was the department most often applied to, as all orders for repairs and fittings passed through its hands. This may in part explain why the Treasury was the department which assumed the responsibility for funding Wilmot's Committee in December 1793.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.; Hampshire Chronicle 2 Sept. 1793.

<sup>203</sup> Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 491n; Buckingham to Burke, 27 Nov. 1793, *ibid.*, p. 492; Wilmot to Dundas, 28 Nov. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, ff. 131-2; Dundas to Wilmot, 30 Nov. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, f. 5.

<sup>204</sup> For a fuller discussion of why the government chose to step in, see Chapter 6.

## V

The questions remain, why were the British so generous towards exiles whose nation and religion they had often fought so bitterly, and why, when the public gave so generously in the first place, did the fund-raising eventually fail? Perhaps the answers are to be found most easily if one regards the measures taken as a form of 'disaster relief'. The sensationalist aspect of the events in France and the dramatic influx of refugees caught public interest. Many citizens in London and the southern counties must have witnessed the new arrivals, and their plight was well-publicised in the press, both incidentally and through the efforts of men such as Burke, Sheffield and other members of the relief committees. The raising of subscriptions to aid the victims of disaster was a standard public response in this period.<sup>205</sup> Thus, if the French refugees are seen simply in this light, the public response was entirely predictable, given the organising talents of men such as Burke, Wilmot, Sheffield, Thomas and La Marche.

What complicated the process was the particular upheaval from which the refugees fled, and their identity. The French Revolution was itself a subject for great debate in Britain, and the refugees from it were foreign, French, Roman Catholic and likely to be ecclesiastics, or aristocrats and their retainers. English people might oppose, or refrain from, giving aid because they approved of the Revolution, or because they disliked the sort of people who had fled from it. On the other hand, some might be disposed to help the refugees because they held precisely the opposite views. In effect,

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<sup>205</sup> David Owen, English Philanthropy 1660-1960 (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 66.

many of the normal springs of charity held good in the case of the French refugees, but because of their identity and the circumstances of the 'disaster', the consensus on giving aid which might otherwise have prevailed was replaced by a debate between the opponents and proponents of such charity. This debate followed hard on the heels of the arriving refugees in September and October 1792.

Clearly, some saw the subscriptions in political terms. The Morning Chronicle, continuing its pro-Revolutionary stance, held that while it was a duty to relieve the refugees' wants with discretion, to go further would be a 'political manoeuvre' on the part of 'the enemies of freedom', who would deem an enormous subscription 'a proof of our general abhorrence of the Revolution in France'.<sup>206</sup> This was an accurate assessment of the stance of Burke, who was a strong advocate of assisting the refugees as a means of expressing opposition to the régime in France. He told Dundas that nothing

could be devised by the Act of man more politick than this Charity, that is to say If we wish to interest the feelings of our Countrymen whether of pity or indignation, against the French System. Every subscriber will be pledged against it. 207

This theme was picked up in an article in The Times on 10 October 1792:

Nothing cuts so severely into the feelings of the French rebels, as the noble and liberal manner in which the English have relieved those Loyalists whom they have ex-patriated. It convinces them that their conduct and their new system of Government are detested in this country, as well as in all other civilized parts of the world; and that therefore it is an impossibility ever to maintain a Government to which all nations but that in which it is attempted, are inimical.

<sup>206</sup> Morning Chronicle 27 Sept. 1792.

<sup>207</sup> Burke to Dundas, ca 19 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 216.

However, Burke's idea of using the plight of the refugees and the subscriptions on their behalf as propaganda against the Revolution was not shared by all subscribers. In Dublin, 'The proposition for a public subscription, as liable to be construed into a censure of the principles of the French Revolution, was almost entirely negatived'; the meeting agreed on a private subscription.<sup>208</sup> Far worse from Burke's point of view was the decision taken at a preliminary meeting of Wilmot's Committee that the Committee would advertise no particular view on the French Revolution. Burke felt that those responsible had 'betrayed their Cause' and 'disgraced us the original authors of the scheme'.<sup>209</sup> He threatened to resign, though he did not in fact do so.<sup>210</sup>

The debate on whether or not to assist the French was also conducted in economic terms. One argument against helping them was that their large numbers would cause prices to rise, to the detriment of the indigenous poor, and that to relieve them would be too costly to the community. For this reason, Lord Sheffield thought a 'principal object' of the Sussex Committee to be 'to remove the prejudice & uneasiness of the ignorant in respect to them - particularly as to their numbers & the effect on the Price of Provisions',<sup>211</sup> and Wilmot's Committee was anxious to allay any fears that excessive numbers of refugees would need relief.<sup>212</sup> The Times expressed the opinion that the economy would benefit from the money brought into the country by the refugees,

<sup>208</sup> London Chronicle 18-20 Oct. 1792.

<sup>209</sup> Burke to W. King, 20 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 222; ibid., p. 219n.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., p. 222n.

<sup>211</sup> Sheffield to [Dundas], 21 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 581. Dundas had not heard of any such complaints in the metropolis: Dundas to Sheffield, 22 Sept. 1792, H.O.43/4, p. 100.

<sup>212</sup> Minutes to 20 Sept. 1792, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 3.

while Hannah More pointed out that any allowances to the refugees would be spent in England.<sup>213</sup> To the argument that the money would be better spent to the benefit of the English poor, the Hampshire Chronicle replied by observing that there were many institutions and endowments which cared for the poor, exclusive of parochial relief, and besides, the poor were with us always, while such pressing calls as this came but seldom.<sup>214</sup> Although there was a case for not helping foreigners ahead of the native indigent, David Owen has pointed out that English charity has a history of aiding refugee groups, who fell outside the net of parochial relief, because they did not qualify for it under the Law of Settlement.<sup>215</sup> Thus aid to the French refugees followed an established tradition.

At this time the press carried few open statements condemning aid to the refugees on account of their religion or nationality, but such prejudice undoubtedly existed. In 1793, a letter in the Gentleman's Magazine from 'A Village Curate' who had been taking a collection on behalf of the French clergy, complained of the attitude of some whom he approached:

one of them signified, that no charity was due to the persons for whom I was an humble petitioner, because they were Roman Catholicks; when another said, that they were not entitled to any compassion, because they had been enemies; when another, being asked for a little money, replied, 'I would sooner give them poison'; and another, on the same occasion, cried out, 'I would drive them all into the sea!' 216

It might also be remembered that later the same year, Fanny d'Arblay blamed the comparative failure of the efforts of the Ladies' Committee on feelings of national prejudice against the French.<sup>217</sup>

<sup>213</sup> The Times 28 Aug. 1792; Baston, Mémoires, ii, p. 37.

<sup>214</sup> Hampshire Chronicle 22 Oct. 1792.

<sup>215</sup> Owen, English Philanthropy, p. 66.

<sup>216</sup> Gentleman's Magazine, lxi, June 1793, pp. 508-9.

<sup>217</sup> See above, p. 199.

On the other hand, strong support was expressed for the subscriptions on the grounds of a Christian or national duty to relieve sufferers, particularly those who were persecuted for their attachment to their king and church. By expelling the clergy, the Revolutionaries were attacking not only Catholicism, but Christianity too. As Burke put it: 'It is religion itself that in their persons is hunted down'.<sup>218</sup> The London Chronicle expressed its opinion in terms of national duty. While the metropolis and the poor might be inconvenienced by the influx,

still it is the duty as well as the distinctive mark of the British character, to assist the poor of every country and religion, who fly to us for protection against murderers. 219

The Anglican Church's clear espousal of the refugees' cause, shown through both the individual efforts of clergymen such as the twelve who joined Wilmot's Committee, and more importantly, the Church's official sanction of the collection in the Anglican parishes, must have more than counter-balanced any expressions of religious prejudice.

Underlying much of the debate on whether or not the French should be succoured was the concept of the deserving poor. More than most objects of charity, the clergy could be seen as being destitute through no fault of their own. As The Times said on their behalf:

we cannot surely for a moment hesitate in relieving objects like these, reduced by unavoidable necessity, not by any crime of their own, to solicit at our hands, in a foreign land, for the means of preserving life, mere food and shelter. 220

The French clergy probably benefitted from the desire of subscribers to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving in the bestowal of their

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<sup>218</sup> Burke to W. King [ante 20 Sept. 1792], Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 220.

<sup>219</sup> London Chronicle 13-15 Sept. 1792.

<sup>220</sup> The Times 26 Sept. 1792.

donations. Their calling was worthy; they had been persecuted and banished from their native land; their bishops could vouch for their identity and character; and they received with proper gratitude and humility any assistance accorded them. This explains in part the comparative success of Wilmot's Committee, which raised funds for the clergy alone. The lay refugees were more open to charges of cowardice or collusion with the Revolutionaries. Lord Loughborough, for example, disapproved of Sir George Thomas' scheme for the relief of both clergy and laity because it extended 'to all Fugitives indiscriminately, which is rather too comprehensive'.<sup>221</sup> The wrong sort of laymen might be assisted. The Morning Chronicle thought that a large subscription would attract bandits and paupers from France.<sup>222</sup> The Hampshire Chronicle warned against imposters who would 'come over to practice as knaves, thieves, gamblers and sharpers'.<sup>223</sup> Burke gave short shrift to such arguments against the subscription:

Afraid, that Rogues should come over! --- Why they have, and daily do, come over; but they come to bring Bribes, and not to partake of Alms --- Good God! to think of coming to London for such relief as we can give! 224

Whatever the reasons why people did or did not donate money to assist the refugees, the sum of the subscriptions showed that some sectors of the English community desired to alleviate their distress, and where fund-raising was concerned, the hostility of some was less important than the financial good will of others. Unfortunately for the refugees, however, the initial rush

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<sup>221</sup> Loughborough to Burke, 15 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, pp. 211-12.

<sup>222</sup> Morning Chronicle 27 Sept. 1792.

<sup>223</sup> Hampshire Chronicle 24 Sept. 1792.

<sup>224</sup> Burke to W. King, 18 Sept. 1792, Burke, Correspondence, vii, p. 214.



of subscriptions soon subsided. Almost half of the total subscription was raised within the first two months of the Committee's existence; thereafter the Committee fought a losing battle against increasing expenditure and decreasing income. The brief resurgence of donations in March and April 1793 was probably due to a renewed drive for funds on the part of the Committee, and the impetus given by the opening of hostilities with France in February. The collections in these months did not even cover expenditure; only the collection in the Anglican parishes stemmed the receding tide of the Committee's resources. The collection was most successful, because of the backing of the Church authorities, and the method of collecting ensured that a widespread section of the English population was asked to contribute.

However, the collection did but delay the inevitable exhaustion of the Committee's funds. By December 1793 its coffers were empty. This reflects its character as a 'disaster fund': initial donations were high, because interest in the refugees was high, but once they became an accepted sight in England, interest subsided, and with it donations. It was not the kind of charity to attract continued support, once it was apparent that the refugees' stay was indefinite and not the short sojourn that English and French alike had expected. The Committee wasted no time in turning to the only body that was capable of giving sustained financial assistance to the refugees: the government. In April 1793, when its funds had almost gone, the Committee wrote to Pitt, 'acquainting him of the State of the Balance of the Charity and to request his assistance'.<sup>225</sup> The timely church collections spared Pitt the necessity of offering or refusing assistance, although the Committee did ask the government for temporary aid until money from the collection came in.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Minutes 12 April 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 94.

<sup>226</sup> Minutes 6 May 1793, *ibid.*, f. 100.

By August the Committee was in difficulties again, so Jenkinson laid the Committee's plight before Pitt, who promised to take the matter into consideration.<sup>227</sup> Thomas' Committee had no funds left for the relief of the laity by September, and probably also approached the government for aid, for Pitt laid a comprehensive arrangement for the settlement of both problems before the Treasury on 12 December 1793.<sup>228</sup> Under this scheme, Wilmot's Committee was to receive a monthly grant for the relief of the French clergy, on the condition that it undertook to administer another such government grant for the benefit of the French laity.<sup>229</sup> The Committee accepted, thus ending its life as a purely private charity.

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<sup>227</sup> Minutes 2 Sept. 1793, *ibid.*, f. 120.

<sup>228</sup> Treasury Minutes 12 Dec. 1793, T.29/66, pp. 252-3.

<sup>229</sup> Long to Wilmot, R. Jenkinson, Sir W. Pepperell and P. Metcalfe, 14 Dec. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, ff. 6-7.

CHAPTER 6

GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

IN REFUGEE RELIEF, 1792-3

I

Events in Jersey in 1792-3 were crucial to the gradual involvement of government in refugee welfare. The island received almost as many refugees as did England, and its small size made it far less able to accommodate, employ or support these alien hordes. The government could not escape knowledge of the resulting tensions or the plight of the French, because the Crown representatives there, the lieutenant-governor and the successive commanders-in-chief, regularly reported on Jersey affairs. Moreover, the financial difficulties associated with charitable efforts to aid the refugees came to a head earlier in Jersey than in England, so the government was soon called upon for aid.

In Jersey, as in England, the initial steps towards refugee relief were taken by the French themselves, particularly the clergy. One of the first exiles to arrive there, in March 1791, was Augustin Le Mintier, Bishop of Tréguier. Together with his fellow-Breton, La Marche, he had opposed changes made by the Revolutionaries, and had similarly evaded their joint 'invitation' to Paris, choosing Jersey as his refuge.<sup>1</sup> He had been joined there by Urbain de Hercé, Bishop of Dol-de-Bretagne, and the Norman bishop, Joseph-Dominique de Cheylus, Bishop of Bayeux. They organised the reception when the major influx of clergy occurred in 1792. The bishops lodged the newly-arrived priests in a rented building, formerly a school. The clergy slept in one room, on mattresses provided by those French already on the island. Meals were prepared

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<sup>1</sup>Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 342; Plasse, Clergé Français, i, p. 324.

at the home of the Marquise de la Ferronière and brought in a large cauldron at midday. The priests soon scattered throughout the island, tending to congregate according to their former dioceses. The Breton priests turned to the Bishop of Tréguier for their needs, and the Normans to the Bishop of Bayeux.<sup>2</sup>

As a refugee group, the French ecclesiastics had the advantage of having had a pre-exile structure and hierarchy which gave some shape to their organisation in exile. Each priest took some measure of his former identity with him, for he was still a member of his diocese, even though stripped of his usual function in it. He owed obedience to his superiors, and could turn to them for spiritual guidance and material help. Responsibility for the members of each diocese could be laid on the highest-ranking member exiled in Britain, often its bishop.<sup>3</sup> These factors tended to make the clergy a more stable group in exile than the laity, and simplified the organisation of welfare measures. This was especially so in Jersey, because of the priests' close geographical concentration and the fact that most of them came from Normandy or Brittany. La Marche and Le Mintier quickly established links between the clergy in Jersey and their colleagues in England, and Wilmot's Committee extended its brief to cover the Jersey ecclesiastics.<sup>4</sup> The distribution machinery was simple: Le Mintier and de Cheylus took charge of the allocation and sent their accounts to England.<sup>5</sup> The identity and means of the applicants were easy to verify, and all clergy except bishops were paid at the same rate, which minimised complication.

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<sup>2</sup>Connell, 'Breton refugee clergy', pp. 136-8.

<sup>3</sup>Lubersac lists thirty-one archbishops and bishops who resided in Britain at any time between 1791 and 1801: Lubersac, Journal, pp. 167-70.

<sup>4</sup>Dundas to Fall, 26 Sept. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>5</sup>Minutes 7 Jan. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18591, f. 64.

The French laity in Jersey comprised a far more awkward problem. They were more varied in age, sex, class, occupation and financial resources. They moved more freely within the local community, were more argumentative and less ordered than the clergy, could intermarry with the natives and posed a greater threat to the security of the island. While they brought more wealth initially, many of them were soon reduced to destitution and had less reliable means of future subsistence than the clergy. More employment options were open to them, but relief allowances were less secure. Thomas' Committee supplied the destitute French laity in Jersey with funds sent from London. According to Olivier d'Argens, an ex-soldier from the Princes' Army, a committee of 'Deux ou trois membres de la noblesse française avec un ou deux Jersiaise' handled the funds, which were distributed by M. Laineveau. Clothing and medical care were also available.<sup>6</sup> However, the resources of Thomas' Committee soon dwindled, and further payments to the laity in Jersey seemed in jeopardy as early as February 1793.

Naturally the government was kept informed of the growing number of French refugees in the Channel Islands through the reports of the islands' administrators, but it was soon induced to take a more active interest in developments in Jersey by specific requests for assistance or advice. La Marche's first request for help on behalf of the clergy there was made on 24 September 1792. He told Dundas that there were some two and a half thousand French clergy in Jersey. Those inhabitants who had nothing to sell and all to buy complained that the influx caused food shortages. It might be advisable, therefore, to send some of the priests to England. La Marche wanted Dundas to ensure protection for the priests if necessary, and to send grain to Jersey to quieten the complaints.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Charles Hettier, Relations de la Normandie et de la Bretagne avec les îles de la Manche pendant l'Émigration (Caen, 1885), p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> La Marche to Dundas, 24 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, f. 612.

Despite his annoyance at being directly addressed,<sup>8</sup> Dundas responded to the questions raised. He had no objection to asking Fall to protect the priests, but he was against the government sending provisions, as it would mean 'taking upon itself directly the maintenance of those Refugees, which I am by no means authorized to do'.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, he was opposed to the government becoming directly involved in bringing the clergy from Jersey to England.<sup>10</sup> Dundas raised the question of the clergy in Jersey with Wilmot's Committee, and was 'informed that measures will be taken by them for the immediate subsistence of such as become objects of their charity' and for sending to England any who were willing to join the settlement at Winchester.<sup>11</sup> When telling Lieutenant-Governor Fall of these developments, Dundas emphasised

that Government takes no part in the removal of these people or in their supply, and that my calling upon you at all on this occasion proceeds from a desire to prevent the continuance of the discontents I have alluded to, and which it will be desirable that you should by every means in your power, endeavour to suppress.<sup>12</sup>

His attitude was that the plight of the refugees on Jersey was not a government responsibility, but that the discontents and disturbances on the island were.

However, these two problems were closely linked. The presence of the French caused shortages and high prices, which angered some islanders; and the shortages, high prices and local hostility in turn made the living conditions of the refugees more difficult. Two factions arose among the natives. On the one hand, those who were able to profit from the inflated

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<sup>8</sup>Dundas to [?], 25 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 626-7.

<sup>9</sup>Memorandum from Dundas, [ca 25 Sept. 1792], *ibid.*, ff. 629-30.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*; see also the résumé of La Marche's letter in an unsigned memorandum, und., H.O.42/22, f. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Dundas to Fall, 26 Sept. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

demand for goods and services were 'much pleased with the present influx of Strangers'.<sup>13</sup> On the other, those poorer inhabitants who lost their lodgings to the French and faced rising costs of food and accommodation, wanted to get rid of them.<sup>14</sup>

In October 1792, Fall estimated that about five hundred priests wanted to transfer to Winchester, but that delays in the project had caused two hundred of them to decide to go to Spain instead.<sup>15</sup> By December, the influx of soldiers from the army of the French Princes and the return of the fishing fleet from Newfoundland had forced further price rises, thus increasing local animosity towards the refugees and causing Fall to wish 'that the number of these Emigrants might be diminished by their having some other Asylum allotted them'.<sup>16</sup>

The behaviour of the émigrés also worried Fall. A mob of them 'assaulted' a visiting French merchant, tearing the cockade from his hat. The local traders feared that they might suffer reprisals when visiting France. Fall quelled a move among the natives to petition the government for the removal of the emigrants, by promising to ask it to act speedily in the matter.<sup>17</sup> Matters worsened in the new year. Prices continued to rise, and Fall told Dundas that the animosity of the poor was such 'that the Emigrants are now often grossly insulted and severely beaten'.<sup>18</sup> The possibility of war with France deepened the uneasiness of the islanders about the presence of so many French; and Fall continued to press the government to take action to remove

<sup>13</sup>Fall to Dundas, 2 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Fall to Dundas, 28 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>Fall to Dundas, 24 Oct. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup>Fall to Nepean, 20 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*; Fall to Dundas, 23 Dec. 1792, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>Fall to Dundas, 28 Dec. 1792, *ibid.* The move arose from complaints about rising prices: *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>Fall to Dundas, 10 Jan. 1793, H.O.98/3, *unf.*

some of them from the island.<sup>19</sup>

In January 1793 the threat of war brought administrative changes to the Channel Islands. On 12 January Dundas notified Fall and Lieutenant-Governor Brown of Guernsey that he was sending army officers to act as commanders-in-chief of the two islands.<sup>20</sup> The subsequent appointments of Colonel James Henry Craig and Colonel Thomas Dundas<sup>21</sup> to Jersey and Guernsey respectively, represented a diminution of the powers of the lieutenants-governor, who normally held military as well as civil command of their stations. Fall and Brown, both army officers, were upset by the new appointments, but were forced to accept their authority.<sup>22</sup> The division between civil and military functions was inconvenient, so when Lieutenant-Governor Brown died suddenly in May 1793, Colonel Dundas offered to assume the duties of his office, and the offer was accepted.<sup>23</sup>

Lieutenant-Governor Fall, in Jersey, lost most by the administrative reorganisation. Not only did he lose his military command of the island, but the States declared that the separation of the military and civil functions of government was unconstitutional, and resolved that henceforth Colonel Craig was to be regarded as the Crown's representative in the States.<sup>24</sup> Thus Fall was deprived of his seat in the States, and some of his civil functions passed to Craig. After a short period of uncertain administrative

<sup>19</sup> Fall to Dundas, 16 Jan. 1793, *ibid.* An anonymous letter warned Grenville that the scarcity of provisions might cause the poor to revenge themselves on the emigrants: An Inhabitant [of Jersey] to Grenville, 28 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Dundas to Fall, 12 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*; Dundas to Lieut.-Gov. Brown, 12 Jan. 1792, H.O.99/1, pp. 133-4.

<sup>21</sup> A former commissioner on the American Loyalist Claims Board: Norton, *British-Americans*, p. 192.

<sup>22</sup> Brown to Nepean, 17 Jan. 1793, H.O.98/24, *unf.*; General H.S. Conway to Dundas, 25 Jan. 1793, H.O.98/3, *unf.*

<sup>23</sup> T. Dundas to Dundas, 17 May 1793, H.O.98/24, *unf.*

<sup>24</sup> Fall to Dundas, 2 March 1793, H.O.98/3, *unf.*



demarcation, Craig also assumed most of the responsibility for dealings with the refugees.

Craig shared Fall's desire to remove the refugees from Jersey, but he found it difficult to persuade them to leave, as many were tied there by the debts they had contracted.<sup>25</sup> To make matters worse, emigrants continued to arrive early in 1793, some from Holland, others from Brittany.<sup>26</sup> Craig was suspicious of the latter, whom he described as people of the lower orders, who had left to avoid being drafted into the army.<sup>27</sup> He pointed out that 'those who are actuated by principle must have quitted the Country long ago', and that some 'were known and much abused by several of the old residenters here'.<sup>28</sup>

With the outbreak of war, and the quartering of troops, food and accommodation became still scarcer and dearer, while the possibility of invasion exacerbated hostility towards the refugee French. Craig grew more determined to remove them and to institute an 'immediate mode' for supplying the island.<sup>29</sup> Local merchants wanted the embargo lifted from traders bound from England to Jersey and Guernsey and convoys appointed for the protection of future trade, so the States petitioned the Crown accordingly.<sup>30</sup> In response, the government diverted a grain ship to Jersey to relieve the food shortage, but did nothing to ensure regular supplies to the island. Dundas was against

<sup>25</sup> Craig to Dundas, 31 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Fall to Dundas, 10 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*; Craig to [Nepean], 3 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* These men formed part of the resistance to the draft which resulted in open rebellion in Brittany in March 1793: Godechot, Counter-Revolution, pp. 212-3.

<sup>28</sup> Craig to [Nepean], 3 Feb. 1793, H.O.98/3, *unf.*

<sup>29</sup> Craig to Dundas, 13, 21 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Fiott de Gruchy & Co. to Dundas, 26 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*; Petition of the States of Jersey to George III, *und.*, *ibid.*

shifting emigrants to England, as he considered the danger of invasion to have abated.<sup>31</sup>

Craig forestalled this decision by taking action before it was communicated. In March, when the Bishops of Dol, Tréguier and Bayeux told him that many of the clergy wanted to leave, but could not afford the passage, Craig arranged for nearly three hundred of them to be taken to England aboard the two transport ships which had brought troops to the island. Thus the clergy were transported at the government's expense, and Craig even made sure that if the voyage were unduly prolonged, or the priests destitute, they would be supplied from the ships' stores.<sup>32</sup> The government's earlier order for the removal of French priests from Alderney, at its expense, may have influenced Craig's initiative.<sup>33</sup>

Opinions differed among the islanders over whether or not more refugees should be sent away. In March, some natives petitioned Craig for the removal of at least some of them, on the grounds of overcrowding, shortages and the consequent high prices.<sup>34</sup> However, other inhabitants quickly counter-petitioned Craig to allow the refugees to stay, as since their arrival,

ils se sont conduits d'une manière paisible & tranquille, et ont enrichi le Pays, par l'augmentation du commerce, & les Sommes d'Argent considerables qu'ils y ont dépensé. Que pour ces raisons, plus leur Situation devient déplorable, plus il parait juste de les faire jouir des droits de l'hospitalité,

and afford them the protection which their own country denied them. Besides, shortages should be blamed on the war's interruption of commerce, not the

<sup>31</sup>Dundas to Fall, 11, 12 March 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>Craig to Dundas, 16, 20, 26 March 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Peter Le Mesurier to Nepean, 19 Feb. 1793, H.O.98/41, unf.; Peter Le Mesurier to La Marche, 4 March 1793, T.93/43, f. 288.

<sup>34</sup>Petition to Col. Craig, enclosed in Craig to Dundas, 20 March 1793, H.O.98/3, unf. The petition failed to mention that the presence of British troops on the island contributed to the overcrowding.

refugees.<sup>35</sup> Craig sent the counter-petition on to Dundas, but expressed his contrary opinion in his covering letter.<sup>36</sup>

The French clergy and laity formed two distinct groups on Jersey, and Craig concentrated his efforts on removing the former. They formed much the larger group: in March 1793, Fall estimated that there were 2714 clergy and 1293 laity in Jersey.<sup>37</sup> The clergy's large numbers, and their calling, aroused hostility and distrust amongst some of the natives. For most of 1793 their good behaviour lessened friction, but tension arose in late 1793 and early 1794 over the proselytising activities of Matthieu de Gruchy, a Jerseyman who had lived in France and become a priest there, before fleeing to Jersey in August 1792. As a native of Jersey, he was able to perform his mission there, which the French were barred from doing. Tension subsided after he left the island in April 1794.<sup>38</sup>

As it transpired, the laity proved a far less tractable problem than the clergy. The main issues were their quarrelsome behaviour, their military potential for or against Jersey, and their growing destitution. One possible solution was to recruit them into regiments in British pay, which would provide them with income, employment and discipline, and also augment the island's defence against possible invasion. But could they be trusted not to turn their arms against their hosts, and aid their invading countrymen?

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<sup>35</sup> Petition to Col. Craig, March 1793, enclosed in Craig to Dundas, 12 April 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Craig to Dundas, 12 April 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Summary of the lists of aliens residing in the different parishes of the island of Jersey, 1 March 1793, enclosed in Fall to Dundas, 8 April 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> For a fuller discussion of his activities, see Connell, 'Breton Clergy in Jersey', pp. 234-46.

One émigré who strongly urged that the exiles should be trusted with arms was the Comte de Botherel, whose shipment of arms to Jersey had caused Fall and Dundas so much alarm in September 1792.<sup>39</sup> As a former Procureur-Général-Syndic des États de Bretagne, now acting as an agent in Britain for the French Princes, he was an important member of the émigré lay community. He often acted as its spokesman, with or without its consent. Fall thought him interfering, untruthful and unduly fearful of Republican persecution. He had rejected as 'extravagant' Botherel's offer to set up a committee of Frenchmen to assist the public security of the island, but the French nonetheless had set up a committee known as the 'Conseil des Doyens', with Botherel as its agent.<sup>40</sup>

In January 1793, when war seemed imminent, and the refugees were experiencing increasing difficulty in obtaining funds from France, Botherel warned Dundas of the hardships which would affect the refugees if they had to leave Jersey and suggested that émigrés should be allowed to bear arms in defence of the island.<sup>41</sup> Dundas was tempted, as this was his main concern.<sup>42</sup> Fall was strongly against the idea, claiming that the suspicion and dread of the emigrants made it impossible, and saw no valid reason for them to stay.<sup>43</sup> Craig took a more moderate view. He saw the practical difficulties of moving them and the sentiment against arming them. He thought it might be possible to form a select and 'carefully vetted' number into a corps if the rest, especially the priests, were disposed elsewhere.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See above, pp. 56-7.

<sup>40</sup> Fall to Dundas, 28, 31 Dec. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

<sup>41</sup> Comte de Botherel to [Dundas], 4 Jan. 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>42</sup> Dundas to Fall, 20 Jan. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Fall to Dundas, 1 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Craig to [Nepean], 3 Feb. 1793, *ibid.*

By March, hostilities with France had commenced, and La Vendée and Brittany were on the brink of open rebellion, so the émigrés again pressed their claims for active service. The Marquis de Montmuran<sup>45</sup> and the Comte du Trésor<sup>46</sup> presented Craig with a petition from the laity, asking that a number of young émigrés be allowed to serve in any capacity thought necessary.<sup>47</sup> In April the rising in Brittany attracted their interest, and Craig reported that about a hundred and fifty young émigrés intended to ask for permission to go there, taking with them the arms confiscated the previous September.<sup>48</sup> Dundas approved the idea, and instructed Craig to

fix upon the best means of landing the said Ordinance Arms and Ammunition, and such of the Emigrants as may desire it, and of furnishing them with such a proportion of Provisions and Money as you may conceive to be adequate to their immediate wants.<sup>49</sup>

On 1 May, Comte du Dresnay<sup>50</sup> was sent to Jersey 'pour établir d'accord avec le cdt de l'île une correspondance avec la France'.<sup>51</sup> He was entrusted with the selection of agents for the task.<sup>52</sup> Fall had already been asked to send scouts along the French coast to collect information on naval preparations.<sup>53</sup> Thus, as in previous Anglo-French wars, Jersey was an

<sup>45</sup> Pierre-Jean-Martial de La Motte, Marquis de Montmuran (1757-1828), who served in Jersey in 1793 as a captain in du Dresnay's regiment, fought at Quiberon in 1795 and returned to France in 1814: Pinasseau, Émigration Militaire, ii, pp. 155-6.

<sup>46</sup> Later Colonel of an émigré corps: Burke, Correspondence, ix, p. 72n.

<sup>47</sup> Craig to Dundas, March 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>48</sup> Craig to Dundas, 15 April 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Dundas to Craig, 28 April 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Louis-Marie-Ambroise-René, Comte du Dresnay (1741-98), emigrated in 1791, fought in Condé's army in 1792, passed to England 2 Jan. 1793: Pinasseau, Émigration Militaire, ii, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Hettier, Relations, p. 39.

<sup>53</sup> Nepean to Fall, 25 Dec. 1792, H.O.98/2, unf.

important intelligence centre for the British government; it was to be a base for naval operations, for contacts with the rebels in western France and for supplying them with money, munitions and men to increase the effectiveness of their struggle against the Republic.

In the meantime, the plight of the laity on Jersey had steadily worsened. In February, Craig reported that the emigrants' means of subsistence would soon be at an end. He had heard

that upwards of two hundred families are at this moment in great distress & partaking of the bounty of the Committee established in London - what we should do in such a case I have not the most distant Idea of.<sup>54</sup>

As Thomas' Committee's funds were fast diminishing, the émigrés turned to the obvious alternative source: the government. Botherel pointed out to Pitt that only the government 'soit dans le cas de nous secourir d'une manière stable, vraiment efficace, et qui ne pese point sensiblement sur le Citoyen', and suggested that it should lend funds to the refugees, to be repaid when they regained their estates.<sup>55</sup> In March, Dundas told Craig that the government had the situation in Jersey in view,

but any step to be taken either for the relief of the Individuals, or of the Island, appears to be likely to be attended with so much difficulty and embarrassment, that nothing has yet been determined respecting them.<sup>56</sup>

In May the committee which had charge of the distribution returned to the attack, with a petition to Craig, outlining the laity's plight. There were from twelve to fifteen hundred of them on Jersey, forming about a hundred

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<sup>54</sup> Craig to [Nepean], 3 Feb. 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>55</sup> Botherel to Pitt, 4 Feb. 1793, P.R.O.30/8/114, ff. 221-2.

<sup>56</sup> Dundas to Craig, 12 March 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

families of men, women, children and servants. Most of the families were destitute, with no resource other than the relief money. Because of dwindling funds, Thomas' Committee had decided to exclude from relief all men aged between sixteen and fifty who were capable of bearing arms; this would affect three or four hundred men. Presumably this decision had been made because the formation of the émigré regiments in England furnished these men with means of employment. However, those in Jersey found it difficult to get to England to enlist, so the Jersey Committee suggested that an émigré corps be formed in Jersey itself. Furthermore, as the funds of the committee in London would soon run out, it proposed that the destitute French families should be granted a loan of twelve to fifteen thousand livres a month for their support.<sup>57</sup> Craig transmitted the petition to Dundas, commenting that he had 'no doubt that their situation is fully as bad as they represent it to be & I confess I am in almost daily apprehension of their being under a necessity of asking bread from me, to preserve them from starving'.<sup>58</sup>

Craig suggested that if the émigrés were to be employed in the army, the sooner the better, as so many were destitute. Besides, he perceived amongst them

the beginning of a Jealousy which may much prejudice their efforts, & which nothing is so likely to put an end to as their being employed - it is between the first Emigrants & what is called the coalition of Brittany [sic]. It costs me even now some pains to prevent its breaking out.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Petition of Comité François to Craig, enclosed in Craig to Dundas, 24 May 1793, *ibid.* Channel Islands currency was 'livres tournois', based on French currency. The exchange rate in December 1793 was 24 to 25 to the pound sterling; see Earl Balcarres to Nepean, 31 Dec. 1793 H.O.98/4, unf.; this made the amount requested approximately £480 to £600.

<sup>58</sup> Craig to Dundas, 24 May 1793, H.O.98/3, unf.

<sup>59</sup> Craig to Nepean, 28 May 1793, *ibid.* Hostility between members of different 'vintages' of a refugee movement is a recurrent phenomenon: see E.F. Kunz, 'The refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement', *International Migration Review*, vii, no. 2, Summer 1973, p. 139.

Thus, employing the émigrés on Jersey as soldiers would have the triple effect of strengthening the defence of the island against invasion, providing some of the émigrés with employment and means of subsistence, and quieting the internal quarrels amongst émigré factions.

In June 1793, when the government reached its decision on the twin questions of raising an émigré corps in Jersey, and relieving the destitute, there were 1,182 adult French laity on the island. In a return of 16 June,<sup>60</sup> Craig categorised them as follows:

	<u>16-50 years</u>	<u>Over 50 years</u>	<u>Total</u>
Gentlemen	377	90	467
Men Servants	139	19	158
Workmen and Labourers	66	9	75
Gentlewomen			252
Maid Servants			197
Working Women			33
Total			<u>1182</u>

Thus there were 719 gentry, 355 servants and 108 workers, comprised of 700 men and 482 women. Of the men, 584 were of an age to give military service, if able-bodied. For relief purposes, children would have to be added to these numbers.

At first, the government decided favourably on both questions. However, when the Comte de Botherel was summoned to hear Pitt's decision in favour of the corps,

he had the modesty to state 'that before they took up arms against France, an assurance was expected that it was not the intention of this Country to dismember the French Empire.'

This proposal, whether it was a condition which the Count alone wished to make, or whether it was the general sentiment, of course put the negotiation totally at an end.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Enclosure in Craig to Nepean, 16 June 1793, H.O.98/4, unf.

<sup>61</sup> [Nepean] to Craig, 23 June 1793, *ibid.* Craig later reported that the condition had been made without the concurrence or knowledge of the émigrés on Jersey: Craig to Nepean, 11 July 1793, *ibid.*



It is to the government's credit that this arrogant intervention did not deter it from its intention to offer temporary relief to the distressed laity. It had been informed that some 'must absolutely perish for want' unless assisted, so the government went ahead, because

Tho' persons offering such a condition can hardly be looked upon as objects proper for public attention, yet Mr. Pitt feels that he cannot let them strave [sic].<sup>62</sup>

Craig was authorised to allow three to four hundred of the most wretched sixpence a day relief until further notice. He was instructed to make it appear that he, not the government, was the benefactor, to draw the necessary bills without specifying their purpose, and to advise the Home Office by private letter to Nepean.<sup>63</sup> Manifestly, the government was anxious that this aid should set no precedent.

Funds from Thomas' Committee had not ceased entirely. In the first week of August it sent £250 to Jersey; men between sixteen and fifty years were excluded from sharing in it. Those who did receive it were temporarily excluded from Craig's list.<sup>64</sup> Craig made payments from 15 July, and within two weeks the number being paid rose from 106 to 237; the cost to the government of the first month was £132.<sup>65</sup> By 15 September, the number being assisted had risen to 420, and the monthly outlay to £430.16.9.<sup>66</sup> As with the clergy, the distribution was made on two lists. Du Dresnay drew up the lists and received the money for the Bretons, and du Trésor did the same for the Normans.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> [Nepean] to Craig, 23 June 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Craig to Nepean, 7 Aug. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Enclosure in *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Enclosure in Craig to Nepean, 21 Sept. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Craig to Nepean, 24 Oct. 1793, *ibid.*

In October, the Earl of Balcarres<sup>68</sup> succeeded Craig as Commander-in-Chief of Jersey, when the latter moved to Guernsey as lieutenant-governor.<sup>69</sup> This change may have been made to reduce the friction between Fall and Craig over division of responsibilities for civil administration and the intelligence operations. Matters had come to a head in August, when a boat carrying an agent to France under Fall's instructions was seized by Craig's men, and the master and crew brought publicly back to Jersey. Fall was incensed by Craig's move to assume control of the correspondence activities, particularly as he considered that Craig

has taken upon himself the Civil as well as the Military functions of the Governor here, & that, in consequence, I am precluded from exercising those Civil powers intrusted to me by His Majesty...<sup>70</sup>

However, Balcarres took charge of the correspondence with France when he arrived,<sup>71</sup> so Fall's powers were further eroded.

The government must have changed its mind about forming an émigré corps in Jersey, for one of Balcarres' first tasks was to muster the 406 recruits who formed a corps under the leadership of du Dresnay.<sup>72</sup> They made an unusual sight when the Earl inspected them:

Upwards of 40 seemed to have the Croix de S. Louis, 2 officers having the Rank of Marechal de Camp appeared in the Ranks, This with the appearance of Colonels & Presidents of Parliaments enrolled as Private Soldiers, made the Scene singular, & interesting.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Alexander Lindsay, sixth Earl of Balcarres (1752-1825), commander of the forces in Jersey 1793, Governor of Jamaica 1794-1801; promoted general in 1803: D.N.B., xi, pp. 1163-4.

<sup>69</sup>[?] to Craig, 17 Oct. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup>Fall to Nepean, 10 Aug. 1793, *ibid.*; Alfred Cobban, 'The beginning of the Channel Isles Correspondence, 1789-1794', English Historical Review, lxxvii, Jan. 1962, pp. 45-6.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>72</sup>Balcarres to Dundas, 28 Oct. 1793, H.O.98/4, unf.

<sup>73</sup>Balcarres to Dundas, 3 Nov. 1793, *ibid.*

Another two hundred emigrants 'are ready to be embodied, but as they are workmen & Servants they cannot be enrolled with Messieurs les Emigrés', so their inspection was deferred.<sup>74</sup> After 'some unpleasant Jealousies' on the island over the arming of the émigrés, the corps was acknowledged to be under Balcarres' command, like all other troops there.<sup>75</sup> The émigrés were recruited to join Lord Moira's expedition to Brittany, which took place in December 1793. The expedition failed; it was dependent on the Royalists capturing a port, and the Vendean attack on Granville had been routed before Moira's small force reached the Breton coast.<sup>76</sup>

The employment of some six hundred émigrés by the British Army eased their internal squabbles,<sup>77</sup> and reduced the number of destitute French on Jersey. In November 1793 the government decided to pay recruits a shilling a day until formed into a battalion, when they would be placed on the same financial footing as La Chatre's legion, already in British pay. At the same time, the government brought payments to the non-military refugees into line with those made to the laity in England, as the allowance of sixpence a day had proved 'totally inadequate to their subsistence'.<sup>78</sup> Apparently Thomas' Committee had pressed for this, for the increase was made retrospective to 10 October, 'the day on which a promise was made to the Committee, in

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Balcarres to Dundas, 15 Dec. 1793, *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Cobban, 'Channel Isles Correspondence', p. 45.

<sup>77</sup> Craig had reported 'many turbulent mauvais esprit among them', and the emergence of a small faction against du Dresnay: Craig to Nepean, 7 Aug. 1793, H.O.98/4, *unf.*

<sup>78</sup> [Dundas] to Balcarres, 27 Nov. 1793, *ibid.*

respect to these Allowances'.<sup>79</sup>

This re-arrangement introduced an important new element into the government's relief system. Dundas ordered Balcarres

to discriminate between the different classes of people, for example, each Emigrant bearing the character of Gentlemen; to be allowed one shilling per day, and each Child and Servant of such Person, five shillings per week, the same as is allowed in England; and I am commanded to authorize your Lordship to adopt this regulation for the present in Jersey.<sup>80</sup>

The wording of this order caused some confusion, as it did not specify the rate at which women were to be paid. Balcarres paid them five shillings a week initially, but Botherel protested to him that they should be paid seven shillings. Balcarres re-examined his instructions, and found nothing in them or in the original order to Craig, 'that authorizes us to pay them anything', so he requested clarification.<sup>81</sup> Balcarres reported that Botherel, whom he described as 'somewhat troublesome & officious', had also expressed his opinion that the emigrants were entitled to receive the benefit of the exchange rate.<sup>82</sup> Balcarres, as Craig had done before him, normally used part of this benefit to 'furnish a Room: Clerk: Firing Stationery &c', and credited the remainder to the government. Besides, 'a Soldier never

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. Thomas' Committee had run out of funds in September; it asked Wilmot's Committee for help, but it could give none: Baston, *Mémoires*, ii, p. 99; Kerbiriou, *La Marche*, pp. 404-05. It is probable that Thomas' Committee then turned to the government for assistance, resulting in the increase in allowances to the laity in Jersey, and the settlement for the laity in England in December.

<sup>80</sup> [Dundas] to Balcarres, 27 Nov. 1793, H.O.98/4, unf.

<sup>81</sup> Balcarres to Nepean, 31 Dec. 1793, *ibid.* The women were paid at the same rate as the men from July 1794: see below, p. 287.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. His opinion of Botherel did not change. Three months later he wrote: 'I have not a doubt that this Monsr. de Botherel has the cause of His King ardently at Heart, but he has much too good an opinion of his own Abilities to act squarely with plain men': Balcarres to [?], 23 March 1794, H.O.98/5, unf

receives the Benefit of Exchange, & I take up that Rule for my Guide'; he would need 'an Army of Clerks' if he were to pay individuals the benefit of fractions of exchange.<sup>83</sup> Botherel's suggestion was not taken up.

## II

Why did the British government allow itself to be drawn into the provision of assistance for the French in Jersey and England? They knew about the growing problem of a group for whose welfare they felt some responsibility. They were aware of the possibility that destitute enemy nationals might be driven to betray Jersey to their Republican countrymen, in a bid for their own survival. Besides, the aid was only a temporary expedient, pending the expected imminent defeat of France.

The government's actions in Jersey should also be viewed in the context of the whole refugee question. Ministers, citizens and French exiles alike seem to have expected that the British would help the French, whether by private charity or public assistance. This attitude was clearly enunciated as early as September 1792 by Lieutenant-Governor Trigge of Portsmouth, when reporting an influx of refugees:

If they continue here, their Subsistence must become a national Concern; either to be furnished by Government, or by means of a general national Subscription: without one of these measures, they have no other prospect than starving, which in this Country, will I trust not be suffered.<sup>84</sup>

In the same month, as has been seen, Dundas was annoyed by a direct approach to him from La Marche, in which the latter made several specific requests for

<sup>83</sup> Balcarres to Nepean, 31 Dec. 1793, H.O.98/4, unf.

<sup>84</sup> Trigge to [Dundas?], 13 Sept. 1792, H.O.42/21, ff. 539-40.

help from the government.<sup>85</sup> Dundas preferred to hold official communications with Wilmot's Committee, rather than informal ones with the Bishop,

for otherwise I perceive We shall very soon be implicated to take a more executive part in the business than We intend, and one of the material benefits to be derived from the shape of a subscription which the subject had assumed, was to avoid that direct interference on the part of government. If another system is to be adopted I would wish it to be done on due consideration, and not to be inadvertently drawn into it.<sup>86</sup>

If the government did not want the refugees to starve, but preferred not to assume responsibility for their care unless it had to, then its course of action made good sense. On the one hand it tried to keep the charitable effort going for as long as possible, by responding favourably to the Committees' requests for help with accommodation and schemes for sending refugees abroad, and by approving the collection in the Anglican parishes. In all these cases, the charities could be seen as the prime movers. On the other hand, the government tried not to be seen to be giving direct aid to the refugees, as when Dundas instructed Fall and Craig not to remove refugees from Jersey under government auspices.<sup>87</sup> Even when the government did assist the Jersey laity in June 1793, it was anxious that its role in the grant should be kept secret.

While the government was attempting to resist involvement in refugee welfare, public officials,<sup>88</sup> members of the relief committees and the French themselves were trying to draw it in. Experienced politicians such as Burke, Wilmot and Buckingham knew the value of approaching the government with specific

<sup>85</sup> La Marche to Dundas, 24 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, f. 612.

<sup>86</sup> Dundas to [?], 25 Sept. 1792, *ibid.*, ff. 626-7.

<sup>87</sup> See above p. 232.

<sup>88</sup> For example, Hood, Trigge, Richmond, Fall, Craig and Balcarres.

requests for aid, such as the many concerning the colony at Winchester. Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee both turned to the government when in financial difficulties, as being the only body able to provide funds on the necessary scale. The French, too, did not hesitate to ask the government for help. Of the many exiles who wrote to the ministers, two were particularly important: the Bishop of St Pol de Léon and the Comte de Botherel. Not only were they men of rank themselves, but they also spoke for others: La Marche for the clergy and Botherel for the laity. In an age of patronage and pressure groups, the French refugees were well served by their advocates, French and British alike.

Why was it thought likely that the government would help, if confronted directly by the refugee problem? For one thing, the government could not deny that assistance to the refugees came within its area of competence, as there was ample precedent for it over the past hundred years. In 1689 Queen Mary made a grant to the Huguenots out of the privy purse, and payments were still being made in 1793. The presence of papers relating to this grant among the émigré relief records suggests that public servants were aware of this precedent.<sup>89</sup> In 1756, Acadian refugees from Canada arrived in England; at Fox's instigation, the government made them a small allowance for the seven years that they stayed.<sup>90</sup> In 1764 the government aided German Palatinate refugees with a grant of land in America,<sup>91</sup> and the Ordinance Office provided them with tents until their embarkation.<sup>92</sup> Most recent

<sup>89</sup> Copy of a warrant dated 20 July 1696, A.O.3/903 [1796], unf.; Shaw, 'Relief of Protestant refugees', pp. 667-8.

<sup>90</sup> Naomi Griffiths, 'Acadians in exile: the experiences of the Acadians in the British seaports', *Acadiensis*, iv, no. 1, Autumn 1974, pp. 69-70, 72-3.

<sup>91</sup> Proceedings of the Committee Appointed for Relieving the Poor Germans (London, 1765), pp. vii-viii.

<sup>92</sup> M. Dorothy George, London Life in the Eighteenth Century (1st pub. 1925; Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 139.

was the extensive assistance accorded to the American Loyalists by the government after 1782, by both lump sum payments and pensions.<sup>93</sup>

Yet the British government did not assist all refugee groups.<sup>94</sup> Refugees needed some claim to the benevolence of government, aid was not theirs by right. These claims are easy to see in the cases mentioned above. The Huguenots and the Palatine refugees were Protestants fleeing Catholic persecution. The Acadians were French residents of Nova Scotia whom the British authorities deported in 1755 because they doubted their allegiance in the case of war with France. The arrival of over a thousand of them in Britain caused some embarrassment, as they were British subjects, but potential supporters of France. The government settled on the expedient of treating them as prisoners of war, while paying them a maintenance allowance,<sup>95</sup> so government support was a mixed blessing. The government was even able to recoup some of its outlay in 1763 when the French government agreed to accept the remaining Acadians and to reimburse the British for part of their maintenance costs.<sup>96</sup> The French government was generous towards them, so the Acadians gained some benefit from their dual nationality.<sup>97</sup> The American Loyalists, of course, were in exile because of their support for the British

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<sup>93</sup> See above, p. 22.

<sup>94</sup> For the treatment of Jewish refugees in the eighteenth century see George, London Life, pp. 132-8. Also, see below, p. 391.

<sup>95</sup> Griffiths, 'Acadians in exile', pp. 67-73; Shelby T. McCloy, Government Assistance in Eighteenth Century France (Durham, N.C., 1946), pp. 369-71. Also, see below, pp. 390-1.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

<sup>97</sup> The French spent about 4,500,000 livres on them in 1763-78, on pensions and settlement schemes, and pensions continued into the 1790s: *ibid.*, p. 383. See also *ibid.*, pp. 372-83.



cause in the War of Independence, and received more generous aid than any other refugee group.

The French exiles of the 1790s, however, were Catholic, and Britain owed them nothing. The nature of the group, and the particular circumstances of late 1793, provide the most likely explanations for the government's generosity. Surely the ministers' sympathies lay with France's dispossessed 'establishment', which included aristocrats and prominent officials: their French counterparts, their social equals, and often their friends, relatives and acquaintances. Even the French Catholic clergy, representatives of a detested Church, could be seen as victims of a worse phenomenon: irreligion. If one believed, with Burke, 'that religion is the basis of civil society',<sup>98</sup> then the Revolutionary persecution of the Catholic Church in France was an attack on the foundations of the state and society. The active support given to the French clergy by their Anglican counterparts suggests a rallying to the defence of Christianity in the face of atheism. Dr Bellenger sees the Anglican Church as seizing the opportunity to underline its role as the National Church and to demonstrate the interdependence of Church and state in English society.<sup>99</sup>

Moreover, the French exiles were symbolic as victims of the Revolution, and had immense propaganda value as such. Britain's establishment, of which the ministers were an integral part, had an enormous stake in the fight against all the Revolution stood for. The Revolution was an attack on religion, privilege, property and power, whether political, economic or social. Burke said of the English: 'We fear God; we look with awe to kings; with affection

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<sup>98</sup>Burke, Reflections, p. 186.

<sup>99</sup>Bellenger, 'French ecclesiastical exiles', p. 35.

to parliaments; with duty to magistrates; with reverence to priests; and with respect to nobility'.<sup>100</sup> He feared the consequences of a loss of respect for these pillars of English society - and so did they. If the revolution so feared by the British establishment ever took place, its members had the most to lose, and would be the first to face the road to exile and to seek succour in a foreign land.

Exiles such as the French, because of their background, also understood the workings of pressure and patronage, as witness La Marche and Botherel, and had far greater access to men of influence than most other disadvantaged groups in society. Dundas certainly realised the danger of the government being drawn into aiding the French, despite its intention to the contrary,<sup>101</sup> and he was right to be wary of such an eventuality, as government intervention did follow from ad hoc responses to specific approaches in particular circumstances.

The crucial period in the government's major decision on refugee welfare was September to December 1793, when the two major relief organisations negotiated with the government for its financial support. At this time the government had an increasing general involvement with the French Royalists in Britain and elsewhere. By December, La Chatre's corps was fighting under the British flag in Flanders, and du Dresnay's corps was sailing for Brittany, to join the Royalist rebels whom Britain was supplying with money and munitions. British forces had occupied Toulon, an anti-Republican stronghold which had voluntarily surrendered itself to British and Spanish forces on 27 August 1793. The government was also involved in negotiations with the Royalists in St Domingo for

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<sup>100</sup> Burke, Reflections, p. 182.

<sup>101</sup> See above, p. 248.

its surrender to the British.<sup>102</sup> The French Royalists and emigrants were allies of Britain in the fight against Republican France, so their goodwill may have been a desirable object for the government at the time.

The government was also still optimistic that its engagement with the enemy on so many fronts would soon result in a crushing defeat for the Republicans, thus allowing the refugees to return to France. The 'temporary' nature of the relief payments may indeed be the key to the government's initial acceptance of the financial burden involved. Had the ministers foreseen the duration of the war, the escalation of the numbers seeking relief, and an annual outlay which rose to over £250,000 in 1798,<sup>103</sup> a less costly solution might well have been sought more vigorously.

In the absence of any clear statement from the government on why it decided to grant financial aid to the refugees, the reasons advanced must be conjectural, but the fact remains that it did decide favourably. There are some indications that the decision of December 1793 was part of a more general move to settle the problem of French refugee relief. In October the Treasury approved the measures adopted by Lieutenant-Governor Bruce of Dominica, for 'affording Relief to the French Emigrants from the Island of Martinico'.<sup>104</sup> In November, the government brought the system of allowances to the laity in Jersey into line with those to the laity in England, after consultation with Thomas' Committee. As the latter had exhausted most of its funds by September, it is possible that the government was making interim

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<sup>102</sup>Burns, West Indies, p. 564.

<sup>103</sup>See below, p. 393.

<sup>104</sup>Rose to Lt Gov. Bruce, 7 Oct. 1793, T.27/43, p. 441.

allowances to the laity in England, before the arrangement was concluded whereby Wilmot's Committee undertook to administer payments to them as well as the clergy. The ministry seems to have made some kind of decision in principle to assist needy French refugees within British jurisdiction.

If the government did undertake to assist the refugees, the form of assistance had to be considered. When the plight of the refugees in Jersey was brought before the government, it settled on the expedient of making a small, temporary allowance to those in need. The distribution machinery was already in existence, and its supervision was entrusted to Craig, as an additional function of his office. With the clergy, the government was specifically asked to provide funds for an existing organisation, Wilmot's Committee, in which the English committee members had held responsibility for supervision, policy and general financial matters, while French ecclesiastics and interested Englishmen distributed its funds under La Marche's management. The government responded directly to each case, and both expedients had the virtue that the government was neither initiating nor directly maintaining an administrative structure, its role being confined to providing funds and making decisions on policy. When settling the case of Thomas' Committee, the government chose to entrust the care of the laity to Wilmot's Committee, the more viable of the two, thus rationalising administration of the problem. The extensive use of unpaid labour by Wilmot's Committee and the Jersey Committee kept administrative costs low, so that a high proportion of the financial allocations would go directly towards relieving the needs of the refugees.

The extent to which the government was a responsive rather than an initiating body is clearly shown by the divergence of the funding of the laity in Jersey from that of those laity and clergy managed by Wilmot's Committee from December 1793. In Jersey, because the laity were asking for both military employment and relief, they directed their petition to Craig, the Commander-in-Chief. Craig passed the petition on to Henry Dundas in his capacity as minister responsible for the conduct of the war, and hence Craig's superior, rather than in his capacity as minister responsible for the Channel Islands. Thus funds for these refugees came from funds for 'war extraordinaries', rather than the civil list.

On the other hand, most of Wilmot's Committee's dealings with the government in 1792-3 were with Pitt and the Treasury, through negotiations on sending priests to Canada, on the collection in the Anglican parishes, and most of all, on the repairs to the King's House at Winchester. When the Committee ran out of funds, it was to the Treasury that it turned for assistance, and the Treasury responded to this initiative. The monthly sum granted therefore came from the civil list. This division, arising from the government's ad hoc method of response, later caused accounting difficulties and a disruption of payments to the French evacuated from the Channel Islands in 1796.<sup>105</sup>

In conclusion, I would suggest that the British government did have a policy on assistance to the French refugees, one implicit in its actions rather than explicit in its statements. This policy was an acceptance that the British government might stand as benefactor

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<sup>105</sup> See Chapter 8.

in the last resort to 'deserving' French refugees who could find no other means of support, but that this role should be avoided if possible. It offered employment in the émigré corps to able-bodied laymen, thus reducing the potential relief bill. The government's stance was obviously discussed in cabinet in 1792, but in the event it was probably decided between Pitt and Dundas, the two ministers most concerned, who had close political and personal ties. Even so, the government's acquisition of responsibility for particular groups of refugees seems to have followed a pattern of ad hoc responses to specific pressures, with little co-ordination between departments; this pattern continued after 1793.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> See Chapter 11 for a detailed discussion of British treatment of successive waves of refugees from the late seventeenth century until the Second World War.

CHAPTER 7THE EXPANSION OF REFUGEE RELIEF IN ENGLAND,JERSEY AND THE MEDITERRANEAN, 1794-6

## I

If Wilmot's Committee ever thought that their troubles were over once the government had agreed to provide a grant for the welfare of French refugees, they were soon disillusioned. Responsibility for the French laity in England rendered administration much more difficult. Their numbers rose much more rapidly than the clergy's, and they moved on and off the lists more frequently, according to employment opportunities, military status and general health. This, and the different rates of allowances to them according to age, sex and rank, made bookkeeping more complicated. They were less easily disciplined than the clergy, and lacked the advantage of an acknowledged leader, such as the clergy had in La Marche. The French Princes might have provided such leadership, but none of them resided in England until Artois came to London in 1799.<sup>1</sup>

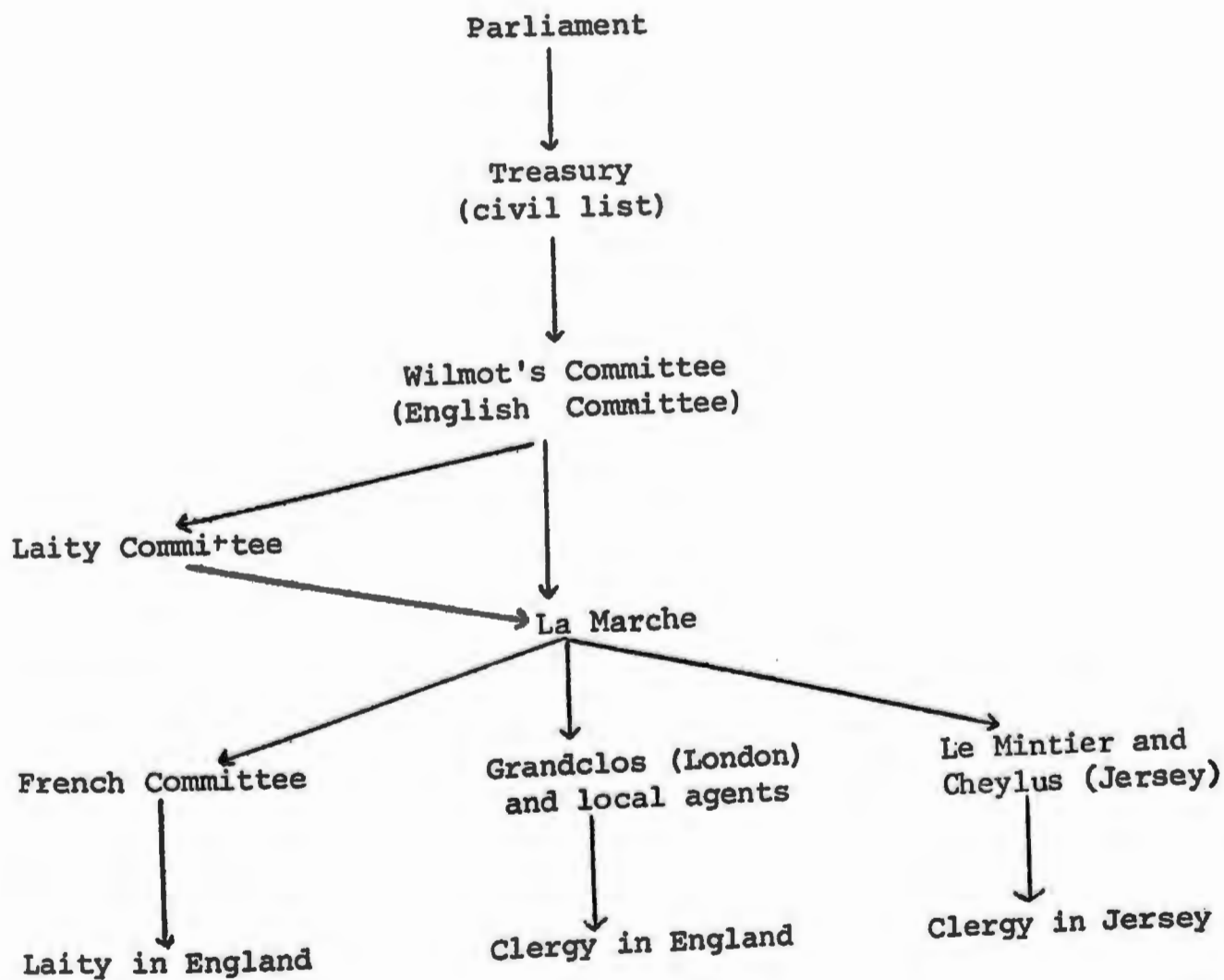
Administration of lay relief was added to the existing structure, so no wholesale re-organisation was needed. On 19 December 1793, four members of Wilmot's Committee formed a separate executive committee to superintend lay relief. Wilmot, Pepperell and Metcalfe were three of the most active members of the parent committee, while Jenkinson was valued for his ministerial connections. However, Jenkinson attended only the first four meetings, so the others effectively ran the Laity Committee for almost three years. Wilmot's Committee, also known as the 'English Committee', handled policy, general

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<sup>1</sup>See below, p. 365

business, and all matters pertaining to the clergy. Funds when received were paid into separate clergy and laity accounts at Wright's Bank. The Bishop of St Pol de Léon supervised the distribution for both Committees, and the existing distribution networks for both laity and clergy were retained.<sup>2</sup> This meant that laity funds passed through the hands of the French Committee, which also advised on questions of identity and eligibility. Diagrammatically, the flow of funds went roughly as follows:

FIGURE 1



La Marche obviously held a key position in the system of distribution, and in the flow of information in both directions. He was also the de facto head of the clergy in Britain, and in that role he occasionally approached the government directly.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes 19 Dec. 1793, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 7-8.



The continuing increase in the number of applicants for relief, and the tardiness of the Treasury in sending the monthly grants, led Wilmot's Committee to badger the Treasury for larger grants and payment of arrears. The numbers on the relief lists to December 1796<sup>3</sup> show the scale of the problem:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Laity</u> (general list)
<u>1793</u>		
December	4012	405
<u>1794</u>		
March	4073	545
June	4295	629*
September	4658	1018*
December	4689	
<u>1795</u>		
March	4725	1851
June	4751	1998
September	4853	2123
December		2298
<u>1796</u>		
March		1941
June		2035
September		2069
December		2011

The applicants were new arrivals in the kingdom, and refugees who had spent the money they had brought, or had lost their means of support.<sup>4</sup>

In December 1793 the government set its grants at £7,830 per month for the support of 4,008 clergy, and £560 for 375 laity.<sup>5</sup> By 23 January 1794 the Laity Committee had 450 refugees on its lists, and thought that at least £800 per month was needed. After requesting a list of the laity needing relief, the Treasury increased their grant to £1,000, and re-imbursed La Marche for his extra

<sup>3</sup> For the clergy see *ibid.*, *passim*; for the laity see T.93/29 and T.93/30 *passim*; for figures marked with an asterisk see Minutes 23 July, 6 Nov. 1794, T.93/1, *unf.*

<sup>4</sup> This includes people whose patrons could no longer support them.

<sup>5</sup> Treasury Minutes, 12 Dec. 1793, T.29/66, pp. 252-3.

outlay in the preceding two months,<sup>6</sup> but warned that it considered the whole grant to clergy and laity 'as temporary, and only issued, until some arrangement can be formed for the disposal of the Persons who are at present the objects of Relief'.<sup>7</sup>

The evacuation of Holland was the main cause of the increase in numbers, and the influx continued into 1795. In July 1794 La Marche reported to the Laity Committee that the French invasion of the Lowlands, the soldiers drawn to England by talk of the formation of a new French corps and the arrival of several families from Jersey had caused increased demands on the Committee's resources, and he estimated that an additional £500 per month was needed to meet expenses.<sup>8</sup> The Committee despatched La Marche's report to the Treasury, which delayed for a month, then sent the report back to the Committee for its opinion. Exasperated, Wilmot retorted that the Committee had already endorsed the report, had asked for the increase from 1 August, and had suffered from the delay in its despatch. Moreover, he pointed out, the main Committee had not asked for a larger grant, although the number of clergy had increased since the evacuation of Brabant, and the habitual tardiness of the monthly grant had forced the Committee to operate on credit.<sup>9</sup> In a hasty postscript, Wilmot wrote that destitute families newly-arrived from Holland and Jersey made 'additional assistance' imperative.<sup>10</sup> The government then granted £1,500 a month from September, not August, but Wilmot managed to get it backdated.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Minutes 23 Jan., 13 Feb. 1794, T.93/1, unf.; Long to Clergy Committee, 25 Feb. 1794, *ibid.* The lists were drawn up by La Marche and Baron de Nantiat.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Minutes 23 July 1794, *ibid.* The military evacuees included many with unhealed wounds, broken limbs and hernias induced by the weight of military packs: *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Wilmot to Long, 31 Aug. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Postscript, 1 Sept. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Wilmot and Pepperell to Long, 16 Sept. 1794, *ibid.*; Minutes 6 Nov. 1794, *ibid.*

Wilmot's Committee's requests for larger grants continued unabated. On 6 November 1794 it compiled a statement intended for the Treasury, showing how unforeseen contingencies had enlarged the number of laity needing relief from 946 in August to 1266 in November. The invasion of 'Brabant, Gueldre, Holland and the Electorates' had sent a new wave of refugees to England. Remittances from estates in Guadeloupe and St Domingo had ceased. Sick and wounded émigré soldiers, sent by the Duke of York to Chelsea Hospital, turned to the Committee upon their discharge. Émigrés who came to England to enlist, but were not accepted, often became ill and penniless. Finally, many émigré soldiers waiting to embark for the Channel Islands were destitute and in need of temporary assistance. The Laity Committee wanted an extra £500 per month and payment of arrears.<sup>12</sup> Wilmot's Committee also requested a larger grant for the clergy. In response, the government agreed to raise the laity grant to £2,000 and the clergy grant to £9,000.<sup>13</sup> But the stream of refugees continued. On 2 March 1795 the Marchioness of Buckingham asked Pitt to answer La Marche's renewed pleas for more money to help the 499 refugees who had applied for relief in the past month. She described their plight:

most of them escaped from Holland frost-bitten, sick, wounded, and without one shilling; of this number many would have died for want of the coarsest food, but for the assistance of individuals, and of a charity which has been entrusted to me, and which, unfortunately for my peace of mind has made me acquainted with the horrors of their situation.<sup>14</sup>

Many would have died within two days, had not her husband given the Bishop enough to supply their immediate needs.<sup>15</sup> Her intercession was successful;

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Minutes 4 Dec. 1794, *ibid.*; Minutes 20 Nov. 1794, 16 April 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 81, 111-2.

<sup>14</sup> Marchioness of Buckingham to Pitt, 2 March [1795] (wrongly dated [1794]), P.R.O.30/8/117, ff. 156-7.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

Pitt granted the extra £1,000 sought by La Marche, bringing the monthly laity grant to £3,000.<sup>16</sup>

On 9 November 1795 Wilmot's Committee made its last major submission for more funds. It pointed out that since the last augmentation the clergy list had increased by 746 to 5154 and the laity list by 524 to 2295. La Marche had estimated that a further £1,500 a month for the clergy and £750 for the laity were needed to meet expenses. Moreover, the current two months' arrears in payments were causing great hardships among the refugees, while the clergy in Jersey had asked for an increase in their allowances to cover the high cost of provisions there.<sup>17</sup> Despite repeated pleas,<sup>18</sup> the Treasury made no definite reply until 22 January 1796, when it refused the increase, forbade the addition of any more refugees to the lists and recommended that the Committee should reduce the numbers already supported.<sup>19</sup> In April it did allow the Committee to admit some thirty or forty 'deserving cases' to the lists on the promise that this could be done from existing funds, but it reiterated the hope that the heavy expense could be reduced as quickly as possible.<sup>20</sup>

The Treasury's decision is not difficult to understand. A recapitulation of the successive augmentations of the monthly grants shows how quickly they had risen to an amount far in excess of the Treasury's expectations:

<sup>16</sup> Minutes 5 March 1795, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>17</sup> Wilmot, Pepperell and Metcalfe to Long, 9 Nov. 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 135-40; Minutes 5 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 132-3; Minutes 5 Nov. 1795, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>18</sup> La Marche to [Pitt?], 19 Nov., 31 Dec. 1795, P.R.O.30/8/151, ff. 202, 205; Committee at Freemasons' Tavern to Long, 26 Nov. 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 144; La Marche to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 16 Dec. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 150-4.

<sup>19</sup> Long to Wilmot, Pepperell and Metcalfe, 22 Jan. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 168-9.

<sup>20</sup> Wilmot to Long, 29 March 1796, T.93/8, f. 4; Long to Wilmot, 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 245-6.

	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Laity</u>	<u>Special</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>1793</u>				
December	£7,830	£560		£8,390
<u>1794</u>				
February	£7,830	£1,000		£8,830
September	£7,830	£1,500	£500	£9,830
December	£9,000	£2,000	£500	£11,500
<u>1795</u>				
March	£9,000	£3,000	£500	£12,500

From the time of the last rise, the government paid Wilmot's Committee an annual grant of £144,600 for the refugees in its care. Nor was this the only such grant: the government made separate grants to the laity in Jersey, the Toulonese refugees in England, the Toulonese refugees in the Mediterranean and some French refugees in the West Indies.<sup>21</sup> The French refugees were a costly and unwanted burden.

After the summer of 1795, they were also unpromising allies. Britain's hopes of using émigré troops to establish a bridgehead on the French coast were smashed by the débâcle at Quiberon, where Hoche routed the arrogant, quarrelsome émigrés. The British government lost confidence in the military efficacy of the émigrés, and henceforth offered them less military employment.<sup>22</sup> However, Quiberon finally convinced the government that its 'temporary' burden of refugees was likely to be long-lasting, for there was no longer any immediate prospect of victory over the Republicans. This probably influenced its decision to freeze the grant to Wilmot's Committee. Quiberon also marked a turning point for the refugee community and the relief committees. For the

<sup>21</sup> See vouchers for payment of relief to 'old, Infirm and distressed French Royalists' in Jamaica, from 1 Oct. 1795, in A.O.3/905. For a grant of over £2,000 for provisions 'furnished to French Emigrants in the Island of Antigua', see Treasury Minutes, 19 March 1796, T.29/69, p. 61.

<sup>22</sup> The British used some émigrés in Portugal and the West Indies: Burke, Correspondence, ix, pp. 71-2; also, see above, pp. 50-1.

former, it blighted hopes of an early return to France, while the toll of dead, maimed and sick amongst the soldiers further dispirited them and made the task of surviving in exile more difficult.

For Wilmot's Committee, the increased number of disabled men, the rise in numbers of widows and orphans and the reduction in military employment for the émigrés, meant that the calls on its funds were greater than ever. These reasons underlay its request for more funds in late 1795. The Treasury's action in refusing to raise the grant, requesting instead a curtailment of expenditure, was a serious blow to the Committee. It now found itself working within a new set of constraints. Instead of distributing ever-increasing sums, it now had to husband inadequate resources and make harsh choices between competing demands.

Expenditure came under three main heads: administrative costs, secours ordinaire and secours extraordinaire.<sup>23</sup> The wide use of voluntary labour kept administrative costs down; most of the outlay was on office expenses. The French Committee met in Nassau Street, Soho, in a room hired for six and a half guineas a month.<sup>24</sup> Wilmot's Committee and the Laity Committee met at Mrs Silburne's house from March 1794. La Marche lived there, the joint secretary had his office there, and it was the headquarters for the distribution of ecclesiastical relief. Wilmot's Committee paid the cost of lighting, heating, office expenses, and the wages of a full-time secretary and an unspecified number of clerks. Theodore John Hester was secretary until early 1796, when he was replaced by George Hughes at the lower salary of £15 per quarter.<sup>25</sup> In 1795

<sup>23</sup> These were the terms normally used by the Committee, even when writing in English.

<sup>24</sup> See Minutes 6 Nov. 1794, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>25</sup> Minutes 3, 10 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 185, 186. Hester may have been dismissed for embezzlement. In August 1796 the Committee suggested releasing Hester from prison 'on his giving the only Security in his Power for the Balance of the Debt due from him to the Crown': Hughes to J. White, 9 Aug. 1796, T.93/8, f. 17.

office expenses averaged £31.3.4½ a month.<sup>26</sup>

The secours ordinaire, the regular monthly allowances to the refugees, took the major part of both monthly grants. The clergy were paid two rates, bishops ten guineas a month and the other clergy two guineas every thirty-five days. When the government refused to increase its grants further, the clergy offered to accept lower allowances so that more laity could be retained on the lists; thus from 1 February 1796, the bishops received only eight guineas and the clergy allowances were paid every thirty-eight days.<sup>27</sup> The laity allowances were more complicated. In March 1794 the monthly rates were set as follows:<sup>28</sup>

Men 14 to 16 and over 50	£1.11.6
Women over 14	1.11.6
Children under 14	1.02.0.
Servants eligible for relief	.1.02.0
Widowers or men with sick wives, who have children	1.11.6
Men 16 to 50 who are sick or infirm	Various

In March 1796 the allowance to servants and children was lowered to £1.1.0 per month.<sup>29</sup>

In 1794 La Marche successfully petitioned Pitt for an extra monthly grant of £500 to pay special allowances to high-ranking

<sup>26</sup> See monthly accounts in B.M. Add. Ms 18592, passim.

<sup>27</sup> Minutes 11 Feb. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 177-81.

<sup>28</sup> Minutes 19 March 1794, T.93/1, unf. Rates for men aged sixteen to fifty who were sick or infirm, were set at an 'appropriate scale', on the basis of their medical certificates: *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> See 'Rules & Regulations for the Guidance of the French Committee', Minutes 24 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 209-14.

magistrates and naval officers. He proposed a sliding scale ranging from £25 for the 'premier president' of the Parlement de Bretagne and the 'Commandant de Marine' to £5 for 'conseillers' and senior Captains; the lists would comprise twenty-seven magistrates and twenty-six naval officers.<sup>30</sup> By April 1796, and probably rather earlier than that, Wilmot's Committee was paying special allowances to 'the Officers lately attached to the Army of Lord Moira'.<sup>31</sup> Early documentation is scarce, but the numbers supported (and presumably the grant) grew, particularly after the reduction of most of émigré corps in 1796-7. By December 1797, the Committee was paying 100 magistrates, 63 army officers and 37 naval officers; Charles de Barentin,<sup>32</sup> the Duc de Harcourt<sup>33</sup> and the Comte de La Grandière<sup>34</sup> administered the respective lists.<sup>35</sup>

The amount paid in secours extraordinaire varied according to the funds available after the monthly allowances had been paid, and

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<sup>30</sup>The original proposal is probably that shown in La Marche's 'Note Particulère', und., P.R.O.30/8/151, f. 212; Pitt had approved the grants by 6 October 1794: La Marche to [Pitt], 6 Oct. 1794, *ibid.*, f. 196.

<sup>31</sup>Minutes 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, f. 241. On this occasion, Long and Ramus of the Treasury had advanced the officers £600 against the forthcoming Treasury Warrant to the Committee: *ibid.* Moira (Francis Rawdon-Hastings, second Earl of Moira (1754-1826), later first Marquis of Hastings) commanded the émigré expedition to Brittany in 1793, and the reinforcements under the Duke of York in Flanders in 1794: *D.N.B.*, ix, pp. 117-22.

<sup>32</sup>Charles-Louis-François de Paule de Barentin (1738-1819), former Chancellor of France: *D.B.F.*, v, pp. 435-8.

<sup>33</sup>The French Harcourts lived at Staines in a house provided by the English Harcourts: Comte d'Haussenville, 'Souvenirs de l'Émigration et du Premier Empire', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, xxv, Jan. 1878, p. 103.

<sup>34</sup>Charles-Marie, Comte de La Grandière (1729-1812), rear-admiral, emigrated 1792, served in the Army of the Princes 1792 and with Lord Moira in 1794, returned to France in 1802: Pinasseau, *Émigration Militaire*, ii, pp. 91-2.

<sup>35</sup>Laity Accounts, December 1797, T.93/2, f. 40.



the calls on those funds. It was an umbrella for such items as clothing, medical and educational expenses, burials and payments to refugees leaving the country. It could also be used to assist temporarily people who were ineligible for normal relief, such as soldiers who were waiting to join the émigré corps.<sup>36</sup> This system of paying such expenses from the residue of funds meant that it was the first area to suffer when funds were tight. In December 1795 La Marche pointed out that the call on funds for allowances was such that

il ne reste plus rien pour fournier aux frais  
d'Hopitaux, de remedes et de maladies.

Quelle Cruelle alternative! ou oter le pain aux  
personnes en sante ou laisser les malades sans  
secours! on n'y pense pas sans premier.<sup>37</sup>

The Committee did try to preserve its medical benefits when it pruned expenditure in 1796.

Clothing and medical care were the two most expensive items of secours extraordinaire during 1794. The Committee preferred to provide the articles of clothing, or the materials with which to make them, than give cash allowances.<sup>38</sup> This cut costs, and prevented the money from being used for other purposes by the refugees. At first, the monthly allocation to the clergy was usually under £100, but at a meeting on 4 June 1794, the Committee decided to expend some of its reserves on clothing, to meet a desperate need among many clergy.<sup>39</sup> In that month, the Committee paid over £1,000 to clothe 1641 clergy and spent a further £200 to £400 a month, until it called a six month moratorium

<sup>36</sup> Minutes 19 March 1794, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>37</sup> La Marche to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 16 Dec. 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 151.

<sup>38</sup> Committee at Freemasons' Tavern to Bishops of Tréguier and Bayeux, 6 Feb. 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 26-7.

<sup>39</sup> Wilnot to Chairman of Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 2 June 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 50-3; Minutes 4 June 1794, *ibid.*, p. 53.

on such expenditure from 1 April 1795.<sup>40</sup> Grants for clothing remained small thereafter, because of the critical shortage of funds.

Medical care was a continuing and growing drain on funds. It was proffered in several ways. Most refugees needing treatment were tended by doctors outside the hospitals. Some English doctors treated them, and received a monthly allowance from the Committee if the volume of patients warranted it.<sup>41</sup> Several French doctors tended the refugees for an extra guinea a month over their relief allowances.<sup>42</sup> Lubersac lists four English doctors, thirteen French doctors and one French dentist who tended refugees in London, and I can add at least one name to each group, without counting the apothecaries who dispensed advice with their medicines, so that the medical services were quite extensive.<sup>43</sup>

Middlesex Hospital continued to take the majority of hospital cases amongst the refugees; in 1794 it increased its charges to ten shillings a week.<sup>44</sup> Special cases were dealt with separately. In 1796 the governors of the British Lying-in Hospital in Brownlow Street offered 'to receive a number of Lying-in-Women, Refugees'.<sup>45</sup> Later, a 'Ladies Committee' founded a small maternity clinic for the émigrées.<sup>46</sup> Deranged refugees who could not be

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<sup>40</sup>Accounts for June in Minutes 9 July 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 57-8; Minutes 12 Feb. 1795, *ibid.*, p. 98. Many clergy had been forced to emigrate in non-clerical garb, so their clothes were a motley collection, often of poor quality: *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>For example, Mr O. Ryan was granted two guineas a month for his services: Minutes 23 July 1794, T.93/1, *unf.*

<sup>42</sup>Minutes 21 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 239.

<sup>43</sup>Lubersac lists as English doctors: Reynolds, Nihell [Neill?], Bishop and Poignan (accoucheur); and as French doctors: Forestier, Gilly, Lejay, Loizel, Toutain, le Père Elisée, Lomenie, Chavernac, Philibert, Bomblé (accoucheur), Macartan, Joly, Cugnonny and de Chémant (dentist): Lubersac, *Journal*, pp. 24-5. Ryan can be added to the first list and Adam to the second.

<sup>44</sup>H. Vaughan to La Marche, 25 March 1794, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 41; Minutes 2 April 1794, *ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>45</sup>Minutes 24 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>46</sup>See below, p. 269.

cared for at home were sent to asylums such as Bethlehem, Hoxton or St Luke's, although the need for an English guarantor for entry to the first, and the cost of the second, restricted the number sent.<sup>47</sup> The placement of some at St Luke's in Old Street was at the suggestion of the Bishop of Ely,<sup>48</sup> who was one of its governors.<sup>49</sup> Elderly refugees who could neither look after themselves nor be cared for by relatives or friends were farmed out to volunteer families for fifteen shillings a week, or to priests for 'a moderate stipend', while their allowances would be used partially to defray costs.<sup>50</sup>

These measures were supplemented from 1795 by the efforts of another 'Ladies' Committee' of Englishwomen, under the patronage of the Duchess of York, set up 'pour secourir les dames Françaises émigrées malades, ou en couche, et qui se trouvoit hors d'état de pourvoir, elles-mêmes, à leurs pressans besoins'.<sup>51</sup> Their efforts to raise money were moderately successful, and the funds were used to provide clothing, food, medicines and dressings for both sexes. However, the call on their resources in the winter of 1795-6 was so great that at a meeting in March 1796, held at the home of La Marche, they decided to limit their activities to refugee women alone.<sup>52</sup>

Lady Buckingham, Mrs Crewe and the Countess of Mount-Edgewood had taken the lead when the Committee was set up in 1795, but in 1796 a new executive committee was formed, composed of the Hon. Ariana Egerton (President), Lady Marie Churchill, Miss Francis and Juliana Angerstein.<sup>53</sup> La Marche and Walker

<sup>47</sup> Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', p. 266.

<sup>48</sup> James Yorke, fifth son of the first Earl of Hardwicke: D.N.B., xxi, p. 1265.

<sup>49</sup> Minutes 24 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 207.

<sup>50</sup> Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 264-5. She does not specify whether the families were French or English, but probably they were the former.

<sup>51</sup> Lubersac, Journal, pp. 79-80.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-4.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 80, 86.

King provided the links with Wilmot's Committee. The Ladies' Committee had three areas of operation: raising funds, ascertaining particular needs through investigation and aiding the women by furnishing 'des lits, les frais de couches, des vêtements et de l'argent'.<sup>54</sup> The active involvement of the ladies in visiting the Frenchwomen, their investigation of cases and their formulation of policy put them to the forefront of the movement towards more active and independent involvement of women in charity work. Frank Prochaska describes them as the first policy-making ladies' committee in England since 1702.<sup>55</sup>

The education of refugee children did not fit neatly into the pattern of Wilmot's Committee's administration, as the first moves came from outside the Committee, and it had no direct control over policy or expenditure. The first effective moves to establish schools, early in 1796, were sparked off by a desire to assist the orphans left by émigré soldiers, particularly those killed at Quiberon. In March, on a visit to La Marche, the Bishop of Ely suggested setting up schools in the areas where refugees congregated, where French children could be fed, clothed, and taught by unpaid priests, who would receive food and heating.<sup>56</sup> The same month, the Ladies' Committee proposed a plan for a school for French girls; this was the one that Wilmot mentioned to the Bishop of Ely in April.<sup>57</sup> The school was run by Maria Macnamara, a member of the Ladies' Committee and a friend of Lady Buckingham.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 84. See also Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 553-5.

<sup>55</sup> F.K. Prochaska, 'Women in English philanthropy 1790-1830', International Review of Social History, xix, no. 3, 1974, p. 430. He notes that seventeen ladies' committees were established between 1795 and 1830, so it was in the vanguard of a new trend.

<sup>56</sup> Minutes 24 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 206-7.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes 17 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 193; Wilmot to the Bishop of Ely, 28 April 1796, T.93/8, f. 9.

<sup>58</sup> See below, pp. 361, 364.

The most important and lasting venture, however, was the boys' school at Penn, in Buckinghamshire, proposed by Burke in February 1796. He deplored the situation of the children of French gentlemen:

They are growing up in poverty and wretchedness; inevitably mixed with children of the lowest of the people, in the miserable lanes and alleys of London, in which the poverty of their parents obliges them to reside. From 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>59</sup>

If they ever returned to France they would be 'utterly incapable of filling up their place in society', and if they stayed in exile, they would be 'nothing less than trained to Botany Bay or the Gallows'.<sup>60</sup>

Burke proposed that sixty boys, preferably officers' sons, should be housed and taught in a house at Penn, which was then leased by the Barrack Master General. The school would be financed by a government grant of £1,000 to furnish it, a monthly grant of £50 thereafter from war extraordinaries<sup>61</sup> and the receipt from Wilmot's Committee of the boys' normal monthly allowances. Buckingham, Grenville, Portland and he would act as trustees.<sup>62</sup>

Buckingham passed Burke's proposals on to Pitt, who agreed to them in substance, and the first pupils arrived in April.<sup>63</sup> Burke thought that the selection of courses, pupils and teachers should be left to the French, and consulted La Marche accordingly. Unfortunately, he did not agree with La Marche's ideas on any of these matters, and disliked Abbé Jean-Marin Maraine, who assumed

<sup>59</sup> 'Burke's Proposal for a School at Penn', 26 Feb. 1796, Edmund Burke, The Correspondence of Edmund Burke ed. R.B. McDowell, vol. viii (Cambridge, 1969), p. 396.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Because the boys' fathers had served in the émigré regiments.

<sup>62</sup> 'Burke's Proposal for a School at Penn', 26 Feb. 1796, Burke, Correspondence, viii, p. 397.

<sup>63</sup> Buckingham to Pitt, 11 March 1796, P.R.O.30/8/117, ff. 80-1; Buckingham to Burke, 24 March 1796, Burke, Correspondence, viii, p. 444.

charge of the school, so he did interfere, despite his intentions to the contrary.<sup>64</sup> The school lasted until 1820, when Abbé Maraine and his remaining pupils returned to France.<sup>65</sup> Wilmot's Committee had little to do with Penn, except to forward the monthly allowances of the pupils, but the fact that several of its members were trustees kept it in touch with affairs there.

In 1796, when Wilmot's Committee considered ways and means of reducing expenditure, one obvious method was to prune the relief lists. Thus conditions of eligibility, always important, became crucial. Before this time, regulations drawn up by the Committee emphasised that applicants must be French, have emigrated 'pour la Cause de leur Religion et de leur Roi', have shown themselves to be loyal and of good conduct, and to be in genuine need of assistance.<sup>66</sup> When priests from the Low Countries arrived in 1794, they were not admitted initially to the relief lists, as the Committee considered that its brief extended only to those forced to seek refuge in 1792-3.<sup>67</sup> Even when they were admitted, it was contingent 'upon their finding proper Certificates of their being obliged to Emigrate to this Country in consequence of the Rebellion in France', and a similar condition was applied to the laity from Liège.<sup>68</sup> At the request of Bishop Douglass, the rule on nationality was relaxed in 1795 to allow fifty-three English nuns who had fled from Dunkirk and Gravelines to receive relief.<sup>69</sup> Clergy relief went only to clergy in orders; two priests

<sup>64</sup> Burke to Mrs Crewe, 26 Feb. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 394-5; Burke to La Marche, [28 March 1796], *ibid.*, pp. 448-50; Burke to W. King, [April 1796], *ibid.*, pp. 460-1. For further discussion of these disputes, see below, p. 363.

<sup>65</sup> Plasse, *Clergé Français*, ii, p. 60.

<sup>66</sup> Minutes 9 July 1794, 26 Feb. 1795, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>67</sup> Minutes 9 July 1794, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 59. They were offered temporary relief from the private fund, however: *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Minutes 9 April 1795, *ibid.*, p. 109; Minutes 9 April 1795, T.93/1, unf.

<sup>69</sup> Minutes 14 May 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 115.

who abjured the Catholic faith were struck off the clergy lists at La Marche's request.<sup>70</sup>

Wilmot's Committee's first act in trimming the lists was to take off those clergy, including the nuns, who had arrived after 1 November 1794.<sup>71</sup> Reducing the numbers on the laity list was more difficult, both because the rules governing their eligibility were more complicated, and because their numbers were less stable than those of the clergy. But at a meeting on 24 March 1796 the Committee adopted a new set of 'Rules & Regulations for the Guidance of the French Committee' in deciding on eligibility.<sup>72</sup> With modifications and additions, these remained the basis for decisions until at least 1803. The new regulations excluded people who had emigrated before 1791, those who were not in absolute want and all healthy men aged between sixteen and fifty.<sup>73</sup> 'Absolute want' was defined as being without money or means of support to the amount of two guineas a month; those earning less than this could have the amount supplemented up to two guineas a month. Cases of sickness were to be investigated carefully, and applicants under forty whose infirmity did not require 'constant or immediate assistance' were to take last precedence on the lists.<sup>74</sup>

Some of the most interesting clauses and practices related to servants. They qualified for relief in their own right only when old or sick; otherwise, they were considered as part of a household rather than as individuals.

<sup>70</sup> Minutes 26 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*, p. 145. However, one was readmitted on the grounds that he was now a Protestant clergyman: Minutes 11 Feb., 24 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 181-2, 195.

<sup>71</sup> Minutes 28 Jan. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 169. Douglass requested and was granted government aid for the nuns: Entry January 1796, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. 26-7.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes 24 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 209-14. The rules were drawn up by Wilmot, with assistance from Buckingham and Rev. Dr Gregory: Minutes 10 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>73</sup> These rules merely codified existing practice.

<sup>74</sup> 'Rules & Regulations...', B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 209-14, rules 1-5, 8.

Consequently, most rules applied to the employers: single people were given no allowance for a servant, and families allowed only for one; French male servants were excluded, and French female servants must be employed ahead of English ones. The Committee could make exceptions in all these cases, but no English menservants were allowed at all. An employer whose means amounted to £3.3.0 a month had to pay for one of his servants, and two when he had £5.0.0 a month or more. This rule was amended soon after, so that a master had to support one of his servants for every £4.0.0 of income.<sup>75</sup> The clergy were subject to the same rules.<sup>76</sup>

The rules on servants sound rather confusing, but are less so when related to actual practice. Female servants who had emigrated with a particular master or family and had remained with them since might continue to do so. A French servant without a patron might be allocated to a family or person who needed domestic help, usually large households, those with aged or sick members or those with several small children. In a sense, servants were a benefit conferred on those in need, thereby supplementing the welfare care available. People on the lists received their money by household, rather than individually. The head of the household would report to the Committee, and receive a sum calculated according to the number of people in his household who were on the lists. A servant, unless old or sick, did not directly receive his allowance; the head received it, and was expected then to maintain the servant. Thus there was the unusual situation whereby a servant worked for a payment which he did not get, while his master received both the servant's labour and allowance. On the other hand, servants and artisans could find employment and

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., rules 10-14; Minutes 7 April 1796, *ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 226.



survive on a low income more easily than the aristocrats, and servants often remained in households even when age or illness made them more a burden than a benefit.

Early in 1796 Wilmot's Committee appointed Rev. John Lettice to review the laity list and implement the new rules.<sup>77</sup> Most of the 252 men aged sixteen to forty were sent to be medically examined;<sup>78</sup> of the first 124 examined, 73 were declared fit for service, 29 temporarily unfit and 22 incapable of future service. Out of 461 servants then on the list, Lettice rejected 215: 102 Frenchmen, 49 Frenchwomen and 64 Englishwomen. A further 22 people were dead or now able to support themselves, so that Lettice was able to cull 310 people from the lists.<sup>79</sup> Sixty-four appealed against Lettice's decisions, and he tendered abstracts of their memorials, together with his opinions on the cases, to the English Committee for final arbitration.<sup>80</sup> Thereafter the procedure for applications required that petitions went first to the French Committee, which prepared abstracts of the cases on the basis of the petitions, enquiries and interviews. Lettice reviewed the cases and made provisional rulings, before referring the cases to the English Committee for decisions. It in turn referred difficult cases to the Treasury. The French Committee deputised one of its members to attend the weekly meetings of the English Committee, to present 'such special cases as they may wish to lay before the Committee and to give necessary explanations on the Memorials &c.'. <sup>81</sup> The English Committee sometimes asked applicants to appear before it in person.

<sup>77</sup> Minutes 18 Feb., 17 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 183, 192.

<sup>78</sup> Usually by a doctor appointed by the Committee. See below, pp. 277, 283.

<sup>79</sup> Minutes 14 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 230-1.

<sup>80</sup> Minutes 21 April 1796, *ibid.*, p. 238. For the cases, see Minutes of memorials, March and April 1796, in T.93/54, ff. 1-16.

<sup>81</sup> Minutes 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 244-5.

This machinery was the administrative area which most clearly reflected Wilmot's experience as a commissioner adjudicating American Loyalist claims. He and his fellow-commissioner, Daniel Parker Coke, had based their judgements on information gained through personal interviews with the applicants, and that supplied by the Board of Loyalist Agents, of which Pepperell was Chairman for a time.<sup>82</sup> Wilmot's Committee used the French in much the same way. Wilmot and Coke had had three main considerations when making judgements on the Loyalists: loyalty and service to the crown, loss of property or income and present needs and circumstances.<sup>83</sup> Wilmot wanted 'to make Loyalty the cornerstone - the groundwork of the whole'<sup>84</sup> and he later wrote that 'the first object of the Enquiry was the Loyalty and conduct of the Claimant, which was justly considered as the most essential of all'.<sup>85</sup> Obviously, the criterion of loss of property or income did not apply in the case of the French, but Wilmot's Committee judged applicants on their loyalty to the deposed French monarchy, their conduct in exile and their present material circumstances.

The French Committee disliked the new regulations. It asked the English Committee to relax those on masters and servants, but was unsuccessful.<sup>86</sup> In April 1796 its president, Général de Martagne, objected that the exclusion of able-bodied men under fifty without dependents meant that many former officers 'etre obligés d'aller se ranger comme simples volontaires sous des ordres de ceux de leur compatriotes qui peut etre servoient auparavant sous leur: ordres'.<sup>87</sup> The English Committee advised him to take up the matter with the

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<sup>82</sup> Norton, British-Americans, pp. 114, 192-3.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>84</sup> John Eardley-Wilmot, Historical View of the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims, of the American Loyalists (London, 1815), p. 43.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>86</sup> Général de Martagne to English Committee, 22 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 220.

<sup>87</sup> Martagne to English Committee, 11 April 1796, ibid., pp. 232-3.

government. The French Committee's treasurer, the Comte de Novion, suggested that the grant to artisans and servants be limited to £200 and the surplus then 'be divided among Superior Officers, Old persons above 70 Years of Age, or [those] who are afflicted with Illness'.<sup>88</sup> To its credit, the English Committee refused to entertain the notion, pointing out that the allowances were based on a bare subsistence level for each person, so it was not 'dans l'état de pouvoir proportioner les Secours selon des differents Rangs'. Besides, any savings accruing from the revision of the lists would be used to help new arrivals from abroad and the increasing number of children.<sup>89</sup> Charles de Barentin, the premier French magistrate among the exiles in Britain, seems to have been no more successful in his bid to have high-ranking magistrates excused from service.<sup>90</sup>

In May 1796 the French Committee asked for a precise ruling on the admission of refugees from Brabant and Holland and asked that two French doctors be appointed to conduct the required medical examinations, at a fee of two guineas over and above their monthly allowances. The English Committee ruled that non-French refugees already on the lists could stay, but that no new ones would be admitted; it left the appointment of the doctors, at the suggested fee, to the discretion of the French Committee.<sup>91</sup> The English Committee was prepared to accept any reasonable suggestion from the French, but consistently

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<sup>88</sup>Minutes 14 April 1796, *ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>89</sup>English Committee to Comte de Novion, 15 April 1796, T.93/8, ff. 7-8.

<sup>90</sup>Minutes 21 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 238.

<sup>91</sup>Minutes 12, 26 May 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 254, 256-7.

showed itself unwilling to confer any further privileges on the higher-ranking refugees.

Not only did Wilmot's Committee trim the existing lists, but in July 1796 it refused to entertain any further applications for relief, although it did tell the French Committee to keep a list of people whom it judged eligible for relief, to be admitted in order when future vacancies arose.<sup>92</sup> In effect, this froze the number of places on the lists, and created a waiting list of approved applicants; this in turn stabilised expenditure and made budgeting easier.

We can glimpse the working of the rules in the scrappy reports on particular cases in the Committee's records.<sup>93</sup> Applicants had first to prove their identity through referees. This requirement produced some problems. Madame Le Maistre, a tailor's wife, could not find two people who had known her in Paris, and so was refused admission to the lists.<sup>94</sup> One referee and his family were suspended because he had 'fait admettre une Personne, aux Secours, dont les principes ne luy donnoient pas droit'. When his dependents asked to be reinstated, the Committee decided that they should not be penalised for the man's 'imprudence', and readmitted them.<sup>95</sup>

The rule on nationality was complicated by French refugees who married British subjects. On Lettice's request, Wilmot made a ruling to the effect that they would not be excluded, unless they thereby gained means of support, but

<sup>92</sup> Ruling 21 July 1796, T.93/54, f. 54/93.

<sup>93</sup> Although there is a substantial collection of relief memorials both for England and Jersey, there is little record of the decisions made, or the reasons for those decisions. The booklets in T.93/54 record the abstracts of petitions, the decisions, and often their basis, so they are particularly useful.

<sup>94</sup> Minutes of memorials, March 1796, T.93/54, f. 58/2. See also W. Strickland to Freeman, 16 June 1796, T.93/52, f. 254.

<sup>95</sup> Memorial abstract, 2 Dec. 1796, T.93/54, f. 54/9.

that the spouses and children would not be eligible for relief. Wilmot thought that the children of an Englishman and a Frenchwoman could have no claim, and that those of Frenchmen and Englishwomen should be excluded on 'the Strong presumption, of the connexion formed in this country producing the means of their Subsistence'.<sup>96</sup> There were no apparent grounds for the 'presumption' of means of support, and the rule was particularly hard on the women of the Channel Islands who married Frenchmen. The English Committee rejected the application of Martha Gifford of Guernsey who had married the Chevalier St Colombe, used all her resources to enable him to cross to Brittany to join the Royalists, and had been left destitute with a young baby to support.<sup>97</sup> A French émigré was a poor matrimonial bargain for an Englishwoman, unless she could afford to support them both. The rule might also apply to other non-French spouses.<sup>98</sup>

Illegitimate children of émigrées were deemed ineligible for relief, as they could be charged to the parish, which would 'provide for the Child, and prosecute the Father; making him pay, if he is able, the Fine due for his incontinence'.<sup>99</sup> The mothers themselves were likely to be excluded as failing the requirement for 'good conduct'. Amélie Le Gros came to England with the Comtesse de La Tour, left her for health reasons, then 'Elle s'est laissé debauché ou a eu le Malheur de Succomber - a eu un Enfant', was now incapable of heavy work and had been struck off the lists. A similar case was

<sup>96</sup>Minutes 21, 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 238, 242-3.

<sup>97</sup>Memorial abstract, [ca June 1796], T.93/54, f. 54/69.

<sup>98</sup>See, for example, the case of Madame de Fray, a Dutchwoman: Memorial abstract, 5 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 54/31.

<sup>99</sup>Minutes 26 May 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 258.

Rose Perault, who had been 'morally sinful', but was now repentent. The English Committee decided to be lenient in these two cases, and assigned them to Madame de Mancini, who would be paid for them.<sup>100</sup> Good conduct was judged in other ways. Phillippine de Marais, a servant, was denied relief despite ill-health because her employers 'ne veuler pas certifier sa conduite'.<sup>101</sup> The Committee refused to reinstate a woman who was struck off 'comme tenant une Maison de Jeu'.<sup>102</sup>

The Committee's judgements reflected its disapproval of applicants who behaved badly or seemed disinclined to work. A valet's young wife who claimed relief on the grounds of ill-health was noted as 'ayant l'air d'une meilleur Santé qu'elle n'avoue & on croit qu'elle a des liaisons qui contribuent à sa subsistance', and rejected as being young and capable of finding work.<sup>103</sup> The Committee refused the request of a watchmaker's wife to be paid at a higher rate and it 'recommande a Mr D'Artenat de faire mieux de son Metier pour lui même et son [ép]ouse'.<sup>104</sup> A French physician's wife was struck from the list because she was Dutch, and Lettice noted that 'She refused to do anything for her Self'. She applied to be re-admitted because of ill-health and submitted a certificate of good conduct from her former employers. A note on the petition observed that 'I understand She behaved very improperly at the Office, refusing to work - & I am privately informed she is only a Dutch Jewess'.

<sup>100</sup> Memorial abstracts [ca Dec. 1796], T.93/54, f. 54/13. La Marche had earlier described Madame de Mancini as 'an Active Agent in dispensing the Bounty & Charity of this Country to the Emigrant Females & Children': Minutes 21 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 239-40.

<sup>101</sup> Memorial abstract [ca Dec. 1796], T.93/54, f. 54/11.

<sup>102</sup> Memorial abstract, 21 July 1796, *ibid.*, f. 54/91-2.

<sup>103</sup> Minutes of memorials, March and April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 58/12.

<sup>104</sup> Memorial abstract, [21 July 1796?], *ibid.*, f. 54/92-3.

The English Committee rejected the petition after ordering further enquiries into her health and ability to work.<sup>105</sup> Elizabeth Gilbert, an English schoolteacher who had fled Calais, protested at being classed as a domestic and asked for a higher rate; this was refused, as 'Being an Englishwoman & having been a School Mistress She might and Should get into Employ'.<sup>106</sup>

Some applicants aspired to higher status on the lists. A letter on behalf of a woman who had been reclassified as bourgeoisie pointed out that as she was 'the grand Daughter of the celebrated Lawyer Philippeaux and the wife of a Chevalier de St. Louis, therefore she is not a Bourgeoisie'.<sup>107</sup> She was reinstated, as was the émigré from 'une famille Distinguée, qui depuis un tems immemorial n'a fait aucun Espece de Commerce', who now found himself 'Separé et Confondu Dans La Classe des Domestiques', at an allowance too low to live on. Baron de Nantiat supported his case, which probably helped.<sup>108</sup>

Petitioners frequently asked to be allocated a servant, but were rarely successful. Single people stood little chance; when the Comtesse de Boucey de Gasté asked to be readmitted and granted a servant on account of her delicate health, she was readmitted, but the petition was marked: 'Le Comité est fâché de ne pouvoir accorder de Domestique ou Servante a des personnes Seules que dans les Cas de Maladies Graves'. Applicants needed good cases: the Marquis de Monbrun was granted a servant to tend his sick mother-in-law, because his wife had four children to manage, the family slept on the floor and he was unable to clothe the children, such was his poverty.<sup>109</sup> Baron de

<sup>105</sup> Memorial abstract, und., *ibid.*, f. 54/39-40.

<sup>106</sup> Memorial of Elizabeth Gilbert, 23 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 48/39.

<sup>107</sup> M. Ryan to C. Butler, 9 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 48/11.

<sup>108</sup> Memorial of Jayac de Lagarde, 6 June 1796, *ibid.*, f. 48/61.

<sup>109</sup> Memorial of Comtesse de Boucey de Gasté, 8 June 1796, *ibid.*, f. 48/143;  
Memorial of Marquis de Monbrun, 15 June 1796, *ibid.*, f. 48/162.

Feuchin had had one of his servants struck off. He had five children aged three to eight, and his wife lived away from home, being in 'l'etat malheureuse de Folie'. Lettice rejected his appeal to have the servant reinstated, because his wife did not live with him. However, the English Committee reversed this decision on the grounds

que si Madame etoit au Sein de sa famille une Servante ou Domestique seroit accordé - & vû que Madame n'y est pas pour veiller aux petits soins des Enfants - la Servante dans ces egards pourroit bien etre censée remplacer Madame et il s'en suit de consequence qu'un Domestique quelconque soit accordé.<sup>110</sup>

The rules and regulations set up by the English Committee performed the important functions of giving consistency to its decisions on applications, and forming a buffer between the Committee members and the human misery with which they constantly dealt. They had limited funds to disburse, and every case was a record of the applicant's unhappy circumstances. In examining cases, they were constant in their view of the main principles of their brief: to aid victims of the Revolution who were in genuine want and worthy of assistance. Inevitably, individuals suffered from being excluded, but to be fair to the Committee, it did not create hardships, it merely failed to relieve them. The differential rates of allowances did penalise the lower orders, partly for pragmatic reasons, but on the other hand, the largest group to be excluded from relief were men fit for military service, most of them gentlemen.

This group posed several problems for the Laity Committee. Able-bodied men were excluded on the grounds that they could enlist, but not all were accepted into the army, and the number in service fluctuated according to the army's needs. The division of responsibility between the Laity Committee and the War Office for men who were wounded or discharged was ill-defined and

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Petition abstract, und., *ibid.*, f. 54/40-1.



confusing. The War Office provided little for the wounded beyond temporary care at Chelsea Hospital. In 1794 Windham, the newly-appointed Secretary at War, thought that nothing more could be done 'but to supply them for the time from the General Emigrant fund'.<sup>111</sup> The Committee did receive them until its financial crisis in 1795; thereafter it kept a closer check on the fitness of men aged sixteen to fifty, and struck off its lists those whom it found fit to serve.<sup>112</sup> Its review of the lists gave rise to a more formal system of medical examinations. The Committee appointed William Hollings, a physician, to examine male patients in London, and it asked chief magistrates in towns where refugees resided to find a local doctor willing to conduct examinations.<sup>113</sup> The procedure followed was that a French doctor would send a patient and his opinion on the case to Hollings, who would examine him, add his own opinion and send the report showing both opinions to the Committee for its decision.<sup>114</sup> There was no right of appeal, but if a person declared fit by Hollings were rejected by military doctors on seeking to enlist, he could be re-admitted to relief.<sup>115</sup> Men wounded on active service could 'be received among the Invalids of La Chatre'.<sup>116</sup> After the Committee closed its lists to new applicants, it seems to have come to an arrangement with the War Office whereby it administered relief to wounded émigré soldiers, using funds supplied by the War Office on a per capita basis.<sup>117</sup> The War Office gave soldiers from disbanded regiments six to eight months severance pay, and some were entitled to a free passage to the

<sup>111</sup> [Windham] to Portland, und. [received 3 Aug. 1794], H.O.98/5, unf.

<sup>112</sup> La Marche to [Windham], und. [received 14 April 1795], B.M. Add. Ms 37858, f. 302; Metcalfe and Pepperell to French Committee, 16 April 1795, T.93/1, unf.; Hughes to French Committee, 8 Dec. 1796, T.93/8, f. 25.

<sup>113</sup> Hughes to Chief Magistrates in sundry places, 30 March 1796, T.93/8, f. 15; Minutes 7, 21 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 225-6, 239.

<sup>114</sup> See medical reports, T.93/54, f. 54/156-80.

<sup>115</sup> Minutes 28 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 243-4.

<sup>116</sup> Hughes to Woodford, 29 June 1796, T.93/8, pp. 13-14.

<sup>117</sup> See below, p. 353.

Continent. Men who had not served, but who wished to go to the Continent to join the Prince de Condé, might also receive a free passage from the War Office. The Committee agreed to grant a small sum to assist such men.<sup>118</sup>

One special group under the care of Wilmot's Committee remains to be mentioned: the seven hundred French priests in the King's House at Winchester. Numbers remained stable, but the cost of supporting the inmates rose sharply from early in 1795, as England's grain shortage forced up the price of bread, and prices generally rose in turn. In May 1796 Wilmot complained that the per capital expense at Winchester exceeded the allowance given to a refugee living in London.<sup>119</sup> As might be expected, the Committee tried to prune expenditure at Winchester by reviewing costs: Wilmot visited Winchester in May to re-negotiate agreements with local tradesmen, but continuing rises soon eroded the gains.<sup>120</sup>

One particular account had aroused Wilmot's wrath early in 1796, and provides a possible explanation for the the dismissal of the secretary, Theodore Hester, at about that time.<sup>121</sup> Thomas Dean, a Winchester brewer, complained that he could no longer afford to carry the Committee's accumulated debt of £2,400 and asked for more regular remittances. Hester had

always informed him that 'the Arrears complained of were owing to the Monthly Allowance granted by Government not being regularly receiv'd, but that he hoped shortly to have it in his Power to send sufficient to discharge the whole'.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Woodford to Committee at Freemasons' Tavern, 22 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 196; Hughes to Woodford, 29 June 1796, T.93/8, pp. 13-14.

<sup>119</sup> Wilmot to Corbin, 14 May 1796, T.93/8, f. 10.

<sup>120</sup> Wilmot to Martin, 11 Feb. 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 175-6; Minutes 31 May 1796, *ibid.*, p. 259; Corbin to [Wilmot?], 10 June 1796, T.93/53, f. 226.

<sup>121</sup> Hester went to prison for a debt to the government, which suggests that he may have embezzled funds from the Committee. If so, the size of the Winchester debt and the length of the arrears suggest that Winchester funds may have been involved. See above, p. 264.

<sup>122</sup> T. Dean to [Wilmot?], 30 Jan. 1796, T.93/47b, f. 1410.

Beer was obviously a large item of expenditure: February's bill was £276.6.0 for 11,052 gallons,<sup>123</sup> representing a daily consumption of four pints a head for the Winchester colony. Little wonder that Wilmot had suggested a reduction in the allowance of beer to the priests.<sup>124</sup>

Including the deficiency in beer payments, there was a shortfall of over £5,000 in the Winchester accounts early in 1796. Corbin explained that debts to this amount had accrued over the past two years, 'for want of a Sufficient Sum from the Committee, to discharge the Monthly accounts';<sup>125</sup> he had obtained credit from those best able to afford it, one of whom was the brewer, presumably. Wilmot ordered Corbin to send all monthly accounts and letters to him in future, and made arrangements to reduce the debts progressively.<sup>126</sup> The total monthly grant to the clergy was only £9,000, so a debt of £5,000 was a disaster, particularly as it came hard on the heels of the government's firm stand against further increases in the grants.

Money was not the only problem. Between January and April 1796 the relief committee received several complaints about the conduct of the priests in Winchester. Jacques Couvet was accused of trying to convert Protestants to the Roman Catholic faith, and some local citizens objected to ordinations at the King's House and the printing and distribution of religious tracts by the clergy. Two Anglican ministers, Dr Sturges and Dr Brownlow North, the Bishop of Winchester, investigated the complaints. Sturges reported that the ordinations had been of French novices, not new recruits, as had been feared.

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., f. 1582.

<sup>124</sup> Wilmot to Martin, 11 Feb. 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 175-6.

<sup>125</sup> Corbin to [Wilmot?], 2 Feb. 1796, T.93/53, f. 204.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.; Corbin to [Wilmot?], 27 Jan. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 203; Corbin to [Wilmot?], 27 Feb. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 208.

The Bishop urged caution in the use of the press, as offence might be given by future tracts.<sup>127</sup> The trouble subsided, but all in all, Winchester was an unwanted burden on the Committee in the first half of 1796, when it was preoccupied with managing rising costs on a fixed income.

## II

In Jersey, the Earl of Balcarres retained charge of the distribution of relief to the laity until his departure late in 1794, while the French Committee there continued to examine applicants, to maintain the relief lists and to distribute the funds. On 2 June 1794 Balcarres issued orders governing admittance to the relief lists:<sup>128</sup> applicants must present to the French Committee, in person, the card which they had obtained from the Comité des Anciens;<sup>129</sup> recipients must collect in person; everyone must make a new declaration of the children and servants in the household; and anyone with a post or craft was barred from the lists.<sup>130</sup> These measures were designed to update the information on applicants and to enable the French Committee (which I shall call the Jersey Committee to distinguish it from its counterpart in England) to keep a closer check on the identity and eligibility of the recipients.

<sup>127</sup>Minutes 14 Jan. 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, pp. 158-84; Rev. Dr Sturges to Wilmot, 23 March 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 198-203; Bishop of Winchester to Wilmot, 26 March 1796, *ibid.*, p. 222; Wilmot to Winchester, 26 March 1796, T.93/8, f. 1; Sturges to Wilmot, 8 April 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, p. 235.

<sup>128</sup>de Monti's 'Copie des ordres relatifs a la maniere de distribuer les secours...', 6 Dec. 1794, H.O.69/34, f. 93b.

<sup>129</sup>This was probably the card certifying their identity, as required under the Alien Act.

<sup>130</sup>But if such people had children, and earned less than a living wage (undefined), one person from the family might be admitted to the lists: de Monti's 'Copie des ordres relatifs a la maniere de distribuer les secours...', 6 Dec. 1794, H.O.69/34, f. 93b.

Several orders related to servants: English servants or those who refused to work were banned from the lists while the remainder were allocated only to the old, sick or infirm or to those with families, although servants who had come from France with their masters might remain with them.<sup>131</sup> Rules and decisions on servants formed one of the most contentious areas of administration, as the Committee responded favourably to but few of the many requests for a servant to be allocated.<sup>132</sup>

Balcarres added two subsequent rules: he raised the allowance to women and to girls over twelve to a shilling a day from 1 July 1794, and on 3 August he ruled that Englishwomen married to Frenchmen, and their children, were ineligible.<sup>133</sup> He explained to Portland that 'As such intermarriages are extremely against the general Policy & Regulations of these Islands I thought it my duty to discourage them as much as possible'.<sup>134</sup>

The increase in the allowance to women furnishes another example of how the government responded to particular pressures, rather than formulating policy in advance. In April 1794 Balcarres received a memorial from 'les dames françoises émigrées à jersey',<sup>135</sup> depicting their poverty and asking him to take up with the King their case for receiving a shilling a day. They wanted it made retrospective to November, when the general arrangements had been made.<sup>136</sup> Balcarres sent the petition to Dundas, suggesting that they be

<sup>131</sup> de Monti's 'Copie des ordres relatifs a la maniere de distribuer les secours...', 6 Dec. 1794, H.O.69/34, f. 93b. Servants would be admitted to the lists only if they were lodged and fed at their masters' house, and served no other person: *ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> See below, pp. 294-5.

<sup>133</sup> de Monti's 'Copie des ordres relatifs a la maniere de distribuer les secours...', 6 Dec. 1794, H.O.69/34, f. 93b.

<sup>134</sup> Balcarres to Portland, 17 Aug. 1794, H.O.95/5, unf. Portland approved his decision: Portland to Balcarres, 8 Sept. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Memorial of 'les dames françoises émigrées à jersey' to Balcarres, 19 April 1794, *ibid.* The signatories were all men.

<sup>136</sup> See above, pp. 245-6.

granted the same amount as women in England received.<sup>137</sup> The women's case, supported in London by Jenkinson, Metcalfe, La Marche and the Duc d'Harcourt, was successful, although it took Dundas until July to present the case to George III.<sup>138</sup>

When Balcarres left Jersey, Fall briefly assumed charge of the distribution. One of his contributions was to ask Portland for permission to continue to pay allowances to eligible persons who had moved to England, but been refused entry to the lists there.<sup>139</sup> This problem returned in force when the refugees were evacuated from Jersey in 1796.<sup>140</sup> In December 1794 Fall lost his new-found responsibilities to his first cousin Philippe d'Auvergne, who bore the title of Prince de Bouillon, as the adopted son of the late Duc de Bouillon.

Bouillon, a native of Jersey, sailor, mapmaker and Fellow of the Royal Society, was appointed Captain of the Nonesuch, in charge of a flotilla at Jersey, in May 1794.<sup>141</sup> This made him the senior naval officer in Jersey waters. He was ambitious, and when Balcarres was transferred in October, Bouillon suggested to Dundas that he might take charge of the correspondence, housing the agents on board ship. He also offered to undertake the relief administration for the refugees, which 'would give me a relation with them which I believe I can confidently affirm would be pleasing to them, and would

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<sup>137</sup> Balcarres to Dundas, 21 April 1794, H.O.95/5, unf.

<sup>138</sup> Dundas to d'Harcourt, 9 July 1794, H.O.43/5, p. 280; Dundas to Balcarres, 10 July 1794, H.O.98/5, unf.; La Marche to [Windham], und., enclosed in Windham to Portland, 3 Aug. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> Fall to Portland, 20 Nov. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> See Chapter 8.

<sup>141</sup> Bouillon to [Nepean?], 20 May 1794, H.O.98/5, unf.

elude any curiosity in the confidential communication with my ship'.<sup>142</sup> Both offers were accepted,<sup>143</sup> and Bouillon maintained his triple responsibilities for over a decade.

It is difficult to obtain a clear picture of ministerial responsibility for the relief of refugees in Jersey in 1794-6. Dundas had charge of the funds, which came from war extraordinaries, but Portland as Home Secretary was responsible for civilians in Jersey, including the refugees. As the commanders-in-chief of the island then had both civil and military command, they reported to both ministers. Bouillon's assumption of control further complicated matters, as he then had three masters: the Admiralty because he was a naval officer, the War Department because he ran the correspondence and distributed funds to the refugees, and the Home Department because he was thereby responsible for the welfare of the refugees and the maintenance of good relations between them and the islanders.

The confusion caused by the vague demarcation of responsibility between departments in Whitehall is amply illustrated in the question of the secours extraordinaire of £800 a month granted to the refugees in Jersey early in 1795. In November 1794, the Comte de Botherel petitioned Windham for a grant of £500 a month as extra relief in Jersey. He based his claim on the grounds that the laity in Jersey had received much less than those in England from Thomas' Committee in the first instance and that the ladies in Jersey for several months had received less from the government than those in England, which meant that the refugees in Jersey had spent their resources more quickly and been forced

<sup>142</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 8 Oct. 1794, F.O.95/604, pp. 25-6. Bouillon had pointed out that it was difficult to conduct a 'secret' correspondence when the coming and going of agents was such public knowledge: *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>143</sup> Earl of Chatham (Admiralty) to Bouillon, 29 Oct. 1794, H.O.69/3, unf. Chatham gave strong support to Bouillon's proposal: *ibid.*

into debt. Besides this, the cost of living in Jersey was higher than in England, so that many lived in the direst poverty.<sup>144</sup> During his brief tenure Fall also put in a plea for an increased grant; the Treasury asked Portland's opinion, then authorised Fall to provide an additional allowance of £800 a month for three months from 1 February 1795.<sup>145</sup> The allowance was continued, and the total monthly disbursement rose to £2200 in October 1795.<sup>146</sup>

Thus the situation arose where Bouillon paid the normal monthly allowance from a War Department grant while Fall paid the monthly secours extraordinaire from a Treasury grant. This was clearly the result of the government's habit of responding ad hoc to approaches made to particular departments. Dundas suggested that Bouillon should be given charge of both grants, and the Treasury agreed.<sup>147</sup> The decision angered Fall, who refused to pay out the money still in his hands, referring the Jersey Committee to Bouillon instead.<sup>148</sup> Fall had cause to be angry; he had been stripped successively of his powers as military commander of the island and the Crown's representative in the States, his charge of the correspondence and the administration of refugee relief.

Apparently some of the émigré soldiers on Jersey shared in the secours extraordinaire, for those on Guernsey later claimed a share in the grant. The Jersey Committee had already been forced to allow the refugee women, children

<sup>144</sup> Memorial of the Comte de Botherel, [ca 12 Nov. 1794] B.M. Add. Ms 37857, ff. 64-6, enclosed in Botherel to [Windham], 16 Nov. 1794, *ibid.*, f. 63. Apparently Botherel had difficulty in getting to see Windham.

<sup>145</sup> Long to King, 24 Jan. 1795, T.27/45, p. 181; Treasury Minutes, 14 Feb. 1795, T.29/67, p. 436.

<sup>146</sup> Long to Huskisson, 29 Oct. 1795, T.27/46, p. 185.

<sup>147</sup> Long to Huskisson, 9 April 1795, T.27/45, p. 310.

<sup>148</sup> Jersey Committee to Bouillon, 3 May 1795, H.O.69/33, f. 152; de Monti to Bouillon, 23 May 1795, *ibid.*, f. 101; Bouillon to Huskisson, 25 May 1795, W.O.1/921, pp. 65-6.



and servants on Guernsey to share the grant, and they strongly resisted the new demands, pointing out that if another eight hundred people were added to the 653 already sharing it the allowance to each person would be reduced drastically. When Emperor Woodford of the War Office was drawn into the dispute, he warned that the Jersey cadres would be excluded from the grant if it were officially known at the War Office that they received it, and that if the Treasury knew of it, it would probably reduce the grant by the amount given to the cadres. The Jersey Committee's attitude angered La Marche, so it turned to Bouillon for help. He resolved the dispute by ruling that the grant was to be shared with the refugees in Guernsey, but that servants and serving officers on both islands were to be excluded.<sup>149</sup> By this time, however, relations between the refugees on the two islands had been severely strained.

Apart from the supplementary allowances to the refugees in Jersey and Guernsey, the secours extraordinaire paid for special costs, such as medical services. French doctors who attended the sick were paid relief allowances, and in some cases an extra allowance for their service.<sup>150</sup> Abbé Carron set up a pharmacy which provided medicines for sick; in 1796 he had to ask for extra funds, so great was the demand for his stock.<sup>151</sup> Bouillon set aside a small

<sup>149</sup> Major-General J. Small to Bouillon, 7 Sept. 1795, H.O.69/10, f. 37; Comte de Villiers to Bouillon, 2 Dec. 1795, H.O.69/33, f. 143; Marquis de Marconnay to Comte de Paysac, 4 April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 89 (copy sent to Bouillon by de Monti); La Marche to Jersey Committee, 29 April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 157; Memorial of Jersey Committee to Bouillon, 7 May 1796, *ibid.*, ff. 156-7; Bouillon to Jersey Committee, 7 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 158; Memorial of the Castries regiment, 30 May 1796, H.O.69/14, f. 47; Chevalier de La Bintinaye, de Villiers and de Monti to Bouillon, 8 June 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 160.

<sup>150</sup> K'jean to Bouillon, 30 Dec. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 80; Jersey Committee to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 164.

<sup>151</sup> Jersey Committee to Bouillon, 7 April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 155; Plasse, Clergé Français, i, p. 335.

sum to provide an accouchement allowance.<sup>152</sup> The secours extraordinaire was also used for special cases, such as the payment to Madame Thierry de Larchantel of a guinea a month towards the expense of keeping her daughter, who had gone mad, in a house at Oxton.<sup>153</sup>

All the schools in Jersey were Protestant, so Arbé Carron opened two Catholic schools there, one for boys and one for girls. He and another priest ran the former, and French women the latter; Carron taught religion in both. Running costs were paid from the secours extraordinaire.<sup>154</sup> When Penn School opened in 1796, the relief allowances of its pupils from Jersey were paid directly to the school, despite parents' protests. The same arrangement was made for the girls from Jersey who attended the French school in London run by Maria Macnamara.<sup>155</sup> This meant that there was no extra charge on the Jersey fund.

The secours extraordinaire relieved the pressure on the ordinary Jersey funds, and allowed Bouillon more flexibility in deciding on cases than Wilmot's Committee enjoyed. As the only direct superintendent of the funds, Bouillon had more discretionary power than his counterparts in London. As a servant of the Crown, however, he was also more accountable for his actions.

The requests and applications sent to Bouillon reflect his standing on Jersey, and his intimate connection with people and affairs there. He was obviously on good terms with the Bishops of Tréguier and Bayeux, particularly

<sup>152</sup> Baron de La Garde to Bouillon, 23 May 1796, H.O.69/23, f. 24; de La Bintinaye, de Villiers and de Monti to Bouillon, 8 June 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 160.

<sup>153</sup> Madame Thierry de Larchantel to Bouillon, 24, 28 June 1795, P.C.1/115, ff. 174, 187.

<sup>154</sup> Plasse, Clergé Français, i, pp. 335-7.

<sup>155</sup> La Marche to Bouillon, 15 April 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 28; de Monti to Bouillon, 27 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 126; de Monti to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 128; de Monti to Bouillon, 7 August 1796, *ibid.*, f. 131; M. Macnamara to Bouillon, 29 Dec. 1796, H.O.69/14, f. 156; Cone, Burke, p. 493.

the latter; he offered Cheylus a gift of fifty louis, which the Bishop declined for the time being, as 'je ne suis pas de ce moment dans un besoin pressé'.<sup>156</sup> Requests for relief, or passages to France were often transmitted through the Bishops, as when Cheylus passed on a request of the beautiful Madame du Dresnay, not because he knew her well, but 'parce qu'elle a des beaux yeux'.<sup>157</sup> Cheylus explained that he was not always able to turn down the many pleas for intercession that he had come to receive because of 'La reputation que j'ay d'etre le Saint le plus puissant auprès de vous et que je dois aux bontés distinguées dont vous m'honorés'.<sup>158</sup> Bouillon was obviously in close contact with the Bishops on relief matters, both lay and ecclesiastic, and he looked at the Bishops' accounts before they were sent to England.<sup>159</sup>

The general run of applications for relief on Jersey was much the same as in England and was governed by similar regulations. Poverty, age and ill-health were the usual pleas. The Jersey Committee identified the applicants and verified their claims, neither of them difficult tasks in a small island community, and gave an opinion on their eligibility. Bouillon's final decision usually conformed to their opinion. He ruled on cases which were not clearly governed by the regulations and could make exceptions if he chose;<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Cheylus to Bouillon, 15 May [1795?], H.O.69/33, f. 7a.

<sup>157</sup> Cheylus to Bouillon, 4 March [1795?], *ibid.*, f. 5a.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.* See also Cheylus to Bouillon, 29 August [1795?], *ibid.*, f. 8b; Le Mintier to Bouillon, 12 May 1796, *ibid.*, f. 42.

<sup>159</sup> Cheylus to Bouillon, 18 April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 16; La Marche to Bouillon, 15 April 1796, *ibid.*, f. 28.

<sup>160</sup> For procedures, see for example the notations on the memorial of Madame de Chateaubriand, *und.*, *ibid.*, f. 74.

and dissatisfied applicants could appeal to him. This procedure was very similar to that adopted by Wilmot's Committee.

Bouillon received several applications from French priests who had abjured their religion and calling, been struck off the clergy lists and applied for lay relief. After two such cases, Bouillon asked for instructions from Dundas. His own opinion was clear: to accept them would create a dangerous precedent. Many would abjure

& consequently shut to themselves the prospect of returning, on a change of affairs to their Country, & corrupt civil Society with their profligate manners and debaucheries burthening the public with their dronish Existence, and load the Parishes with the produce of their illicit and indelicate Unions.<sup>161</sup>

This outburst appears to have been inspired by the fact that the priests' 'first Act in their New faith was to marry two harlots with whom they had before Cohabited & got pregnant'.<sup>162</sup> Dundas accepted Bouillon's recommendation and the applications were rejected. When Captain John Le Couteur recommended the case of Bourgé, an abjured priest, whose countrymen refused to speak to him or his wife, Bouillon advised that since he had changed his tonsure for matrimony, he should join as a volunteer, thus entitling his wife to relief.<sup>163</sup>

Many applications were for servants, but few were successful unless they fitted the regulations. Some French, even when destitute, could not comprehend the idea of having few or no servants. The servant of the Chevalier de Mouillemuse had lost his soldier's pay when his company was disbanded. De Monti, one of the lay distributors, was reluctant to grant him relief because

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<sup>161</sup>Bouillon to Dundas, und. [1795], P.C.1/117B, f. 71.

<sup>162</sup>Ibid., f. 70.

<sup>163</sup>Captain J. Le Couter to Bouillon, 23 Sept. 1795, H.O.69/10, f. 34; [Bouillon] to [Le Couteur], und., H.O.69/17, f. 56.

he had not come from France with the Chevalier. The latter hoped that Bouillon would not refuse relief for 'un domestique que l'habitude m'a rendu nécessaire, et que se trouveroit lui même dans l'indigence la plus affreuse s'il m'etoit impossible de le conserver'.<sup>164</sup> When pleading the case for relief to such soldier-servants, the Comte de Talhouet pointed out that they had received relief like other servants, before enlisting.<sup>165</sup> One of Madame Le Fruglays' servants being old and infirm, she asked for another, making the fourth for the household. As she realised that Bouillon might think this excessive, she informed him that her brother-in-law and one of his parents also lived there; 'cela ne ferait donc que quatre domestiques pour trois maitres, et dont l'une d'elles en raison de son âge pourrait prétendre aux secours mêmes sans servir'.<sup>166</sup> While these applicants might not seem greatly in need of servants, the servants as much as the masters stood to lose if the requests were denied. Servants such as Madame Le Fruglays', who qualified in their own right, were often better off as part of a household than on their own.

One further relief case deserves mention, both as a special case, and as an illustration of the straits to which some refugee parents were reduced. A Jerseyman, Dr John Smith, asked for a relief allowance for a four-hours-old baby which had been abandoned on his doorstep at night, with this note attached:

Cet enfant est recommandé aux soins charitables de Mr. le dr. Schmith, qui est prié d'être parain & de lui donner le nom qu'il lui plaira. Dans des circonstances plus heureuses, il sera récompensé par les parents infortunés, forcés par la triste nécessité des temps d'abandonner ce tendre fruit de leur Amour.<sup>167</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Chevalier de Mouillemuse to Bouillon, 24 Dec. 1794, P.C.1/115, f. 394.

<sup>165</sup> Comte de Talhouet to Bouillon, 24 Dec. 1794, *ibid.*, f. 399.

<sup>166</sup> Madame de Fruglays to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 108.

<sup>167</sup> [?] to [Dr J. Smith], [23 April 1795], H.O.69/16, f. 138b.

Dr Smith intended to care for the child.<sup>168</sup>

By mid-1796, when the refugees were ordered out of the Channel Islands, relief administration on Jersey had settled into a routine, mainly conducted by the Jersey Committee under Bouillon's supervision. Relationships among the refugees themselves, and between them and the islanders, remained uneasy, and the administrators on Jersey and Guernsey alike often found the refugees tiresome. In May 1796 Bouillon complained of the inertia afflicting the French officers, who were 'droning away their melancholy existence here', which he feared would last 'as long as their present formation affords them the means of being useless, even burthensom to Society'; he suggested reducing their allowances.<sup>169</sup> Nor was he the only one to complain. On Guernsey, Major Thomas Saumarez<sup>170</sup> had a great deal of trouble with the cadres in his charge. He thought that Bouillon must be well acquainted with their 'unwearied Importunity'; he liked to help them, but confessed: 'I find it a difficult task to discriminate and I am sorry to add they are not all equally grateful or deserving'.<sup>171</sup> On Jersey, Fall tried to keep some French officers who had been fighting amongst themselves from coming before the courts, because 'Their young men are wrong headed in general, but circumstanced as these poor french are, they demand all the indulgence that can be shown them'.<sup>172</sup> General Gordon was less sympathetic; he hoped that the émigré landing at Quiberon would be successful, so that the cadres might stay there. Of the priests he said:

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<sup>168</sup>Smith to Edwards (surgeon on H.M.S. Bravo), und., *ibid.*, f. 138a.

<sup>169</sup>Bouillon to Dundas, 20 May 1796, W.O.1/921, p. 414.

<sup>170</sup>(1760-1845), promoted to general 1835; brother of Sir James Saumarez, later admiral.

<sup>171</sup>T. Saumarez to Bouillon, 22 Jan. 1796, H.O.69/9, f. 159.

<sup>172</sup>Fall to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 84.

Notwithstanding all my encouragement, added to the flattering prospects of Martyrdom, I am sorry to say there are still above 1300 French Priests (Locusts) on this Island. Don't you think a small Detachment of only four or five Hundred of them, being removed to Sierra Leone, would be of infinite advantage both to that Settlement and to this?<sup>173</sup>

Many of the islanders shared Gordon's sentiments. When those priests who did join the expedition tried to enter Jersey after it failed, the islanders petitioned against their admission. Gordon supported them. Portland refused the request, pointing out that many of the priests concerned had lived in Jersey before the Quiberon expedition. Gordon replied that as the States were currently discussing an address to the Crown, asking for the removal of the 1,400 priests from the island, he had postponed the arrival of any priests from Guernsey. He took the occasion to criticise the conduct of several of the clergy in Jersey.<sup>174</sup> Portland was furious. He roundly condemned the States' action and pointed out that any complaints should have been discussed with the priests' superiors and reported to him. He ordered Gordon to exert himself

in bringing the States of Jersey to a proper sense of justice and humanity to their fellow creatures, and to feel as they ought the respect and deference which are due to His Majesty's Government.<sup>175</sup>

Gordon defended himself by saying that he had frequently consulted the bishops over the priests' behaviour, and had been forced to send several away from Jersey after 'the urgent solicitations and bitter complainings of the Inhabitants whose wives and Daughters have been perverted, and Debauched'.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Gordon to Huskisson, 31 July 1795, W.O.1/607, pp. 176-7.

<sup>174</sup> Petition of Jersey inhabitants to Gordon, 3 Sept. 1795, H.O.98/6, unf.; Gordon to Portland, 14 Sept. 1795, *ibid.*; Portland to Gordon, 31 Oct. 1795, *ibid.*; Gordon to Portland, 16 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Portland to Gordon, 24 Nov. 1795, *ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> Gordon to Portland, 1 Dec. 1795, *ibid.*

By then the proposed address had been defeated in the States,<sup>177</sup> so the issue died down and the priests stayed. Their respite was short, for only eight months later the government itself ordered the evacuation of the French refugees from the Channel Islands.

### III

In December 1793 the British government inadvertently acquired responsibility for another group of French refugees when the Royal Navy evacuated four thousand Toulonese citizens,<sup>178</sup> to help them escape the Republican troops, under Colonel Napoleon Bonaparte, which had recaptured Toulon. The city's Royalists had invited joint British and Spanish forces to occupy the city in August 1793, and the Republicans were not in a forgiving mood. Those Toulonese evacuated on British ships became the charge of Lord Hood, the admiral of the fleet, and Sir Gilbert Elliot, the newly arrived civil commissioner of Toulon. Elliot quickly took the lead in planning for their settlement:

I shall first secure a temporary asylum for them somewhere or other in Italy, & provide for their present support till govt. determines what to do further, but so much we owe them, & I shall take it on myself to make our govt. do at least so much good.<sup>179</sup>

He told Dundas that he thought that the evacuees should not be abandoned, but that he had promised them nothing beyond immediate support and asylum. He had lists of their names and stations and knew the circumstances of most of them.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Minto, ii, p. 227. Elliot's original estimate was lower: Elliot to Dundas, 20 Dec. 1793, *ibid.*, p. 207. Also, see above, pp.

<sup>179</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 20 Dec. 1793, N.L.S. Ms 11049, f. 94.

<sup>180</sup> Elliot to Dundas, 20 Dec. 1793, Minto, ii, p. 207. Also, see above, pp. 66-7.



After leaving Toulon the fleet anchored at the Îles d'Hyères, in sight of the city. Some refugees went on to seek asylum at Leghorn, while the rest stayed with the fleet.<sup>181</sup> Elliot described the crowded conditions on H.M.S. Victory: 'About twenty of them sleep all together men women & children on the floor of one cabin - with an English officer or two swinging over them in cots'.<sup>182</sup> Not surprisingly, the crowded conditions bred sickness, including an outbreak of measles, in the six weeks that the ships remained at anchor.<sup>183</sup>

Elliot tried to negotiate asylum for the evacuees. In January the Grand Duke of Tuscany agreed to allow the refugees to land at Porto Ferraio on the Isle of Elba, so Elliot initially placed about two thousand there.<sup>184</sup> He then persuaded the Grand Duke of Tuscany to allow a thousand Toulonese into Leghorn.<sup>185</sup> The Courts of Rome and Sardinia and the Republic of Lucca were unco-operative, but the King of Sardinia later accepted a few in Piedmont.<sup>186</sup> Settling the refugees in Leghorn proved arduous. Elliot wrote to his wife:

I never was so worried, or so fairly tired down in my life. The French come before I am up, & from that time till dinner I have had on most days not one instants release from the most vexatious & harassing of all business, the importunities of the unreasonable & what is so much worse the reasonable prayers & tears of the unhappy to whom I can give nothing like reasonable comfort.<sup>187</sup>

He moved on to Elba, from whence he despatched some of the refugees to alternative asylums, then sailed to join the siege of Corsica, leaving his secretary, George

<sup>181</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 2 Jan. 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, ff. 97-8.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., f. 99.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., f. 102.

<sup>184</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 7 Jan. 1794, *ibid.*, f. 103; Minto, ii, p. 227.

<sup>185</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 11 Feb. 1794, N.L.S. 11049, f. 115.

<sup>186</sup> Minto, ii, pp. 227-8; Elliot to Lady Elliot, 8, 22 Feb. 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, ff. 112, 119.

<sup>187</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 22 Feb. 1794, *ibid.*, f. 119. See also [Elliot] to Dundas, 22 Feb. 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11140, ff. 20-1 (draft, not sent).

Sandy, in charge at Elba.<sup>188</sup>

On 5 April 1794, at Bastia, Elliot finally received from Dundas instructions concerning relief for the Toulonese. The government had taken its time, for news of the evacuation had reached England over two months before Dundas wrote.<sup>189</sup> He was pleased that so many Toulonese, 'who from the part they had taken became objects of our attention and care', had been saved from Republican vengeance. The King agreed that steps should be taken to provide for their future support and would approve any 'reasonable disbursements' already made.<sup>190</sup>

Dundas had the difficult task of trying to formulate instructions to cover several contingencies, including the outcome of the siege of Corsica. If it were taken, it should provide 'a comfortable asylum'. Lord Hervey<sup>191</sup> had made some suggestions, notably that Sardinia might prove an alternative haven if Corsica were lost, and that the refugees should be paid at rates fixed according to age rather than rank.<sup>192</sup> Dundas did not want 'unworthy objects' receiving relief, and suggested 'that a Committee of the most respectable among the Refugees should be appointed to examine into and report upon the conduct and character of the several persons who are now supported by the British Government'.<sup>193</sup> He suggested that one person should be appointed to undertake the sole direction of disbursements. The placement of the refugees was an important question, for Dundas feared 'that unless some effectual measure be taken, for placing them in a situation whereby they may be

<sup>188</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 4 March 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, f. 123; G. Sandy to Elliot, 20 Aug. 1796, N.L.S. Ms 11210, f. 127.

<sup>189</sup> Miles to Long, 31 Dec. 1793, Minto, ii, p. 119; Dundas to Elliot, 7 March 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/108, unf.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Elder son of the Earl of Bristol: D.N.B., ix, p. 732.

<sup>192</sup> Dundas to Elliot, 7 March 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/108, unf.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

enabled to acquire support, they will continue a heavy and a perpetual charge on this Country'.<sup>194</sup> He was against sending the Toulonese to St Domingo or other West Indian islands and suggested that some could either be formed into a corps, or join du Dresnay's corps in Britain, as a means of employment.<sup>195</sup>

Several aspects of Dundas' directions and suggestions are familiar. The government was endorsing relief measures already taken and was prepared to adopt Lord Hervey's recommendations, thus in both cases responding to outside initiatives.<sup>196</sup> The formation of a committee of refugees to decide on the worthiness of applicants was in line with current practice in England and Jersey, as was employing refugees in foreign regiments in the British army. The idea of paying allowances according to age rather than rank was a departure, but it too came from responding to outside advice.

The British victory over the French at Bastia<sup>197</sup> eased the placement problem for Elliot, who became Civil Commissioner and later Viceroy of Corsica. He arranged for several hundred each of the Toulonese at Porto Ferraiio and Leghorn to be transferred to Corsica.<sup>198</sup> By 15 July 1794 he was 'up to the Chin in Toulonese - I have 1200 to find Lodgings & other things for'.<sup>199</sup> Three weeks later the numbers were approximately 1300 at Porto Ferraiio, 600 in Piedmont and 350 at Leghorn.<sup>200</sup>

The method of disbursements is not clear, but probably Elliot gave authority each month for bills drawn on the Treasury, to British agents or

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> This was not surprising in the first instance, as Elliot could hardly leave the refugees to starve, pending instructions from London.

<sup>197</sup> '...to which not one Frenchman that I have yet seen can bring himself to subscribe': Elliot to Windham, 2 April 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 37852, f. 231.

<sup>198</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 12 July 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, f. 180; Elliot to A. Amyot, 14 July 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/154B, pp. 146-8.

<sup>199</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 15 July 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, f. 181.

<sup>200</sup> Elliot to Portland, 5 Aug. 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/155, p. 5.

consuls at the various towns, who in turn gave the money to Toulonese agents to distribute.<sup>201</sup> The allowance paid at Corsica was approximately a shilling a day to upper class women and all children.<sup>202</sup> Lord Hood and Elliot successfully recommended paying persons of distinction 'a more permanent Bounty of rather greater amount',<sup>203</sup> so that the idea of payment without distinction of rank was not adopted in practice. These government pensioners were paid quarterly, usually at a rate of £50 per annum; other refugees were paid monthly. The pensioners were allowed to live outside the main centres of the distribution, and to receive payments by procuracy.<sup>204</sup>

At first, the expense of relief at Elba was particularly high, as in March 1794 a typhus epidemic swept the refugee community, whose health had been undermined by the long sojourn at sea in crowded conditions. The British and Tuscan authorities acted quickly:

un hopital, une Pharmacie, les medecin, et les chirurgiens ont été soldé tant pour les malades traité a l'hopital que pour ceux qui le seroient chés eux...<sup>205</sup>

<sup>201</sup>The agents were George Sandy at Porto Ferrario, John Trevor in Piedmont and Charles Bird and John Orr (bankers) in Tuscany. The Toulonese were Jean-Baptiste Contencin in Porto Ferrario, Victor Amyot in Bastia and Alexandre Amyot in Leghorn. See: Sandy to [Elliot], 20 May 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 3; Elliot to J. Hippisley, 6 June 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/154B, p. 26; E.H. to C. Bird and J. Orr, 31 May, 26 June 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 4-5, 110; Elliot to J. Trevor, 18 July 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 161-2; V. Amyot to [Elliot], 25 Oct. 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11217, f. 43.

<sup>202</sup>Elliot to Portland, 5 Aug. 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/155, p. 5.

<sup>203</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>204</sup>Coulet, *Fugitifs de Toulon*, pp. 51-2. For those receiving pensions see 'Les Pensionnés' in *ibid.*, pp. 57-75.

<sup>205</sup>Victor Amyot, 'Exposé de ma Conduite pendant La Révolution', 15 April 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11217, f. 31. Sandy protested against a ruling that medicines were to be paid for out of the allowances of hospital patients, who would thus command their sole use, but who formed 'a very small part or the Sick compared to those who remain at their lodgings'. He also queried the intention of making the refugees pay for their own medicines: Sandy to [Elliot], 20 May 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11215, ff. 4-5.

Some of the vessels in port were converted into hospital ships, and their decks were washed frequently with lime as a sanitary measure. The French ships' doctors attended to sick under the direction of Joseph Antoir, the refugee physician and botanist.<sup>206</sup> More routine medical care was later provided at Leghorn, as the accounts included sums for 'Secours aux réfugiés malades' and as 'Quittance du directeur de l'hôpital de Livourne pour les dépenses causées par les réfugiés malades';<sup>207</sup> presumably similar arrangements pertained in Bastia.

Elliot was anxious to reduce the cost of relief as much and as soon as possible. One means of doing this was to find employment for the refugees, and he was prepared to stop the allowances of those who refused to comply with his suggestions. From Bastia, he sent to Elba for thirty sailors and their families, a dozen caulkers, and some coopers, carpenters and bakers;<sup>208</sup> and he ordered Jean-Baptiste Contencin,<sup>209</sup> the agent there, to give a fortnight's notice of cessation of allowances to all sailors.<sup>210</sup> If those sent to Bastia did not find work they would receive relief, but any who refused to go would lose their allowances.<sup>211</sup> Elliot was unhappy at the number of tradesmen on the lists, because there was no intention 'que ces Personnes jouissent toujours du secours destiné seulement pour ceux, qui ne

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<sup>206</sup> Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, pp. 27-8.

<sup>207</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>208</sup> [Elliot?] to Baron de Knesevich (Gov. of Porto Ferrajo), 29 May 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/154B, p. 1; E.H. to J.-B. Contencin, 11 June 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 51-2.

<sup>209</sup> Jean-Baptiste Contencin (c. 1735-1794?), former Director of Customs at Toulon: Coulet, Fugitifs de Toulon, pp. 63-4.

<sup>210</sup> Elliot to Sandy, 6 June 1794, *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>211</sup> E.H. to Contencin, 11 June 1794, *ibid.*, p. 51.

peuvent pas se subsister autrement, ou qui n'ont pas l'occasion d'exercer leurs metiers'.<sup>212</sup> He also thought it unnecessary to place new-born babies on the lists,<sup>213</sup> a departure from the practice in England and the Channel Islands.

An obvious means of employment was military service, and both Elliot and Dundas tried to encourage it.<sup>214</sup> However, Dundas was adamant that

no condition ought to be made with any French Troops now to be formed either in the Mediterranean or else where that might subject this Country to the burthen of Half Pay either permanently or for any limited time.<sup>215</sup>

While the government still hoped that the emigration was but temporary, it was unwilling to risk the émigré soldiers becoming a long-term liability.

Elliot believed that no relief should be paid to those who could do without it, 'the sole Principle being the relief from want, & not the reward of Services or the Compensation for Losses'.<sup>216</sup> Accordingly, he instructed one of his agents to strike off the list those who could earn a living 'without too great a violation of their habits & Education'. He thought that all able-bodied men of the lower classes should be able to subsist by their own exertions, as should young men among the better-born.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>214</sup> Dundas to Elliot, 30 June 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/121, unf.; Elliot to Portland, 5 Aug. 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/155, pp. 5-8.

<sup>215</sup> Dundas to Elliot, 30 June 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/121, unf.

<sup>216</sup> Elliot to Trevor, 18 July 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/154B, p. 161.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., pp. 161-2.

By such measures, and by lowering the rates of allowance in some instances, Elliot was able to reduce considerably the expenditure for September 1794. He attributed part of the saving to the transfer of refugees to Corsica, and proposed to import still more from Elba.<sup>218</sup> Portland was delighted with the reduction, but told Elliot not to infer 'that any intention is entertained of depriving any of those Persons, of the benefit of that Provision, whom you shall judge deserving to partake of it'.<sup>219</sup>

The expense diminished further during 1795, mainly through the return of refugees to France. Although most went voluntarily, Elliot encouraged the move by suppressing the relief of 'those who were retained from France only by the Bounty, or who had other means of living'. By June there were only two to three hundred in Corsica, three hundred at Leghorn and eighty in Piedmont.<sup>220</sup> Elliot attributed the exodus to the threat of a French invasion of Corsica and Italy and to the 'extreme timidity' of the Toulonese. He told his friend Windham: 'The day on which the French fleet appear'd off Cape Corse, I sign'd about 300 passports for Toulonese only. Not one of them came to ask for a musquet, not one out of near a thousand'.<sup>221</sup> The recruitment of émigrés had slowed considerably and he thought the emigrants, particularly those in Corsica, untrustworthy in a crisis.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>218</sup> Elliot to Portland, 30 Sept. 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/155, pp. 84-5.

<sup>219</sup> Portland to Elliot, 14 Oct. 1794, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/121, unf. See also Portland to Elliot, 2 Dec. 1794, *ibid.*

<sup>220</sup> Elliot to Portland, 10 June 1795, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/155, pp. 321-2. For the return movement, see also Coulet, *Fugitifs de Toulon*, pp. 41-4.

<sup>221</sup> Elliot to Windham, 2 April 1795, B.M. Add. Ms 37852, f. 227.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 226, 231.

There was one group of Toulonese refugees already in England, comprised of the French crews of ships commandeered by the Royal Navy at the evacuation of Toulon, and the Royal Louis corps, which had assisted in the defence of Toulon.<sup>223</sup> Following the government's practice of assigning refugee groups to the care of the department of first contact, Captail William Otway<sup>224</sup> of the Transport Office was given charge of them.<sup>225</sup>

Recruiting being a perennial problem in Britain, the government sought to use the man-power and martial skills of these men. It decided to incorporate the Royal Louis corps into Comte d'Hervilly's<sup>226</sup> émigré regiment, and allowed Comte d'Hector<sup>227</sup> to recruit from amongst the Toulonese crews.<sup>228</sup> D'Hector later complained that Captain Dorain, an officer in d'Hervilly's regiment who was agent in charge of the Toulonese at Southampton, refused to allow the seamen to join his émigré Royal Marine corps, 'et ne leur permet de s'enrôler que pour le corps d'Hervilly'.<sup>229</sup> In December 1794 the East India Company

<sup>223</sup> Hood to Dundas, 20 Dec. [1793], in J. Holland Rose, Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon (Cambridge, 1922), p. 160; Mullins (Mayor of Southampton) to Portland, 17 July 1794, H.O.1/2, unf.; King to Otway, 29 Nov. 1794, H.O.43/6, p. 87.

<sup>224</sup> Captain William Albany Otway, R.N. In September 1795 he was a member of the Transport Board: see Mary Ellen Conden, 'The administration of the transport service during the war against Revolutionary France, 1793-1802' (Ph.D., University of London, 1968), p. 51.

<sup>225</sup> He was directed 'to appropriate a certain District for their Residence', and to place them under the control of one of their own officers, who would distribute allowances to them: King to Otway, 1 Jan. 1795, H.O.43/6, p. 132.

<sup>226</sup> Louis-Charles, Comte d'Hervilly (1756-95). He later led the émigré regiments in the Quiberon expedition: N.B.G., xxiv, pp. 544-5.

<sup>227</sup> Charles-Jean, Comte d'Hector (1722-1808), former Lieutenant-General of Marines and Naval Commander of Brest: Pinasseau, Émigration Militaire, ii, pp. 69-70.

<sup>228</sup> King to Otway, 29 Nov. 1794, H.O.43/6, p. 87; Burke, Correspondence, viii, 3ln.

<sup>229</sup> Comte d'Hector to Dundas, und., W.O.1/388, p. 235.



became a competitor for the services of the seamen,<sup>230</sup> so that the latter had a choice of careers.

When some of the seamen proved reluctant to enter into any kind of British service, the government applied pressure:

With respect to such Seamen as are able & refuse to enter into the Navy, Army, East India, or Merchant Service, (especially into the first) altho' their Situation does not permit them to be considered as Prisoners of War, it should be strongly and forcibly represented to such, that they will not, until they enter some Service be considered as entitled to their arrears, or to any Allowance whatsoever; on the other hand, every Encouragement by Bounty & otherwise should be given to induce them to serve.<sup>231</sup>

This threat was not sufficient, so the government further coerced the recalcitrant by isolating them on a transport ship at Spithead and refusing to pay them arrears until they enlisted, then by separating the ring-leaders from the rest.<sup>232</sup>

The unwillingness of these men to fight for the British indicates one of the distinctive features of the Toulonese émigrés. The citizens of Toulon had been Constitutionalist in leaning, rather than ultra-Royalist. They disapproved of the direction which the Revolution had taken, rather than the Revolution itself. They shared the émigrés' distaste of fighting against France, but unleavened by any great attachment to the cause of restoring absolute monarchy to France. The Toulonese in Corsica, living there by grace of the British occupation, were unwilling to accept that it was no longer French, and the majority returned to France within twelve months of Thermidor, once

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<sup>230</sup>King to Otway, 12 Dec. 1794, H.O.43/6, p. 104.

<sup>231</sup>King to Otway, 1 Jan. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 132-3.

<sup>232</sup>King to Otway, 10 Jan., 18 Feb. 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 149-50, 230-1.

the personal risk of returning had abated. Similarly, the Toulonese seamen had been forced to leave Toulon when the Republicans stormed the city, but continued to identify themselves with France. Besides, it would be fair to say that attachment to the Royalist cause was strongest amongst men of rank, while the majority of the Toulonese were artisans, workmen or seamen. This again set them apart from the general run of émigrés in England.

The position was complicated however by the fact that the British owed more to the Toulonese than to most French refugees. The British had entered Toulon at their invitation, had fought alongside them, but had failed to protect their city against Republican attack. This was reflected in Elliot's attitude: he felt that Britain ought to provide for the Toulonese evacuees, and he laboured conscientiously to that end, but he distrusted them and encouraged them to return to France. The more plebian composition of the Toulonese group, and the number of skilled workers amongst them, enabled him to trim the relief lists, on the grounds that the refugees should be able to earn their own living.

Elliot's conflict had eased by 1796, for the large numbers returning to France had left mainly the higher ranks and more ardent Royalists in his care. At this time the French invaded Italy, so the Toulonese had to be evacuated from Leghorn to Corsica. Elliot wished initially to send them on to England, along with the French prisoners-of-war on Corsica,<sup>233</sup> but this was forestalled by Portland's ordering the evacuation of Corsica on 31 August 1796,<sup>234</sup> thereby adding Corsican evacuees to Elliot's responsibilities and making a more general review of the refugee

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<sup>233</sup> Elliot to Portland, 29 June 1796, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/156, p. 191.

<sup>234</sup> Portland to Viceroy of Corsica, 31 Aug. 1796, N.L.S. Ms 11211, f. 68.

situation necessary. In the same year the government moved the refugees from the Channel Islands and the King's House at Winchester. It is to the upheaval resulting from these three decisions that we must now turn our attention.

CHAPTER 8UPHEAVAL AND RESETTLEMENT, 1796-7

## I

The dispersal of the clergy from the King's House at Winchester and the evacuation of the refugees from Corsica and the Channel Islands took place in a period of dismay and uncertainty for host country and refugees alike. In mid-1796 the invasion of England and the Channel Islands seemed imminent and the British mobilised to meet the danger. In October, when the threat had abated, Lord Malmesbury crossed to France on his first peace mission, but was soon ordered out of the country. In January 1797 the French expedition to Ireland failed at Bantry Bay, due more to bad weather than British management. February brought a financial crisis at home when the Bank of England suspended cash payments, but victory abroad when the Royal Navy routed the Spanish at Cape St Vincent. Malmesbury embarked on his second peace mission in July, but abandoned it in September after the moderate Directors were overthrown in the coup d'etat of 18 Fructidor. The British naval victory over the Dutch at Camperdown in October was counterbalanced by French military victories in Italy, and her removal of Austria from the fray by the Treaty of Campo-Formio. Perhaps even more disturbing for the British were the naval mutinies at Nore and Spithead in 1797.

The fluctuations of fortune in this period affected the French refugees in several ways. When invasion threatened, they were both objects of distrust from the defenders and themselves under direct threat from the invaders. The peace missions and the rise of Royalism at home raised hopes of a return to France, which Fructidor and the failure of the missions dashed. To these uncertainties were added the three forced resettlements from Corsica, Winchester and the Channel Isles, which involved at least two thousand refugees.

The colony of French clergy at the King's House in Winchester had faced possible eviction for several years, but had withstood pressure with the aid of the Marquis of Buckingham. The need for barracks when Britain seemed threatened by French invasion finally brought the eviction order in August 1796. Thanks to the efforts of Windham, large houses were provided for the clergy in Thame and Reading, which housed over three hundred of them. A hundred more settled in Reading town, another sixty in a house in Paddington and the rest dispersed.<sup>1</sup> The abandonment of the King's House made little difference to the relief administration, however, once the clergy were settled in their new homes, and arrangements for disbursements changed accordingly.

The upheaval involved in the evacuation of Corsica was greater, although the numbers involved were less. On 31 August 1796, Portland ordered the evacuation of the island as naval forces were being moved from the Mediterranean to strengthen defences nearer home. He commended the Toulonese refugees to Elliot's 'particular Care & Attention', and expressed the hope that the Portuguese government might provide military employment for the able-bodied men and asylum for those unable to support themselves, but assured Elliot that

should this hope be disappointed, the Magnanimity & humanity of His Majesty will not suffer Him to let them lose His Protection, and You are authorised to assure them in His Royal Name that if it is their Inclination to remain in the Dominions of His Majesty an Establishment will be provided for them in Canada... 2

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<sup>1</sup>Carter to La Marche, 18, 27 Aug. 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 99-100, 120-1; Lubersac, Journal, p. 12. For numbers and accounts at Reading and Thame, see T.93/45, passim. In October 1797 the numbers were: Reading (house) - 224; Reading (town) - 105; Thame (house) - 90: ibid., f. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Portland to Viceroy of Corsica, 31 Aug. 1796, N.L.S. Ms 11211, f. 69.

Further, he instructed Elliot to inform any Corsicans whom he thought endangered by a French re-occupation of the island, that they too could depend on an asylum in Canada, the Bahamas or 'some other part of the King's American Dominions'.<sup>3</sup> Two months later, when the order for the withdrawal of Jervis' fleet from the Mediterranean was countermanded, Portland tried to revoke the order for the evacuation of Corsica, but his letter crossed that of Elliot announcing the complete and successful evacuation of the island.<sup>4</sup> Elliot took about three hundred Toulonese and seventy Corsicans from Corsica; a month later the number of Toulonese was down to 150, so that the problem hardly compared with that after the evacuation of Toulon.<sup>5</sup> Elliot argued that Italy offered a better asylum for the refugees than 'England or any foreign establishment', as they could then easily return to their homelands if the opportunity arose, and it would be less expensive than transporting them to England or the Bahamas. Accordingly, he arranged for them to settle in Naples, Rome and Tuscany.<sup>6</sup> Portland raised no objections, being willing to accept Elliot's initiative.

From the start, Elliot was generous towards the Corsicans in the matter of allowances. Their numbers were small, they came from the higher classes and they had lost their country and their children in Britain's cause. He later explained his considerations when fixing the scale of their allowances:

His Majesty had accepted the Crown of that Country, over which his dominion was intended to become permanent. The people of Corsica had become his subjects and his Royal protection had been promised to them during the period of his reign in that country. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., f. 70.

<sup>4</sup> Portland to Viceroy of Corsica, 21 Oct. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 72; Elliot to Portland, 26 Oct. 1796, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/156, p. 292.

<sup>5</sup> Elliot to Portland, 4, 22 Nov. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 295-6, 313-5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Elliot to Portland, 6 May 1797, *ibid.*, p. 393.

Besides, offering 'consolation' to the Corsicans might persuade others in the region of Britain's goodwill when future connections might be mooted.<sup>8</sup>

From these remarks, and the scale of pensions that he recommended, Elliot obviously saw the allowances as compensation for losses sustained when Britain had proved unable to provide the protection which she had formally extended to the Corsicans. In his list of May 1797, Elliot grouped forty-eight Corsicans into categories according to their losses and former rank, and recommended annual allowances ranging from £400 down to £12.<sup>9</sup> In July, the government granted a pension of £2,000 a year to General Paoli, the doyen of the evacuees.<sup>10</sup>

Elliot's attempts to settle the refugees were complicated by his own departure for Britain early in 1797. Before he left he made what arrangements he could. He sent lists of the Toulonese and Corsicans, together with the rates of their allowances and the state of payments, to the British representatives at Naples and Florence,<sup>11</sup> the commercial agent at Rome and the Commander-in-Chief on Elba.<sup>12</sup> He also sent letters advising the refugees of the conditions under which payments were to be made, while warning the Corsicans that the arrangements for them were only provisional.<sup>13</sup> At the rates set, Elliot calculated the annual expenditure at £6,596.10.0 for the Toulonese and £5,682 for the Corsicans. However, the continuation

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 394.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 395.

<sup>10</sup> Pitt to Elliot, 25 July 1797, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 92.

<sup>11</sup> Sir William Hamilton and William Wyndham.

<sup>12</sup> Mr Graves and Lieutenant-General de Burgh. British troops were then stationed on Elba.

<sup>13</sup> [Elliot] to Bird, 24 Jan. 1797, N.L.S. Ms 11215, ff. 35-6; [Elliot] to W. Wyndham, 25 Jan. 1797, *ibid.*, f. 35; Elliot to Portland, 6 May 1797, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/156, pp. 389-90.

of payments was uncertain and he told William Wyndham in Florence that he would have to provide future funds for the refugees in Tuscany 'in the manner which your prudence will suggest'.<sup>14</sup>

Elliot did not abandon the refugees when he returned to England. Because the ministers and consuls abroad came under the Foreign Office, he approached Lord Grenville about the new arrangements; but Grenville referred the matter on to Portland, 'as relating wholly to the business of the Home Department',<sup>15</sup> presumably because Corsican affairs fell into the category of colonial business, and the Home Office had handled all refugee relief in the Mediterranean to date. Portland asked for lists of the names and proposed rates of payments to lay before the Treasury, and Elliot complied.<sup>16</sup> Although Elliot 'neglected no mode of solicitation, nor even of importunity in almost every office belonging to Government', the difficulty of accomplishing 'any business that was not immediately pressing at home', meant that he was unable to obtain formal sanction for his arrangements until July 1797.<sup>17</sup> Elliot then told Wyndham that he no longer had 'any sort of Authority in these Matters'.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, Charles Greville of the Home Office paid Elliot the compliment of making it 'an invariable rule, not to depart from the line marked out by Sir Gilbert Elliot',<sup>19</sup> and Elliot continued to be consulted on matters concerning the refugees for some years to come.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> [Elliot] to Wyndham, 24 Jan. 1797, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 35.

<sup>15</sup> G. Canning to [Elliot], 11 April 1797, *ibid.*, f. 45.

<sup>16</sup> Greville to Elliot, 17 April 1797, *ibid.*, f. 47; Elliot to Portland, N.M.M. Ms 9217, ELL/156, f. 395.

<sup>17</sup> [Elliot] to Wyndham, 14 Aug. 1797, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 62.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 63.

<sup>19</sup> Greville to Canning, 19 Aug. 1797, H.O.43/10, p.3.

<sup>20</sup> In 1805 Lord Hawkesbury (formerly Robert Banks Jenkinson) told Lord Minto (formerly Sir Gilbert Elliot) that he considered him and Lord Hood as 'the channel of communication & information' guiding the government on 'the affairs and concerns of the Toulonese Royalists here': Hawkesbury to Minto, 16 Aug. 1805, N.L.S. Ms 11216, f. 178.



The refugees in the Mediterranean continued their peregrinations in 1797; Elba was evacuated, and the Tuscan government ejected the Corsicans from Leghorn under pressure from the French.<sup>21</sup> Some Toulonese and Corsicans moved to Portugal, where Portland made arrangements for them to be paid by the British resident. Portland hoped that they would remain there, but specified that 'if it should be thought necessary to remove them, the English Government will pay every expence, which may thereby be incurred'.<sup>22</sup> This was typical of Portland's attitude: he was pleased by reductions in expense and preferred to have the refugees remain outside Britain itself, but did not deny Britain's essential responsibility for their welfare.

As in the case of the dispersal of the clergy from Winchester, the Toulonese and Corsican refugees were ultimately provided for by the government, despite a period of upheaval, and there was definite continuity in the relief arrangements made for them. It was only in the case of the evacuation of the Channel Islands that resettlement caused a breakdown in relief arrangements.

## II

On 15 July 1796 Portland ordered the French clergy and non-military laity in the Channel Islands to prepare themselves to leave for England at short notice. He told Gordon and Sir Hew Dalrymple<sup>23</sup> to arrange for their shipment to Southampton and to send him 'particular Accounts as to their different situations'.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, the War Office ordered the removal o:

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<sup>21</sup>Sir W. Hamilton to Elliot, 31 May 1797, N.L.S. Ms 11215, f. 49; Windham to Elliot, 30 Sept. 1797, *ibid.*, f. 100.

<sup>22</sup>Greville to Canning, 19 Aug. 1797, H.O.43/10, pp. 2-3.

<sup>23</sup>Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey 1796-1801: D.N.B., v, p. 408.

<sup>24</sup>Portland to Gordon and Dalrymple, 15, 16 July 1796, H.O.99/1, pp. 260-1.

émigré military forces from the islands.<sup>25</sup> Where did the initiative for the evacuation order come from? Certainly Windham disapproved of the decision, made 'by what intrigue he knew not'; he told de Monti 'qu'il étoit criant d'avoir obligé les françois de quitter jersey, et qu'on avoit été contre les vues, et les intentions du gouvernement'.<sup>26</sup> This suggests that the evacuation was not generally discussed by the cabinet before the decision was made.

For most of the refugees on the island the evacuation order was a catastrophe: they were quick to object to it, individually and through the Jersey Committee. The latter wrote to Bouillon, pointing out that the refugees had used all their resources establishing themselves in Jersey, that some would be unable to harvest the crops on which they had expended their time and money and that the short notice would force all of them to sell their belongings at a loss. It asked Bouillon to obtain a modification, if not a revocation, of the order to quit. The Committee wished to be informed of transport arrangements and whether the refugees would be grouped together in England. Moreover, it requested relief money in advance to tide the refugees over the period of resettlement.<sup>27</sup> The Committee also asked the Duc d'Harcourt to intercede with the ministry on its behalf.<sup>28</sup>

Individual refugees reacted in their own way. Two priests who tried unsuccessfully to escape to France caused a stir. At first they were thought to be carrying intelligence to the enemy, but it turned out that they 'were merely driven away by the terror of being otherwise sent to Canada'.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Draft letter to Gordon and Dalrymple, [16] July 1796, W.O.1/607, p. 329.

<sup>26</sup> J. Dumaresq to Bouillon, 9 Sept. 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 134.

<sup>27</sup> Comte de Bedée et al. to Bouillon, 30 July 1796, *ibid.*, f. 166. Botherel also approached Bouillon on behalf of the refugees: Botherel to Bouillon, *und.*, H.O.69/18, f. 15.

<sup>28</sup> Jersey Committee to d'Harcourt, 30 July [1796], H.O.69/32, f. 212(i).

<sup>29</sup> Windham to [Bouillon?], 5 Aug. 1796, H.O.69/1, f. 19.

One soldier advanced cogent reasons for wishing to stay on Jersey. He spoke no English, he was comfortably settled, a rich islander friend helped him along and he had a beautiful French-speaking mistress who cost him nothing. Perhaps she was rather common, but 'étant vieux et laid je ne vais pas perdre mon tems a chercher une Vestale. De plus vous [Bouillon] êtes mon général. C'est beaucoup'.<sup>30</sup> Not every émigré was so philosophical. All the anguish of exile and upheaval lay in the words of the young emigrant who reportedly said:

that if he should be so happy as to set his foot once more on his native land, he would never leave it on any account; and if he had children, in teaching them the ten commandments, he would add one of his own, which should be -- 'Thou shalt not emigrate, neither shalt thou take up arms in defence of religion'.<sup>31</sup>

Gordon and Bouillon might express anti-émigré sentiments from time to time, but they were quick to spring to their defence when the government ordered the French from the islands. They thought that the evacuation would cause unnecessary hardship to some of the refugees, and appealed to Portland on their behalf. Gordon placed the old and infirm in the last group to be embarked, while awaiting further instructions, and asked 'in what manner the women and Children are to be disposed of'.<sup>32</sup> He enlisted Bouillon's support in requesting the ministers to allow some exceptions to the order. Bouillon made a strong plea on behalf of the old, infirm, women and children. He described some veterans as incapable 'of moving again any where but to their graves', while some ladies were in 'a very Sickly State'. He and Gordon solicited the continuation of the relief allowances to such people.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Francheville to Bouillon, 21 July [1796], P.C.1/115, f. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Hampshire Chronicle 20 Aug. 1796.

<sup>32</sup> Gordon to Portland, 20 July 1796, H.O.98/6, unf.

<sup>33</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 21 July 1796, P.C.1/117B, ff. 107-8.

Dalrymple took a similar stance. He did not interpret his orders to include persons resident before the Revolution, or labourers untainted with suspicion, so a dozen refugees stayed on Guernsey.<sup>34</sup> Portland readily agreed to allow 'several old and infirm Men, and some Women and Children' to remain on Jersey. He told Gordon to exercise his own judgement on the matter and to continue their allowance as before.<sup>35</sup> It was characteristic of Portland to grant discretionary powers to the man on the spot.

By 25 July, 2,900 refugees were ready to embark for Southampton, including the forty or fifty for whom Gordon had hoped to gain an exemption. Three boatloads of them were sent within the next twelve days.<sup>36</sup> In the meantime, Portland had obtained a grant of £1 per head for removal expenses, and decided to divert six hundred of the clergy to the north of England.<sup>37</sup> Already there were signs that he was softening the evacuation order, for he extended the exemptions to include people in an established trade or occupation which gave them a livelihood.<sup>38</sup>

There remained the question of what relief money was to be paid to the evacuees. The clergy presented no particular problem, as they were paid from

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<sup>34</sup> Dalrymple to Portland, 28 July 1796, H.O.98/25, f. 34.

<sup>35</sup> Portland to Gordon, 25 July 1796, H.O.99/1, pp. 263-4. Windham asked Bouillon and Gordon to use their discretion to mitigate the sufferings of the refugees: Windham to [Bouillon], 5 Aug. 1796, H.O.69/1, f. 19

<sup>36</sup> Gordon to Dundas, 25 July 1796, W.O.1/607, 334; Portland to Gordon, 10 Aug. 1796, H.O.99/1, p. 266.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.; Treasury Minutes, 4 Aug. 1796, T.29/69, p. 364. Also, see above, p. 67.

<sup>38</sup> Portland to Gordon, 10 Aug. 1796, H.O.99/1, pp. 266-7.

London already. Those who went north were grouped into districts and an agent appointed for each to distribute the funds sent from London.<sup>39</sup> It was the French laity in Southampton, now 'pleine comme un oeuf',<sup>40</sup> who presented the real problem.

Bureaucratic bungling had left the refugees there without means of support. The dispersal of responsibility for the refugees was at fault. The Treasury paid the refugees in England, but had recently forbidden Wilmot's Committee to enlarge its lists under any pretext. The War Department paid the Jersey list, but normally refused the payment of allowances to refugees once they had left the Channel Islands.<sup>41</sup> The War Office was responsible for the military evacuees but had no money available and did not know what to do with them, although Windham promised to do what he could for their relief.<sup>42</sup> Portland, whose evacuation order had created the difficulty, said that as the Home Department had not been involved in supporting the refugees, 'it does not belong to me to give any directions respecting them', although he presumed that those who remained on Jersey would continue to be paid there.<sup>43</sup> One fact was clear in the confusion: the refugees in Southampton were left without support, and many would die unless prompt measures were taken.

Bouillon and Gordon were alive to the danger; Gordon asked help from Portland and Bouillon approached Dundas. The latter move brought a

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<sup>39</sup> See, for example, summaries and accounts of extraordinary relief in T.93/49. For a fuller account of the clergy in the north, see Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 508-17.

<sup>40</sup> De Monti to Bouillon, 14 Sept. 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 133.

<sup>41</sup> De Bedée, de Monti and de Vezé to Bouillon, 23 Aug. 1796, W.O.1/921, pp. 619-21. See also Garnier de La Fosse to Bouillon, 18 Aug. 1796, P.C.1/117A, f. 67.

<sup>42</sup> Windham to [Bouillon?], 8 [Sept.] 1796, H.O.69/17, f. 26.

<sup>43</sup> Portland to Gordon, 13 Sept. 1796, H.O.99/1, p. 274.

temporary solution early in September when Dundas gave Bouillon permission to continue payments on the Jersey lists to the evacuees.<sup>44</sup> Bouillon moved quickly. Within a week he had despatched de Monti to Southampton as his provisional commissioner there, armed with a set of regulations to govern relief administration for the evacuees in England.<sup>45</sup> However, not all the evacuees in Southampton were covered on the lists, as some had been self-supporting in Jersey, while the presence in the area of the Toulonese<sup>46</sup> and the disbanded émigré cadres, maintained on separate lists, complicated matters. The riots that broke out in Southampton in September, when French workmen offered to undercut the wages of local labourers, soon added to the chaos.<sup>47</sup>

The task of sorting out the evacuees had already begun in August. Portland sent Baron de Nantiat of the French Committee to Southampton to aid the Deputy Barrack-Master General in preparing the settlement of the refugees, and La Marche visited the town to organise the clergy on their arrival. Then the Home Office sent Abbé de Tromelin to replace de Nantiat, in charge of all the non-military refugees, while the War Office assumed responsibility for the soldiers.<sup>48</sup>

The arrival in September of de Monti, bringing with him lists of the three hundred Jersey evacuees whom he was to pay, and the money with which

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<sup>44</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 11 Aug. 1796, W.O.1/921, pp. 586-7. Bouillon to Huskisson, 13 Sept. 1796, H.O.98/6, unf.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Also, see below, p. 242.

<sup>46</sup> Those under Otway's control: see above, pp. 306-7.

<sup>47</sup> De Bedée to [?], 27 Sept. 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 176.

<sup>48</sup> Portland to Major Lewis, 30 July 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 64; King to Mayor of Southampton, 6, 19 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 76-7, 102; King to Ridding, 31 Aug. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 127.

to pay them, should have relieved the most pressing needs of the refugees, who had been without money for several weeks. But the self-important de Monti proved incompetent. His claim to be the paymaster for all the refugees in Southampton, rather than for one group only, brought importunities from those not on the lists. Believing that he needed a banker's authority to make his payments, and that his exertions were needed to gain assistance for the workmen, he rushed off to London without paying any of the refugees at all. While in London, he invited the Comte de Villiers, a former member of the Jersey Committee, to act as agent for paying those Jersey evacuees who had already moved to London, but de Monti then left without advancing any funds.

On de Monti's return to Southampton, laxity on his part enabled a few French workmen to claim from both his list and the temporary fund for workmen who were not normally entitled to relief. He also incurred Bouillon's wrath by hiring an Englishman to act as a translator, thus increasing office expenses. These mistakes, the unwarranted trip to London and the delay in payments to the refugees, by then in dire straits, brought an angry reaction from Bouillon and the Jersey Committee. The latter urged Bouillon to recall him to Jersey, but when the unhappy and penitent de Monti begged permission to return there to his old job or go to London to assist de Villiers, the Jersey Committee asked to be spared his services.<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless, he later rejoined the Jersey administration.

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<sup>49</sup> De Monti to Bouillon, 14, 21 Sept. 1796, H.O.69/33, ff. 133, 134; de Villiers to Bouillon, 23 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 149; de Bedée to [?], 27 Sept. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 176; de Monti to Bouillon, 14 Oct. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 135; Jersey Committee to de Monti, 3 Nov. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 163; de Bedée to Bouillon 6 Nov. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 62; de Monti to Bouillon 8 Dec. 1796, *ibid.*, f. 137; Jersey Committee to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 167.

The accommodation of the refugees in Southampton was only temporary; the outward drift began within days, with London the main attraction. Residence in Southampton was forbidden under the Alien Act, so the government used it merely as a staging-post of the evacuation. Eventually, the administration of the Jersey list in England shifted to London, where de Villiers assumed charge of it.

Refugees returning to the Channel Islands made up part of the exodus from Southampton. Even before the evacuation was completed, Portland gave permission for 'families comfortably established, and having acquired a Property, or the means of gaining a livelihood which will be destroyed by their removal', to stay on in Jersey.<sup>50</sup> By 9 October, there were 663 refugees still resident, some from these categories and others who refused to leave, short of force.<sup>51</sup> They were lucky: on 26 October 1796 Portland halted further removals, as the danger of imminent invasion had passed. Moreover, he decided that any persons already evacuated who had means of livelihood in the Channel Islands might return there.<sup>52</sup>

Portland adopted the procedure of sending lists of applicants to Gordon or Dalrymple for their comments before granting or refusing the requests.<sup>53</sup> Dalrymple tried to get certificates from islanders guaranteeing the conduct and support of the applicants, when possible.<sup>54</sup> Applications to return to the Channel Islands from former officers were referred to the War Office,

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<sup>50</sup>Portland to Gordon, 30 Aug. 1796, H.O.99/1, p. 271.

<sup>51</sup>Gordon to Portland, 9 Oct. 1796, H.O.98/6, unf.

<sup>52</sup>Portland to Dalrymple and Gordon, 26 Oct. 1796, H.O.99/1, pp. 283-4.

<sup>53</sup>See, for example, Gordon to Portland, 1 Nov. 1796, H.O.98/6, unf.; Portland to Dalrymple, 8 Nov. 1796, H.O.99/1, pp. 285-7; Portland to Gordon, 25 Nov. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>54</sup>Dalrymple to Portland, 6 Dec. 1796, H.O.98/25, f. 75.



for Portland's policy was to grant them permission only if they were unfit for service through age or ill-health.<sup>55</sup> For the non-military, family connections in the islands became a further ground for being permitted to return.<sup>56</sup> Because most of the returning refugees had some means of support, there was little increase in the numbers on relief. This, and the impact of the evacuation, can be seen in the relief numbers for the twelve months to March 1797:<sup>57</sup>

1796:	March:	948
	June:	976
	September:	563
	December:	575
1797:	March:	593

The continuation of the secours extraordinaire preoccupied the Jersey Committee. Its desire to retain the whole or a substantial portion for the refugees in Jersey, rather than share it equitably with the evacuees in London, drew La Marche's ire once again. Both parties called Bouillon into the dispute, and he ruled that it should be divided proportionately between the two groups according to their numbers.<sup>58</sup> Later, the War Department stopped the grant altogether; Botherel blamed Bouillon for this,

<sup>55</sup> Carter to Woodford, 26 Nov. 1796, H.O.5/2, pp. 219-20; Greville to Le Mesurier, 5 Dec. 1796, *ibid.*, p. 226. For conditions of discharge and severance pay, see Windham to Comte d'Williamson, 1 Nov. 1796, A.O.3/905, unf.

<sup>56</sup> Carter to Botherel, 30 Nov. 1796, H.O.5/2, p. 222.

<sup>57</sup> Compiled from accounts in H.O.69/39. The figures represent the highest total in each month.

<sup>58</sup> De Bedée to Bouillon, 26 Nov. 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 63; La Marche to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 30; La Marche to Bouillon, 24 March 1797, P.C.1/118A, f. 217; La Marche to Jersey Committee, 24 March 1797, *ibid.*; de Bedée to Botherel, 11 July [1797], H.O.69/34, f. 136.

but in fact it was caused by the government's reorganisation of relief procedures during 1797.<sup>59</sup>

The reorganisation was sorely needed. The set of regulations which Bouillon had drafted for de Monti's guidance in September 1796<sup>60</sup> had laid down a procedure for relief administration. Each month, those eligible for relief were to send the commissioner 'un certificate de vie et de résidence signe du maire ou officier municipal du lieu de son domicile'; in places where twenty or more refugees resided, the certificates might be collected on one paper and attested by two of their number, to be nominated by Bouillon. After receiving the certificates, the commissioner was to send a statement to the Jersey Committee, to be presented to Bouillon so that he might then make out and send the voucher for payments. As far as possible, payments would be made in the first eight days of the month; the secours ordinaire would be paid for the coming month and the secours extraordinaire for the month past. Receipts were to be signed by the recipient or his delegate. In all cases where the commissioner found a case outside the regulations, he was to write directly to the Jersey Committee, for them to pass on to Bouillon for a definitive ruling.<sup>61</sup>

This procedure was designed to prevent double claims or claims for dead people's allowances, dangers inherent in such a decentralised system of distribution. But the decentralisation itself caused much of the problem. Sending funds from the government in London to the evacuees in England

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<sup>59</sup> Botherel to [Windham?], 9 April 1797, B.M. Add. Ms 37863, ff. 339-40; de Bedée to Botherel, 11 July [1797], H.O.69/34, f. 136. De Bedée strongly defended Bouillon: *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> 'Règlement du Prince de Bouillon...', 10 Sept. 1796, T.93/31, ff. 81-2.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

via Bouillon in Jersey was cumbersome, delaying payments to people who lived on the edge of penury. Besides, proper supervision from Jersey proved impossible, and neither the Jersey Committee nor Bouillon was happy with the arrangement.<sup>62</sup> The refugees on Guernsey had the same problems. In January 1797, after a three month delay in payments, Dalrymple tried to get payments made directly, to 'prevent the Delay at present unoidably occasioned from its passing through the Hands of so many Persons, and coming to them after its going circuitously to Jersey'.<sup>63</sup> By then Bouillon had had his fill of 'the troublesome & unthankful office of that administration'. 'I am tired of being persecuted & worried by these people', he told Thomas Saumarez, 'Would to God they were all again in their Country'.<sup>64</sup>

The government's first attempts to change these arrangements succeeded only in making matters worse for the evacuees. In March 1797 Dundas made the first move by informing the Treasury that the War Department would no longer make payments to the evacuees in England, as this had been but a temporary expedient until new arrangements could be made. The Treasury instructed Bouillon to draw only for those on the island in future, so he sent back a nominal list of 536 refugees in England to be paid in April.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> De Bedée to Bouillon, 26 Nov. 1796, H.O.69/33, f. 63; de Bedée to Bouillon, und., *ibid.*, f. 65; Bouillon to T. Saumarez, 26 Jan. 1797, H.O.69/9, f. 109.

<sup>63</sup> T. Saumarez to Bouillon, 24 Jan. 1797, *ibid.*, f. 108.

<sup>64</sup> Bouillon to T. Saumarez, 26 Jan. 1797, *ibid.*, f. 109.

<sup>65</sup> Long to Bouillon, 16 March 1797, T.27/48, pp. 83-4; Long to King, 28 March 1797, *ibid.*, p. 104; Bouillon to Huskisson, 28 March 1798, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, p. 52; T.93/31, f. 99.

The Treasury referred the War Department decision to Portland, pointing out that Bouillon would pay only the refugees in Jersey in future, making it necessary that 'some Plan should be forthwith adopted for the Payment of those removed to Southampton'.<sup>66</sup>

Dundas probably took this move to force other ministers into making the promised 'new arrangements', but in fact changes were deferred until April, then June, while the Treasury and the Home Department negotiated. The scheme they agreed on was that the Home Department should take charge of the Channel Islands evacuees, but that payments and their superintendence should be made through Wilmot's Committee in London. Probably because of poorly worded instructions, both the War Department and Bouillon thought that Wilmot's Committee was to have charge of all Channel Islands refugees, and that Bouillon could relinquish the relief administration.<sup>67</sup> He appointed two English inspectors to review and report on the Jersey Committee's work and accounts, then submitted the accounts and vouchers to the Treasury to be audited and closed.<sup>68</sup>

Bouillon was not to be rid of his burden so easily. The Jersey Committee pointed out that some form of administration would be needed in Jersey itself, to keep the lists up to date in the face of continual minor adjustments. Whatever form this administration took, a superintendent would

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<sup>66</sup> Long to King, 20 March 1797, T.27/48, p. 104.

<sup>67</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 24 May 1797, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, pp. 88-90; Huskisson to Bouillon, 31 May 1797, W.O.6/1, pp. 97-8; Woodford to Bouillon, 9 June 1797, H.O.69/1, f. 56; Treasury Minutes, 13 June 1797, T.29/70, pp. 371-2.

<sup>68</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 24 May 1797, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, pp. 88-90; Bouillon to Huskisson, 13 June 1797, *ibid.*, pp. 106-7. An earlier report on the Jersey Committee is recorded in Dumaresq and M. Fosset to Bouillon, 12 Dec. 1796, T.93/31, ff. 60-71 (copy by Bouillon). Dumaresq's and Fosset's second inspection, on 4 April 1797, is reported in *ibid.*, ff. 75-9.

be needed, 'et nous croyons que le gouvernement a apprécié ce que le prince de Bouillon a fait à cet égard'.<sup>69</sup> The Committee also wanted Hemery Brothers retained as bankers on the island, as they had always been sympathetic to the refugees and had often advanced them money when relief payments were in arrears. It sought the help of Botherel and La Marche in approaching the government to have Bouillon retained in charge of the Jersey lists.<sup>70</sup> In October, de Villiers wrote to Bouillon from London: 'j'ay éprouvé une peine bien sensible en apprenant que vous aviez abandonné vos enfants sortis de jersai, et que vous ne vouliés plus vous mêler de leurs secours', and assured him of his continued popularity.<sup>71</sup>

De Villiers need not have worried; in October Bouillon re-entered the fray on behalf of the refugees over the long delay in payments. Between them, the War Department, the Jersey Committee and Bouillon had wound up the previous relief administration, but the Home Department had sent no instructions for new arrangements and no money, so that the refugees in Jersey had received nothing since May. Bouillon's enquiries finally brought to light the hiatus in arrangements between the Home Department and the War Department.<sup>72</sup> John King instructed Bouillon to draw two months' allowance

<sup>69</sup> Jersey Committee to Comte [de Botherel?], 12 June 1797, P.C.1/118A, f. 57.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.; de Bedée to Botherel, 11 July [1797], H.O.69/34, f. 136.

<sup>71</sup> De Villiers to Bouillon, 13 Oct. 1797, *ibid.*, f. 129. Bouillon may have been in need of reassurance; he had earlier complained of calumnies made against him by some of the émigrés: Woodford to Bouillon, 27 March, 2 June 1797, H.O.69/1, ff. 34, 53; Bouillon to Huskisson, 5 Oct. 1798, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, p. 331.

<sup>72</sup> Draft of Jersey Committee's memorial to Bouillon, 17 Oct. 1797, H.O.69/34, f. 137; Bouillon to Huskisson, 23 Oct. 1797, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, pp. 170-1; King to Bouillon, 27 Oct. 1797, H.O.43/10, pp. 91-2.

on the Treasury while the matter was being worked out. From November, Bouillon drew directly from the Treasury, which referred his drafts to Portland for approval before paying them.<sup>73</sup> Bouillon was thus resaddled with his former responsibilities for refugee relief, and had no further break from them until 1802.

Sheer inefficiency and lack of communication between government departments had left the refugees in Jersey without funds for five months. Much of the blame lay with Dundas. He had precipitated the changes by stopping payments to the evacuees in England, and Portland's specific recommendation had been to place this group under the control of Wilmot's Committee, increasing its grant accordingly.<sup>74</sup> War Department officials had assumed that both groups were included in the change, and had so instructed Bouillon. It says little for Treasury efficiency that the hiatus in payments and administration went unnoticed,<sup>75</sup> but 1797 was the nadir of Britain's war-time fortunes and finances, and doubtless the matter was lost in the press of other business.

### III

Some gains did result from the administrative chaos which followed the hastily-conceived evacuation of the Channel Islands. By the end of 1797, the responsibility for refugee relief there had been put in the hands of the Home Office, which was already in charge of civil affairs on the islands,

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 92; Long to King, 11 Nov. 1797, 31 Jan., 16 March 1798, H.O.28/41, pp. 5, 34, 47.

<sup>74</sup>Treasury Minutes, 13 June 1797, T.29/70, p. 372.

<sup>75</sup>The Treasury was also very slow; Portland's recommendation had been made on 3 April: *ibid.*, p.371.

and had also Toulonese and Corsican evacuees in its care. This reduced to two the departments involved in refugee welfare. Placing the administration of the lists of Channel Islands evacuees with Wilmot's Committee consolidated the position of that body and was a further step in the centralisation of the management of French refugee relief.

Wilmot's Committee arranged for the list in London to be maintained separately, with de Villiers as treasurer. It sent him a copy of its regulations and suggested that he, de Lucinière, Botherel, du Tresor and Bouillon might form 'un Comité pour assister le Comité Anglois sur le même principe et sous les même Reglemens que le Comité des autres mm: Emigrés Francois a Londres'.<sup>76</sup> Such a committee was formed, but no lists of its exact membership appear to have survived. Thus Wilmot's Committee applied for and received the monthly grant of relief funds, formulated rules and policy and had the final decision on entrants to the various lists under its control. It apportioned the grant between the French Committee, the Jersey Committee in London and La Marche. They in turn maintained their respective lists, processed applications and distributed the funds to the recipients.

1797 was a difficult year for Wilmot's Committee, as well as for the refugees. The Treasury forbade it to admit any applicants who arrived after 1 January 1797. The clergy evicted from Winchester had to be re-settled. The return movement to France and its reversal after Fructidor meant continued adjustments to the lists. It had trouble fixing the demarcation of responsibility for the welfare of ex-soldiers between itself and the

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<sup>76</sup>Hughes to de Villiers [ca Aug. 1797], T.93/8, f. 39.

War Office, while the disbanding of the cadres brought a rash of applications to the French Committee.<sup>77</sup> Funds were constantly in arrears. In March, Wilmot pleaded with the Treasury for their prompt payment. He told Charles Long:

All are in the greatest distress -- Most of them are Sick and exhausted from Want & misery -- They are in debt for Lodging & Board near 3 months -- The Hospitals are full & the Jails & Streets must soon receive them. -- There are so many in Bedlam that there is difficulty in getting Admission for more ... 78

The plight of the refugees doubtless added to the strains imposed on the working members of the Committee.

Late in 1797, some members of Wilmot's Committee rebelled. It is not clear who was involved as the minute book covering this period has not survived, but Wilmot almost certainly disagreed with the malcontents. The aim of these members was to rid themselves of responsibility for all lay relief.<sup>79</sup> The Committee had then been in existence for over five years; it had evolved from a private charitable body assisting French clergy alone to an executive committee answerable to the Treasury. It was now responsible for about seven thousand French refugees, split into several categories. Much of the complexity of business stemmed from the laity, with its various groups and differing pay scales, and the transfer of the Channel Island evacuees into the committee's charge added to this burden. A return to dealing with the clergy alone would greatly simplify the Committee's business, and make it less time-consuming for its members.

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<sup>77</sup> See the applications dealt with on 6 April 1797, T.93/54, f. 54/126-32.

<sup>78</sup> Wilmot to Long, 16 March 1797, T.93/8, f. 32.

<sup>79</sup> Treasury Minutes, 31 January 1798, T.29/72, p. 56; Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, pp. 76-7.



The Treasury's reaction was to invite Wilmot and Colonel Thomas Glyn<sup>80</sup> to undertake the administration of the relief grants; this included the superintendence of claims and payment of allowances to the clergy, the laity, the Jersey evacuees and the special lists of magistrates, naval officers and army officers. The Treasury instructed Wilmot and Glyn to pay only those who fell within the rules, to admit no new persons and to propose any alterations that they considered necessary. In view of the time and trouble the extra responsibility would cost Wilmot and Glyn, the Treasury stated its willingness to ask Parliament to provide them with compensation. Wilmot and Glyn accepted the proposal.<sup>81</sup>

The old voluntary committee retained its formal existence through its small private fund, which Wilmot and Metcalfe continued to administer.<sup>82</sup> Strictly speaking, therefore, Wilmot and Glyn formed a new administrative body. But the continuity of personnel and administrative practices was such that it was, in effect, the old organisation under a revised scheme of management. This change marked a new stage of administrative development of the organisation, as it had become a quasi-government body. Wilmot and Glyn each received an honorarium of £300 a year,<sup>83</sup> making them more in the nature of government commissioners than philanthropists, and

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<sup>80</sup> (1756-1813), a colonel in the Grenadier Guards, and a younger brother of Sir Richard Carr Glyn, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1798, and himself a former member of Wilmot's Committee. Thomas Glyn remained involved with refugee relief administration until the year of his death: Sir John Bernard Burke, A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Peerage and Baronetage, the Privy Council, Knightage and Companionship (105th edn, London, 1970), p. 1112.

<sup>81</sup> Long to Wilmot and T. Glyn, 3 Feb. 1798, T.27/49, pp. 192-3; Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 5 Feb. 1798, T. 93/2, ff. 4-5.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, accounts in T.93/50, ff. 619, 621, 623-4.

<sup>83</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Audit Commissioners, 21 Feb. 1807, T.93/6, unf.

correspondingly less independent of the government in form, although in practice their predecessors had followed Treasury instructions once it became the paymaster. The organisation continued its evolution into a formal agency of government; by 1807 Wilmot and Glyn referred to themselves as 'Commissioners', and to the office as the 'Emigrant Office'.<sup>84</sup> The relief committee had come a long way since its first meeting in September 1792.

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

CHAPTER 9REFUGEE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION 1798-1802AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REFUGEE COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

## I

By 1798 the British government had gathered under its wing a number of groups of French refugees. This had happened not so much through conscious government policy as through ad hoc decisions on the part of Pitt, Dundas and Portland in their ministerial capacities. As a consequence, the composition of the groups and the modes by which they were administered had been decided by historical accident rather than administrative logic. The government had made some attempt to rationalise its fragmented administration by giving the clergy relief organisation, Wilmot's Committee, charge of the laity in England from late 1794 and the lay evacuees from the Channel Islands from mid-1797.

In 1798, again by force of circumstance, the government was saddled with another refugee group - the St Domingans - and another administrative body, the St Domingo Claims Board. The government made no further consolidation of administrative bodies, but between 1798 and 1802 rationalised its financial arrangements by giving the reformed Wilmot's Committee auditing responsibility for three groups in turn: the Toulonese and Corsican evacuees (1799), the St Domingans (1799) and the Jersey laity (1802). At this point, it may be useful to look more closely at these groups and to examine their progress and eventual linkage to Wilmot's Committee.

The administration of relief to the Toulonese and Corsicans was made more difficult by their dispersal in small groups around the Mediterranean and Great Britain, and the consequent fragmentation of administration between British residents abroad and Otway of the Transport Office at home. The latter had specific charge of the Toulonese soldiers and seamen; other Toulonese and Corsicans

who drifted into the kingdom from 1798 fell to the care of Minto, who had thought to be free of them once he returned home.

The continued penetration of Napoleon's armies into the Italian and Iberian peninsulas caused further shifts among the refugees in the Mediterranean. In 1799 Portland gave Sir Morton Eden, the envoy in Vienna, permission to relieve any French or Corsican pensioners who were forced there from Italy.<sup>1</sup> A small group of them subsequently settled in Vienna, and they were there to greet Minto in 1801 on his arrival as envoy.<sup>2</sup> In September 1799 thirty Toulonese arrived at Deptford on a transport ship from Gibraltar; others from Naples bound for the same place went ashore at Milford Haven, and decided to remain there rather than continue their journey.<sup>3</sup>

By this time, Wilmot and Glyn had taken over the payments to Toulonese and Corsicans resident in London. On 24 June 1799 the Treasury instructed them to pay those on the list quarterly allowances, as hitherto paid by Minto, and to apply for an additional amount in their usual estimates to cover the extra cost.<sup>4</sup> Thus the Treasury became directly responsible for this group. Victor Amyot, a Toulonese, had had charge of the distribution list in London for Minto, and he appears to have continued in charge under the new régime.<sup>5</sup>

A list of the Toulonese and Corsicans residing in London accompanied the Treasury's instructions. Thereafter the Treasury bedevilled Wilmot and Glyn

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<sup>1</sup>W. Wickham to Canning, 22 March 1799, H.O.5/4, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup>Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 18 Feb. 1801, T.93/4, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup>Flint to Captain of Ann Transport, 30 Sept. 1799, H.O.5/5, p. 74; Flint to Mayor of Milford Haven, 30 Sept., 1 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*, pp. 75-6, 76-7.

<sup>4</sup>Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 24 June 1799, T.93/2, ff. 216-7.

<sup>5</sup>V. Amyot to [Minto], 30 Aug., 7 Oct. 1799, N.L.S. Ms 11217, ff. 74, 76; Hughes to V. Amyot, 18 Oct. 1799, T.93/9, unf.

with requests for information on the 'general list' of Toulonese and Corsicans, ignoring their repeated denials of any knowledge concerning refugees abroad.<sup>6</sup> Wilmot's and Glyn's own payments were rendered more difficult by the movement abroad of their new pensioners. On their requesting instructions, the Treasury told them not to pay Toulonese abroad except on special orders from the Treasury, nor Corsicans unless they had been so paid by Minto.<sup>7</sup> The Committee's new task seemed more trouble than it was worth: by 1800 it had only eight to ten people on the list.<sup>8</sup>

The government reappraised the situation of the Toulonese and Corsicans during the peace negotiations. In 1801 Portland directed that payments to French and Corsicans abroad should cease until further notice once the definitive treaty was concluded.<sup>9</sup> Those in England seemed more secure, although Captain Otway discharged some of the Toulonese officers 'on account of their being young, healthy, and capable of gaining a Livelihood'.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand the Treasury, on Minto's recommendation, raised and continued the allowances of several Toulonese who 'are actually proscribed, and cannot return to their Native Country',<sup>11</sup> and it eventually conceded that those Corsicans who wished to go abroad might negotiate to 'receive a Compensation for their Pensions'.<sup>12</sup> Thus

<sup>6</sup>Hughes to King, 23 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*; Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 3 Jan. 1800, T.93/4, p. 77; Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 1 Sept. 1800, T.93/9, unf.; Wilmot and Glyn to J.H. Addington, 30 May 1801, T.93/4, p. 153; Wilmot and Glyn to N. Vansittart, 5 Sept. 1801, *ibid.*, pp. 218-9.

<sup>7</sup>Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 5 April 1800, T.93/2, f. 329; Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 30 Aug. 1800, T.93/4, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup>See quarterly accounts for Toulonese and Corsican emigrants, due 20 April, 20 July 1800, T.93/3, ff. 26, 58. For accounts before 20 April 1800, see *ibid.*, ff. 124-5, 181, 225, 280, 353, 434, 438.

<sup>9</sup>Addington to Lord Hervey, 24 Nov. 1801, T.28/41, p. 454.

<sup>10</sup>Treasury Minutes, 10 Dec. 1802, T.29/80, pp. 66-7.

<sup>11</sup>Treasury Minutes, 13 Nov. 1802, T.29/79, pp. 405-6.

<sup>12</sup>Minutes 22 Oct. 1802, T.93/4, p. 431.

decisions regarding the Toulonese and Corsicans continued to be based on the interplay between immediate need and the government's sense of obligation.

The case of the Toulonese and Corsicans from 1798 shows British administration at its benevolent best and organisational worst. The Toulonese then received about double the allowances of the ordinary laity,<sup>13</sup> while some Corsicans received up to £300 per annum.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, sixty-three Toulonese and Corsicans still received pensions from the government as late as 1836.<sup>15</sup> However, the dispersal of recipients and administrators and the varying rates of allowances made administration piecemeal and inefficient. The government was fortunate that Minto gave some sort of continuity over the years through his continued interest in the refugees.

In 1798 the government acquired a new group of French pensioners when it evacuated St Domingo. Late that year the Treasury appointed a committee to investigate the cases of St Domingo claimants.<sup>16</sup> In its report to the Treasury on 6 November 1799 the committee recommended that applicants be divided into five classes: the first three were graded according to property loss and present need for relief, and might receive a lump sum in compensation and possibly an additional monthly allowance; the fourth contained mainly the widows and children of deceased officers, and might receive monthly allowances during the king's pleasure; and the fifth class comprised those whose claims should be disallowed on the grounds that their property was outside the limit of territory accorded British protection, that they lacked documentation or that they fell outside the province of the committee. It recommended total bounty

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Minto to Otway, 21 April 1802, N.L.S. Ms 11216, f. 77.

<sup>14</sup> For example, M. Balestrino in the quarterly accounts for Toulonese and Corsicans, due 20 April 1800, T.93/9, f. 26.

<sup>15</sup> See 'Account of Thomas Crafer Paymaster...' for the year ending 31 March 1837, A.O.3/276, unf.

<sup>16</sup> Rose to King, 15 Dec. 1798, T.28/41, p. 138.

payments of £13,360, and a grant of £751.5.6 to cover monthly allowances for the nine months to 30 September 1799.<sup>17</sup>

The Treasury agreed to pay the monthly allowances to that date, but decided that future allowances should be paid through Wilmot's Committee.<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, on 9 January 1800 Long sent the lists of St Domingo pensioners to Wilmot and Glyn, instructing them to pay the allowances from 30 September last, and to include the requisite sums in their future monthly estimates.<sup>19</sup>

Fifty people, mainly women and children, received the first monthly allowances paid by Wilmot and Glyn.<sup>20</sup> Thereafter between sixteen and twenty names appeared on the lists in the next eighteen months, but these probably represented heads of households, in which case numbers remained fairly stable.<sup>21</sup> The approximate average monthly disbursement was £70. In 1837 the government was still paying eleven people a total of about £55 a month so the pensions, although small, were long-lasting.<sup>22</sup> In 1800 the claims committee was formally constituted into the St Domingo Claims Commission, composed of three commissioners and a secretary.<sup>23</sup> St Domingo pensioners were barred from receiving allowances from the general laity fund, but unsuccessful applicants to the Commission might apply to Wilmot's Committee in the normal way.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Treasury Minutes, 6 Nov. 1799, T.29/75, pp. 182-3.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 184.

<sup>19</sup>Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 9 Jan. 1800, T.93/2, ff. 282-3.

<sup>20</sup>Minutes 13 May 1800, *ibid.*, f. 355.

<sup>21</sup>T.93/3, ff. 23-5, 42-3, 60-1, 78-9, 91, 122, 147, 174, 180.

<sup>22</sup>'Account of Thomas Crafer Paymaster...' for the year ended 31 March 1837, A.O.3/276, unf.

<sup>23</sup>Long to Huskisson, 8, 16 May 1800, T.28/41, pp. 278-9, 282. Robert Mackenzie, John Murray and William O'Brien were the commissioners, and 'Mr Martin' the secretary. J. Benjafield later replaced Mackenzie. Reports of the Commission are contained in T.81/1-4. See also an unsigned memorandum in the Windham Papers, suggesting that the claims were slow to be settled: Memorandum 16 Jan. 1800, B.M. Add. Ms 37867, ff. 5-7.

<sup>24</sup>Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 30 Aug. 1800, T.93/3, f. 47.

The last and most important group to form a connection with Wilmot's Committee was the laity in Jersey. This did not happen until 1802, and was then only an auditing arrangement, so Bouillon and General Gordon remained the most important administrators as far as the refugees were concerned. Financial arrangements had remained stable until then. Bouillon drew Treasury bills on Hemerys' Bank, then sent the accounts and vouchers to the Treasury, which referred them to the Home Office for verification before paying them.<sup>25</sup> As there were considerable arrears due to the refugees by February 1798,<sup>26</sup> arising from the hiatus in payments during 1797, Portland instructed Bouillon to draw for up to two months at a time at 'an interval of six weeks or two months between each set of Bills until these arrears are discharged'.<sup>27</sup> The Jersey Committee continued to handle the distribution under Bouillon's superintendence, while Captain John Dumaresq assisted the Committee and presented Bouillon's accounts in London.<sup>28</sup>

The only noteworthy change, then, was in May 1802, when the Treasury sent Bouillon's accounts to Wilmot and Glyn, asking 'whether you can undertake to inspect and examine these Accounts and to report thereon from time to time'.<sup>29</sup> This request also included accounts from British Residents in Rome, Trieste, Naples, Florence and Lisbon, so it was part of the trend to have Wilmot and Glyn oversee accounts for those refugee groups not under their immediate supervision. Wilmot and Glyn accepted the new task.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> King to Bouillon, 9 Feb. 1798, H.O.43/10, p. 245; Bouillon to the Secretaries of the Treasury, 1 Dec. 1802, T.64/354, unf.; G. Shee to Sargent, 18 Dec. 1802, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> See La Marche to Bouillon, 2 Jan. 1798, H.O.69/35, item 1; King to Bouillon, 9 Jan. 1798, H.O.43/10, pp. 196-7.

<sup>27</sup> King to Bouillon, 9 Feb. 1798, *ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>28</sup> Bouillon to Sir J. Dick, 12 March 1801, F.O.95/611, f. 82.

<sup>29</sup> Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 18 May 1802, T.93/4, pp. 351-2.

<sup>30</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 22 May 1802, *ibid.*, pp. 252-3. See also Sargent to Wilmot and Glyn, 17 July, 28 Sept. 1802, *ibid.*, pp. 418, 421; Wilmot and Glyn to Sargent, 12 Oct. 1802, *ibid.*, pp. 421-3.



Bouillon's inward correspondence for 1800<sup>31</sup> marks that year as a turning point in refugee administration in Jersey. There was a noticeable decrease in letters requesting relief, and a corresponding increase in those requesting passages to France for persons or letters. The major return movement to France had commenced, and Jersey had an important part to play as a staging post on the return route.<sup>32</sup> In December 1800 Gordon reported that there were over a thousand refugees on the island,<sup>33</sup> but this must have included several hundred disbanded soldiers and persons en route to France. Bouillon's accounts show the rapid decline thereafter in the relief disbursements: they dropped from £1,350 in February 1801 to £450 in September 1802. The amount remained fairly stable thereafter.<sup>34</sup> In 1802 numbers of relief dropped from 579 in January to 242 in December.<sup>35</sup>

Bouillon was often used as a channel of communication between the refugees and the government. The Jersey Committee so used him in 1798 when it sought help for the young men from the disbanded cadres. Bouillon's approach to the War Office brought a refusal to aid any men who had received a gratuity on their discharge, other than those over fifty-five years. Henry Green of the War Office had charge of this list, for which Bouillon made the payments in Jersey.<sup>36</sup> In September, however, Woodford told Bouillon that persons reduced from the military establishment at Jersey might be placed on the list if entitled.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup> See H.O.69/37.

<sup>32</sup> For a discussion of the return movement, see below, pp. 353-7.

<sup>33</sup> Gordon to Portland, 1 Dec. 1800, H.O.98/7, unf.

<sup>34</sup> See accounts in T.64/354, unf.

<sup>35</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Sargent, 16 April 1803, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Beaumanoir, de Triac, de Rosnyvinen, du Boishues and de Beauvoir to [Bouillon], 26 Feb. 1798, H.O.69/35, f. 199b; Woodford to Bouillon, 9, 23 March 1798, H.O.69/1, ff. 96, 104; H. Green to Bouillon, 8 June 1798, *ibid.*, f. 123.

<sup>37</sup> Woodford to Bouillon, 29 Sept. 1798, *ibid.*, f. 136.

In December 1800 their allowances were raised to the following levels: men under fifty with wives in Jersey, to 1.3d a day; men aged fifty to sixty, to 1.6d a day; and men over sixty, regardless of marital status, to 1.9d a day.<sup>38</sup> As with ordinary relief, single men below fifty were left to fend for themselves.

The arrival of more Chouans from Brittany, where the Royalist bands were breaking up, added another group to Bouillon's concerns. In June 1798 he informed Dundas that another thirteen had been sent by M. de Chalus, their leader in Brittany, in advance of 'a great Number...said to be invited by M. de Puisaye to Join him in England for a projected Settlement in Canada', and requested instructions.<sup>39</sup> He was told to inform them

that you will furnish them with a speedy means of returning to their own Country, but that if they choose to remain in England they must subsist on their own Industry, as they cannot be provided for from any Public Funds.<sup>40</sup>

The thaw in this attitude did not take long. Two weeks later the War Department decided to allow them a shilling a day from Secret Service funds 'while their Residence here is considered temporary, or for Six Months after their Arrival if they choose to remain in England'.<sup>41</sup> They were welcome to asylum, but were to be discouraged from travelling to London.<sup>42</sup> Apparently a longer-lasting form of relief was later extended to some of them, as in November 1802 the Treasury asked Wilmot and Glyn to pay Royalists from western France at Jersey, on lists transmitted by the Comte de La Chaussée. There were ninety men involved,

<sup>38</sup> Green to Bouillon, 19 Dec. 1800, H.O.69/2, f. 50.

<sup>39</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 6 June 1798, Bouillon's Letterbook, S.J. Ms A5, p. 277. For a detailed account of Puisaye's venture, see: Lucy Elizabeth Textor, 'A colony of émigrés in Canada, 1798-1816', University of Toronto Studies: History and Economics, no. 1, 1905, pp. 1-86.

<sup>40</sup> Woodford to Bouillon, 14 June 1798, H.O.69/1, f. 126.

<sup>41</sup> Woodford to Bouillon, 29 June 1798, *ibid.*, f. 129.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*; Gordon to Bouillon, 1 July 1798, H.O.69/12, f. 62.

paid rates ranging from two to six shillings a day.<sup>43</sup>

These longer term payments may have been part of the government's stock-taking at the Peace of Amiens, as the Royalists were probably forbidden to return to France. Another group that had then to be considered were the former agents of the correspondence. Gordon and Bouillon agreed that something ought to be done for them, so the latter wrote to Lord Hobart, the Secretary for War, pointing out that several of the agents were too well known to be able to return to France. He recommended the agents for their diligence and fidelity, and suggested that the lesser agents might be given a gratuity and passage to France, while those unable to return might be given some kind of allowance and be permitted to become denizens of Jersey.<sup>44</sup> In May 1802, at Hobart's request, Bouillon despatched a list of agents 'that appear by their continued and faithful services during the War to have claims to the consideration of Government'. Three of them had been proscribed from France.<sup>45</sup>

A variety of other requests or tasks fell to Bouillon. His correspondence from 1798 to 1801 includes such diverse matters as an émigré soldier writing from Lisbon to ask if the Prince knew anything of the forty louis which was supposed to have been sent from Normandy to his Jersey address;<sup>46</sup> a letter from another such soldier in Lisbon thanking Bouillon for sending and receiving his correspondence with his parents, which he could not have afforded otherwise;<sup>47</sup> the family of an émigré seaman impressed into the Royal Navy asking to have him

<sup>43</sup> Sargent to Wilmot and Glyn, 20 Nov. 1802, T.27/54, p. 214.

<sup>44</sup> Gordon to Bouillon, 14 Nov. 1801, H.O.69/38, f. 24; Bouillon to Lord Hobart, 7 Dec. 1801, W.O.1/923, pp. 581-2.

<sup>45</sup> Bouillon to Hobart, 31 May 1802, H.O.69/39, f. 223. The list attached to the letter is not the one alluded to, which is probably 'State of Persons employed in the Secret Service at the Island of Jersey May 1802', H.O.98/8, unf. This names Prigent, Bertin and Kersauson as the proscribed agents.

<sup>46</sup> Du Poirieu to Bouillon, 18 Jan. 1798, H.O.69/35, f. 140b.

<sup>47</sup> G. Angot to Bouillon, 2 Feb. 1799, H.O.69/36, f. 9.

exempted from service;<sup>48</sup> and several letters from French prisoners-of-war seeking his help in getting themselves exchanged and sent back to France.<sup>49</sup>

Bouillon also received a number of letters from the irrepressible de Monti, claiming office expenses from the time of his service on the Jersey Committee, asking also to have his allowance paid to him in England, an extension of this benefit and requesting a gratuity and a reference in acknowledgement of his past services. The letter asking for a reference was a gem of its kind. De Monti ignored any mention of the trouble caused by his inept administration in Southampton in 1796-7, while suggesting to Bouillon the terms in which he might write:

je crois pouvoir vous prier d'attester que les Comptes que j'ay eu l'honneur de vous rendre depuis l'epoque de 1794 sont d'une clairté, et d'une exactitude qui ne laisse rien a desirer meme aux scruples de la plus inquiete delicatesse.<sup>50</sup>

De Monti added that he had no objection to Bouillon's adding that he gave the testimony 'comme une preuve authentique de votre haute consideration, et de votre parfaite estime pour moi'.<sup>51</sup> Bouillon twice refused to see de Monti after this missive,<sup>52</sup> but in the main he was remarkably patient in entertaining his proposals.

Between 1800 and 1802 Bouillon importuned several ministers on his own behalf. He had long since tired of the demands of the refugee relief administration and obviously saw it as secondary to the tasks of collecting naval intelligence and running the correspondence. The Admiralty had refused to allow him to take

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<sup>48</sup>Charbonneau to Bouillon, 25 July 1800, H.O.69/37, f. 57.

<sup>49</sup>See, for example, Dubost et al. to Bouillon, 25 July 1800, *ibid.*, f. 76.

<sup>50</sup>De Monti to Bouillon, 26 Feb. 1798, H.O.69/35, f. 130.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup>De Monti to Bouillon, und. [1798], *ibid.*, f. 131.

an active ship, as he was too valuable in his shore station in Jersey.<sup>53</sup> Being shore-based had increased his personal expenses and deprived him of the opportunity of earning prize-money to supplement his captain's pay, on which he depended for his support.

Bouillon pointed out these facts in a letter to Dundas in March 1800. Moreover he claimed that the nature of his services exposed him to more incidental expenses than he might normally have expected. Doubtless these included the many small amounts that he gave to refugees out of his own pocket and hospitality to the agents of the correspondence. He was now in debt to his friends for £3,000 to £4,000. He asked Dundas for compensation and a future allowance, or else that he should be allowed to retire from his present duties.<sup>54</sup> In November 1800 the Admiralty granted him an extra £500 a year.<sup>55</sup> However, Bouillon's position worsened after peace was declared, and he went on to half-pay. His intelligence activities had made him persona non grata with the French government, which dampened his hopes of claiming the Duchy of Bouillon. On a visit to Paris in 1802 he was arrested, imprisoned and interrogated, before being ordered to quit France.<sup>56</sup> He got little from the British government beyond promotion to rear-admiral in 1805.<sup>57</sup>

The laity on Jersey was only one of several groups of refugees that came into the orbit of Wilmot's Committee between 1798 and 1802. The money for the Toulonese in London and abroad, the Corsicans, the St Domingans and the Chouans actually passed through its hands, while its role with the laity in Jersey was

<sup>53</sup> Earl Spencer to Bouillon, 2 July 1798, H.O.69/38, unf.

<sup>54</sup> Bouillon to Dundas, 24 March 1800, W.O.1/923, pp. 147-50.

<sup>55</sup> G.R. Balleine, The Tragedy of Phillippe d'Auvergne: vice-admiral in the Royal Navy and last Duke of Bouillon (London, 1973), p. 94.

<sup>56</sup> Bouillon to Windham, 27 Sept. 1802, B.M. Add. Ms 37869, f. 100.

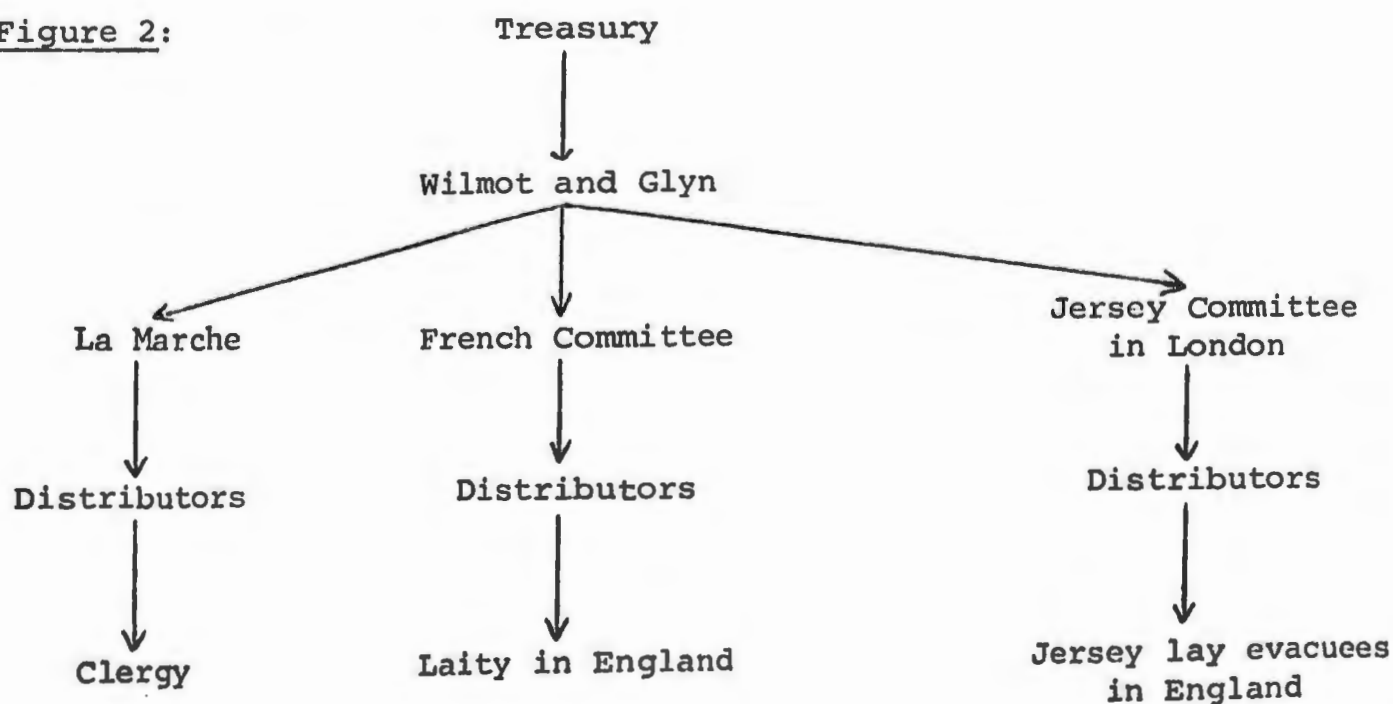
<sup>57</sup> Balleine, Phillippe d'Auvergne, p. 107.

restricted to checking accounts. Although it had no responsibility for policy or supervision of lists, the acquisition of these new tasks did mean that Wilmot and Glyn now checked the accounts concerning all but a few of the French refugees supported by the British government. Thus the government achieved some sort of financial, if not administrative, rationalisation.

## II

Despite their newly-acquired responsibilities, the main task of Wilmot and Glyn between 1798 and 1802 remained the administration of relief to those laity and clergy for whom they were directly responsible. Wilmot and Glyn were now known as the 'Clergy and Laity Committee', the 'Committee for relieving the suffering Clergy and Laity of France', their official title, or simply the 'English Committee', the term favoured by the French. Their replacement of the earlier Committee simplified administration to the extent that clergy and laity business could be dealt with in turn at the one session. The two men considered matters as they arose, asked the Treasury for advice on a ruling when necessary and passed decisions on to the appropriate party, usually La Marche the French Committee or the Jersey Committee in London. The administration thus had a pyramid structure:

Figure 2:



La Marche blurred the lines a little, as funds for some questions concerning the laity passed through his hands.

Part of this structure was used also for deciding on relief applications. Ecclesiastical applicants first petitioned La Marche, while the laity applied to the French Committee. La Marche and this Committee interviewed the applicants, verified their claims and sent the applications, together with their opinions on them, to the English Committee, which conducted further interviews. It in turn sent lists of the applicants, giving their recommendations, to the Treasury for a final decision.<sup>58</sup> When in doubt, Wilmot and Glyn sent details of the case in a separate letter to the Treasury, prior to sending in the list.

This process had several implications. One was that it freed the English Committee from direct pressures of patronage. For instance, the Committee rejected the claim of M. de Montaut for a servant, despite Windham's recommendation of his case, and it told Brooke of the Alien Office and William Taylor of the Foreign Office that candidates who did not comply with the rules for eligibility could not be admitted to the lists without a special order from the Treasury.<sup>59</sup> Conversely, the Treasury could refer on to the Committee for an opinion any letters which it received, written on behalf of a particular refugee.<sup>60</sup> Thus the English Committee and the Treasury could each lessen pressure on itself by referring cases to the other.

In practice, the Treasury was probably less resistant to pressure than Wilmot and Glyn. While the Treasury rarely rejected a favourable recommendation

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<sup>58</sup> Long to La Marche, 27 March 1798, T.27/49, pp. 300-01; Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 2 April 1798, T.93/2, ff. 30-1; Wilmot to H. Swinburne, 18 May 1798, T.93/9, f. 5; Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 420-1; [Wilmot and Glyn] to Ramus, und., T.93/9, unf.

<sup>59</sup> Hughes to Woodford, 23 Sept. 1799, T.93/9, unf.; Hughes to Brooke, 2 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*; Wilmot and Glyn to W. Taulor, 15 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 9 March 1801, T.93/4, p. 112.

from them, it often gave the special order without which they would not proceed, or even overruled their negative recommendation. In 1799 when Arthur Dillon, the Archbishop of Narbonne, asked the Treasury to allow the Bishop of Agen to be placed on the bishops' list on his arrival in England, the Treasury granted a special order, although Wilmot and Glyn had rejected him because persons arriving after 1 January 1797 were ineligible for relief.<sup>61</sup> In 1799 it gave the Marquise du Dresnay priority for a vacancy on the list without first consulting Wilmot and Glyn, a practice that it adopted occasionally.<sup>62</sup> In 1801 the Treasury countermanded the English Committee's ruling on the family of M. de Thivelle. He had left France in 1791, later married a Frenchwoman long resident in Lubeck in Germany, and brought his wife and family to England in 1796. Wilmot and Glyn considered Madame de Thivelle and her children to be ineligible, 'as they were domiciled at Lubec, which they were not under the necessity of quitting'. The Treasury decided that the two children could be admitted, thus tempering the Committee's judgement.<sup>63</sup>

Wilmot and Glyn were not afraid to express an independent view. In June 1801 they pointed out the awkward precedents set by the Treasury decisions to grant assistance to a servant of the Bishop of Moulins, and to place Abbé de Villeneuve on the list despite arriving late in 1798 and being already a War Office pensioner.<sup>64</sup> Nor were they slow to criticise the Alien Office for what they saw as an attempt by one department to pass off its own expenses to another. In December 1801 they received an application from two men who had spent fifteen months in France 'on particular affairs of Government', and who apparently had

<sup>61</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Rose, 23 Oct. 1799, T.93/9, unf.; Rose to Wilmot and Glyn, 26 Oct. 1799, T.93/2, ff. 256-7.

<sup>62</sup> Long to Wilmot, 25 Jan. 1799, *ibid.*, f. 167.

<sup>63</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 25 Nov. 1801, T.93/4, p. 269; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 2 Dec. 1801, *ibid.*, p. 273.

<sup>64</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 27 June 1801, *ibid.*, pp. 172-3; Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 30 June 1801, T.93/3, f. 231.



been promised that on their return they would be reinstated on the lists and paid for the time they had been away. Wilmot and Glyn told the Alien Office:

The Committee would have supposed that a Suitable provision and Compensation would have been made for the Services of those Gentlemen by the Department which employed them, and they do not pay any persons abroad without the Express Directions of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury: indeed their Receipts being Monthly on an Estimate, they have no Fund for the payment of large Arrears.<sup>65</sup>

The brief notes that accompanied the lists that Wilmot and Glyn submitted to the Treasury for approval show something of the range of the cases and the reasons for decisions made. New-born babies appeared regularly on the lists, and were admitted or not according to the status and income of the parent and the number of children already on relief. Thus children of servants or artisans and those of people receiving special allowances were likely to be rejected. People coming from Ireland were excluded under the ruling made in December 1800 by the Treasury at Wilmot and Glyn's instigation.<sup>66</sup> The English Committee's rigid adherence to its principles seemed harsh on occasion. One woman aged thirty-seven was not admitted, being 'A servant having married lately and thereby thrown herself out of the way of getting into a place as before'.<sup>67</sup> Presumably she had lost a living-in job on her marriage. A similar case was 'La Nomné L'Homme (26) Being a Servant thrown out of place by marrying'.<sup>68</sup>

The brief comments also show glimpses of the misery of some of the applicants. Julie Pouget, aged twenty-six, was admitted as a 'Case of Temporary Admission

<sup>65</sup> Hughes to Flint, 28 Dec. 1801, T.93/4, pp. 287-8.

<sup>66</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 29 Nov. 1800, *ibid.*, pp. 54-6; Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 23 Dec. 1800, *ibid.*, p. 79. The Committee had already made several such decisions before the ruling was made. See list 6, 6 March 1799, T.93/9, unf.; list 11, und., *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> List 8, 14 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> List 5, 22 Oct. 1798, *ibid.*

being a Servant at this time Reduced to great Distress in consequence of a bad Lying-in and her Husband unable to support her'.<sup>69</sup> Michel Gandais, aged thirty-four, was admitted, 'Being deranged in his Mind and obliged to be Confined'.<sup>70</sup> Also accepted was Mademoiselle de La Roche, 'Having hitherto subsisted by her Needlework which the failure of her sight now prevents'.<sup>71</sup>

Between 1798 and 1802 the government passed on two more ecclesiastical groups to Wilmot and Glyn. The first comprised those clergy sent to Guyane by the Directory and shipwrecked or captured by the Royal Navy en route. They arrived in several small batches between mid-1798 and early 1801. At the urging of La Marche and the Duke of Portland, the Treasury agreed that they should be admitted to the general clergy list, although some elected to return to France.<sup>72</sup>

The other group comprised two hundred and thirty Trappists, who arrived in Hamburg from Russia in 1800. The abbot, Dom Augustin de Lestrange, wrote to La Marche asking him to obtain the government's permission for them to travel to England en route to Canada, where they wanted to settle. In November he came to England to prepare the way for the others, Portland having approved their coming to England. Lestrange asked Pitt to grant them relief, while he and Jean Baptiste, the prior of the Lulworth Trappists, started a collection among the Catholics for their immediate support. However, Portland refused to allow the Trappists to settle in Canada or Ireland, so Pitt resolved the matter by promising to support them in Hamburg if they stayed there. The Treasury then

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<sup>69</sup>List 7, 19 June 1799, *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup>List 5, 22 Oct. 1798, *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup>List 7, 19 June 1799, *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup>Plasse, *Clergé Français*, ii, pp. 90-94, 99-100; Entry 28 Aug. 1798, W.D.A., *Douglass' Diary*, i, p. 118; W. Wickham to Commissioners of the Transport Service, 6 Sept. 1798, H.O.5/4, p. 115; Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 8 Nov. 1799, T.93/2, ff. 261-2; Long to Wilmot and Glyn, [Feb. 1798], T.93/3, ff. 144-6. Also, see above, pp. 150-51.

instructed Wilmot and Glyn to pay the Trappists an allowance of a shilling a day each, to be transmitted monthly to Hamburg through Wright's Bank.<sup>73</sup>

After the reorganisation of Wilmot's Committee in 1798, the government made several attempts to review refugee welfare. In June 1798 it asked Wilmot and Glyn for a register of those refugees receiving relief.<sup>74</sup> In February 1802 the Treasury asked them for a current list of the emigrants, a statement of the reduction in numbers since 1 October 1801 and a forecast of future reductions.<sup>75</sup> This was obviously part of the general stock-taking during the peace negotiations. On 6 April 1802 the Treasury announced the receipt of the definitive treaty, and ordered Wilmot and Glyn to close the lists entirely, while pointing out that many of those already on the lists had sufficient means to return to France.<sup>76</sup> In response, Wilmot and Glyn sent in a list of seventeen people already accepted, presuming the rule not be retroactive, and asked whether the rule extended to new-born babies. The Treasury accepted the list and exempted the new-born from the ban.<sup>77</sup>

In October 1802 the Treasury asked Wilmot and Glyn to compile and submit a list of all refugees under their superintendence, specifying the date of their first enrolment and the scale of their benefit. This was preparatory to the close examination of the relief lists carried out in mid-1803 whereby each pensioner had to state details of his entire income and resources, prove that he needed the benefit to live and sign a declaration that his statements were

<sup>73</sup> Entries 17 Aug., 3, 19, 29 Nov., 31 Dec. 1800, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, ii, pp. 41, 47, 48, 49, 52; Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 9 Jan. 1801, T.93/3, ff. 108-

<sup>74</sup> Instructions to the agents of the distribution, [ca June 1798], T.93/9, ff. 16-17; 'Registre des déclarations des Émigrés Français', 20 and 21 July 1798, T.93/39.

<sup>75</sup> Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 22 Feb. 1802, T.93/3, ff. 339-40.

<sup>76</sup> Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 6 April 1802, T.29/53, p. 420.

<sup>77</sup> Minutes 10 April 1802, T.93/3, f. 371; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 15 April 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 375-6.

true.<sup>78</sup> Numbers had stabilised by then;<sup>79</sup> most of the refugees left in Britain were the die-hard Royalists or those for whom Britain now had more attraction than France.

From 1798, as before, Wilmot and Glyn were under constant pressure to keep expenses down. Medical expenses were one of the greatest problems, for the high proportion of clerics meant that the average age of the colony rose each year, the generally inadequate diets debilitated health and many of the lay men carried wounds or disabilities as mementoes of their military service. In December 1799 the Committee found that calls on hospital and dispensary services had increased to the point where the sum allowed for them barely covered expenses. It decided that the patient's regular allowances, which had been used to reduce expenditure in ordinary relief, should be put towards medical expenses.<sup>80</sup> The Committee had already tried the expedients of making people receiving special allowances ineligible for free medical treatment,<sup>81</sup> curbing the generosity of the dispensaries<sup>82</sup> and asking Middlesex Hospital for a monthly return of emigrants who 'can derive no further benefit from their Residence in the Hospital, in order that we may judge of the propriety of keeping them there longer'.<sup>83</sup> In the same letter Wilmot referred to a complaint he had had from Abbé Blandin<sup>84</sup> that the surgeon at the Middlesex

<sup>78</sup> Sargent to Wilmot and Glyn, 20 Oct. 1802, *ibid.*, p. 453; Wilmot and Glyn to Sargent, 12 Nov. 1802, T.93/5, pp. 7-8; Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, p. 251. See T.93/40 for the declarations.

<sup>79</sup> See below, p. 369.

<sup>80</sup> Minutes 23 Dec. 1799, T.93/2, ff. 273-4.

<sup>81</sup> Minutes 8 March 1798, *ibid.*, f. 16.

<sup>82</sup> Circular letter to the dispensaries, 10 Aug. 1797, T.93/9, p. 19.

<sup>83</sup> Wilmot to Secretary of Middlesex Hospital, 6 June 1799, T.93/2, f. 206.

<sup>84</sup> Blandin had taken charge of the refugee wards there in 1798 after the death of Madame Masson, the previous incumbent: Minutes 22 Oct. 1798, *ibid.*, ff. 128-9.

had been dissecting bodies of the refugees who died there. The Middlesex admitted that some 'small inspections' had taken place in conformity with usual hospital practice, but promised that these would cease.<sup>85</sup>

The decision to cut patients' allowances was part of a general review of medical expenses in December 1799 and January 1800, in which Wilmot visited in person the Committee's medical establishments. As a result of its investigations, the Committee asked Abbé Carron and Blandin to restrict the number of patients at the Female Hospital and Middlesex Hospital to twenty-five at each establishment, and limited expenditure at the dispensaries to a total maximum of £100 a month.<sup>86</sup> As part of his survey, Wilmot visited Miles' and Kay's private asylum for lunatics to enquire into complaints by the patients that they had to share beds. Mr Miles told him that the Committee's payment of twelve shillings a week was not enough to provide this amenity, but assured him 'that care is taken to put such Patients together as are not likely to disagree, and that the Keepers are always within hearing'.<sup>87</sup> Given the Committee's financial circumstances, there was little that it could do about what was after all a common practice. Wilmot did make enquiries, however, about providing a separate bed for an emigrée who had particularly objected to sharing a bed with a stranger.<sup>88</sup>

Other economy measures adopted by Wilmot and Glyn included keeping a closer check on boys reaching the age of sixteen and notifying the French Committee when they were due to be struck from the list,<sup>89</sup> restricting new

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<sup>85</sup> Wilmot to Secretary of Middlesex Hospital, 6 June 1799, *ibid.*, f. 204; J. Hill to Wilmot, 7 June 1799, *ibid.*, ff. 206-7.

<sup>86</sup> Minutes 20, 23 Jan., 1 Feb. 1800, *ibid.*, ff. 291-2, 296-8, 300-02.

<sup>87</sup> Minutes 1 Feb. 1800, *ibid.*, f. 301.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 301-2.

<sup>89</sup> Hughes to Olivier du Vivier, 17 June 1799, T.93/9, f. 61; Hughes to Olivier de Vivier, 22 Oct. 1799, *ibid.*, unf.; Minutes 9 July 1802, T.93/4, p. 381.

admissions to 'very Special Cases' from January 1800,<sup>90</sup> investigating all clergy who were 'known or Supposed to be able to support themselves',<sup>91</sup> and reviewing cases of people on temporary relief, suspending benefits pending their personal appearances before the English Committee.<sup>92</sup>

Despite their efforts, the Committee was unable to reduce expenditure substantially until the wastage from refugees returning to France exceeded new acquisitions. The turning point was 1800; the estimate for 1801 was approximately £5,500 less than for the previous year.<sup>93</sup> The refugees suffered from the economies and from the chronic arrears in the government grants. In March 1799 the Committee decided to distribute £500 from its balance in hand to those in the greatest need, as payments were three months in arrears, and the winter severe.<sup>94</sup>

The position of those on relief improved slightly in 1801-03. The Treasury under Henry Addington seems to have been relatively sympathetic to the refugees' plight. In July 1801 the Comte de Botherel followed up an earlier petition asking for an increase in allowances and the admittance of all who needed them, with one suggesting how this augmentation might be financed: by re-allocating funds previously sent to the Royalists in western France, or by applying funds accrued from death or departures among the usual recipients.<sup>95</sup> He claimed that the need was great, as hunger was causing suicide and death among the refugee community. He suggested doubling the allowance of those on a shilling a day.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Minutes 20 Jan. 1800, T.93/2, f. 292.

<sup>91</sup> Minutes 20 May 1800, *ibid.*, f. 362.

<sup>92</sup> Minutes 12 June 1802, T.93/4, pp. 365-6. For a similar measure, see also: Minutes 26 Feb. 1802, *ibid.*, p. 325.

<sup>93</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 26 Feb. 1801, T.93/9, unf.

<sup>94</sup> Minutes 16 March 1799, T.93/2, f. 180.

<sup>95</sup> Memorial of Botherel, 20 July 1801, B.M. Add. Ms 37868, f. 108.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

The Treasury responded by ordering an increase of two shillings a week to those who received only a shilling a day. This rather confused Wilmot and Glyn, as the clergy received more than this and the laity received various rates 'according to their Situations and Circumstances', but they appear to have worked out a suitable scale.<sup>97</sup> The arrangement was originally for three months from 1 August 1801, but it was subsequently backdated to 1 July and continued past the expiry date.<sup>98</sup> In 1802 Botherel entered a plea for a further augmentation,<sup>99</sup> while the Comte de Butler and Baron de Nantiat wrote on behalf of Monsieur, asking that the allowances be increased to the level first suggested by Botherel.<sup>100</sup> The Treasury did increase the allowances when it reviewed the relief lists in 1803.<sup>101</sup>

Late in 1800 the War Office increased its allowances to those on the list paid by Wilmot and Glyn, so the latter decided that such persons should no longer be eligible for care from the hospitals or dispensaries.<sup>102</sup> In June 1802, in response to a request from La Marche, the bishops' allowances were restored to ten guineas a month.<sup>103</sup> These sundry augmentations were made possible by the decrease in numbers of pensioners, caused by the gathering momentum of the return movement to France.

The return movement to France from Britain had never stopped entirely, although Fructidor had had a dampening effect. Numbers were small and the

<sup>97</sup> Vansittart to Wilmot and Glyn, 30 July 1801, T.93/3, ff. 251-2; Minutes 1, 7 Aug. 1801, *ibid.*, ff. 252-3, 256.

<sup>98</sup> Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 14 Dec. 1801, *ibid.*, f. 318.

<sup>99</sup> Memorial of Botherel [ca Jan. 1802], B.M. Add. Ms 37868, f. 217; Botherel to [Windham], 3 April 1802, *ibid.*, f. 269.

<sup>100</sup> Memorial of Comte de Butler and Baron de Nantiat, 10 April 1802, *ibid.*, f. 271.

<sup>101</sup> Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, p. 251.

<sup>102</sup> R. Gardiner to Hughes, 13 Oct. 180 , T.93/4, pp. 240-1; Minutes 14 Oct. 1801, *ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>103</sup> Minutes 26 June 1802, T.93/3, ff. 415-6.

return routes indirect, mostly through Germany or Jersey. Late in 1799 the Consulate relaxed its attitude towards some emigrants and issued a proclamation allowing freedom of worship in France.<sup>104</sup> This encouraged many emigrants, particularly the clergy, to consider returning, and 1800 marked the beginning of their exodus from Britain. Between 1 January and 25 November, 567 people from Wilmot and Glyn's general lists went 'abroad', and doubtless those from other lists went too.<sup>105</sup>

One of the most popular return routes was via Jersey, and Bouillon complained in August 1800 that the business of conveying emigrants to France was severely disrupting the correspondence.<sup>106</sup> The French were carried on privateers and the boats of the correspondence. The captains were paid by M. Monmonier of the Jersey Committee, with bills drawn in Bouillon's name.<sup>107</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel John Le Couteur,<sup>108</sup> on General Gordon's staff, made up lists of emigrants arriving in Jersey wanting passages to France, and passed the lists on to Bouillon, who arranged their transport.<sup>109</sup> The passengers had to be landed secretly, as Britain and France were still at war, and at least one boatload was captured by the French.<sup>110</sup>

The signing of the Concordat in July 1801 and the amnesty given in April 1802 to all but the most intransigent Royalists among the émigrés swelled the numbers of those who returned; Wilmot and Glyn estimated that over eight hundred

<sup>104</sup> Bouillon to Windham, 24 Nov. 1799, F.O.95/611, f. 26; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 596-7.

<sup>105</sup> Wilmot to Long, [ca Nov. 1800], T.93/9, unf.

<sup>106</sup> Bouillon to Windham, 21 Aug. 1800, F.O.95/611, f. 62.

<sup>107</sup> See receipted bills for passages to France, Dec. 1800 to Nov. 1801, P.C.1/122, ff. 4-11.

<sup>108</sup> (1761-1835), a native of Jersey. He was the inspecting officer of militia and assistant quartermaster-general in Jersey: D.N.B., xi, pp. 777-8.

<sup>109</sup> See, for example, Le Couteur to Bouillon, 19 Feb. 1801, H.O.69/38, f. 33; see also P.C.1/120A, ff. 18-32. Monmonier was often used as an intermediary, and did most of the appropriate administrative work for Bouillon.

<sup>110</sup> Monmonier to Bouillon, 20 March 1801, *ibid.*, f. 22.



of their pensioners left Britain between 1 October 1801 and 30 April 1802, leaving about 2,363 clergy and 1,300 laity on their lists.<sup>111</sup> A further 749 refugees left in June.<sup>112</sup> In April 1802, in anticipation of the exodus likely to follow the amnesty and the signing of the peace treaty, Wilmot and Glyn suggested that a cheaper method of transporting the refugees ought to be found. At the Treasury's suggestion they conferred with Captain George of the Transport Office, with the upshot that the Transport Office agreed to instruct its officers in the Channel ports to carry refugees to France for a guinea a head, if they held an order from the Committee. Accounts would be sent monthly to the Committee.<sup>113</sup> This change was made possible by the end of the war, as returning emigrants might now travel legally on British and French papers. The French designated Calais and Bordeaux as ports of entry, and probably others, as Jersey continued to be a place of trans-shipment. The return movement slowed in the latter half of 1802, as the most eager had left, while those remaining were committed monarchists and those deterred by the oath of fidelity to the Consulate and the Pope's order that all bishops must resign their sees, or by fears of persecution or lack of means of support in France. Gordon grew very impatient with the clergy who lingered in Jersey, as he believed them reluctant to relinquish a relief allowance higher than the income they might expect in France.<sup>114</sup> He then had to defend himself from

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<sup>111</sup>Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 30 April 1802, T.93/3, f. 387.

<sup>112</sup>Minutes 2 July 1802, *ibid.*, f. 417.

<sup>113</sup>Minutes 8 April 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 367-8; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 15 April 1802, *ibid.*, f. 377; Minutes 17 April 1802, *ibid.*; Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 21 April 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 379-80; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 1 May 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 389-90; George, A. Serle and Otway to Wilmot and Glyn, [ca May 1802], *ibid.*, ff. 390-1.

<sup>114</sup>Gordon to King, 15 June 1802, H.O.98/8, unf.

claims by La Marche that he was harassing the clergy unnecessarily.<sup>115</sup>

The English Committee and Bouillon were anxious to expedite the return of their pensioners, and devised the congé system, whereby allowances were continued for a period after departure. In 1798-9 the English Committee usually offered a mois en sus, an extra month's allowance, to those leaving the country. In 1800 the Treasury adopted the occasional practice of continuing an émigré's allowance for six months after he had left the country, a practice also followed by Windham with the War Office pensioners.<sup>116</sup>

In January 1801 a more formal congé system was instituted after La Marche suggested to the Treasury that it might offer three to six months allowance in advance to clergy who wished to return to France. This, and a similar concession to the laity, were approved. In September 1801 the Treasury directed the English Committee to allow six months congé to all emigrants regardless of rank. In October the Home Office granted Bouillon's request that refugees in Jersey be allowed congés as an inducement to return home. A shorter congé was settled on, travel from Jersey being cheaper.<sup>117</sup> Congés were extended occasionally if refugees had to take the long route via Germany or were delayed in Jersey awaiting transport. When the arrangement with the

<sup>115</sup> La Marche to [King?], 27 Sept. 1802, H.O.98/26, f. 121; Gordon to King, 11 Oct. 1802, *ibid.*, f. 119.

<sup>116</sup> Long to Wilmot and Glyn, 26 June 1800, T.93/4, p. 3; Woodford to Hughes, 27 June 1800, *ibid.*, p. 1; Hughes to Woodford, 4 July 1800, *ibid.*, p. 2; Hughes to de Cruchent, 5 Aug. 1800, T.93/9, unf.

<sup>117</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Long, 24 Jan. 1801, *ibid.*; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 22 April 1801, T.93/3, ff. 184-6; Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 30 May 1801, *ibid.*, ff. 207-8; Addington to Glyn, 19 Sept. 1801, T.93/4, pp. 232-3; Bouillon to King, 21 Sept. 1801, H.O.98/8, unf.; Shee to Bouillon, 22 Oct. 1801, H.O.99/2, pp. 60-1.

Transport Office was concluded, Wilmot and Glyn reduced the period of the congés, as the cost of travel was now less.<sup>118</sup> People receiving the highest allowances suffered the greatest cuts and artisans on £1 a month none at all, as the Committee was more concerned with the cost of the journey than the status of the traveller.<sup>119</sup>

One of the greatest problems with the congé system was how to finance it. The returning refugees needed a lump sum in advance rather than a continuation of relief, but the English Committee used the latter method in its accounting, as the Treasury had put a ceiling on its monthly grants. The refugees usually managed by borrowing privately against the promise of future allowances, but the interest was costly. The Committee tried to help by advancing money from surpluses accrued by reductions in numbers, but the continuation of payments for other congés for the six months after departure made the reduction a slow process. The Committee finally speeded up matters by allowing payments to refugees remaining in England to fall another month into arrears. It then applied the month's grant thereby saved to pay departing émigrés in advance until sufficient of the backlog of earlier congés had expired to enable the Committee to restore its financial equilibrium. In this, as with other problems of the relief organisations, the decline in numbers by the end of 1802 proved the solution.<sup>120</sup>

One final problem faced by the relief organisations was that of refugees who returned from France, having found life preferable in Britain. The

<sup>118</sup> Minutes 30 Aug. 1801, T.93/4, p. 216; Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 21 April 1802, T.93/3, f. 380; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 30 April 1802, *ibid.*, f. 388.

<sup>119</sup> Wilmot and Glyn to Addington, 8 May 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 392-3; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 10 May 1802, T.93/4, pp. 349-50.

<sup>120</sup> Minutes 13, 16 June 1801, *ibid.*, pp. 161-2, 165; Minutes 30 June 1801, T.93/3, f. 233; Minutes 6 Nov. 1801, *ibid.*, f. 287; Minutes 10 June 1802, *ibid.*, ff. 403-4; Addington to Wilmot and Glyn, 10 June 1802, *ibid.*, f. 404.

government and the Committee tried to discourage such returns by removing people from the lists on their departure, warning them that they would be treated as new applicants if they returned, with no guarantee of being accepted.<sup>121</sup> Even so, a few returned. Perhaps they had discovered that after a decade in exile, the home for which they had yearned now held little for them, as it was no longer the France that they had remembered.

### III

The efforts of Wilmot's Committee to provide auxiliary welfare services were supplemented by the increasing co-operation and self-help of the refugees themselves after 1796, as part of their growing sense of community, especially in London. This development was not new, but it had strengthened as the period of exile had lengthened. The bulk of the ecclesiastical and the other non-military refugees had arrived in England and Jersey between August and October 1792, and it took them some time to adjust to their new surroundings and circumstances. They had left France in bewildering and often terrifying circumstances, and had arrived among chaotic scenes along England's south coast, often in a state of shock. However, they were thankful to have reached safety. Henri Danloux, the French painter, witnessed the arrival of some clerics at his London lodgings:

Je vois monter les dix prêtres qui vont se coucher.  
Ils sont si heureux qu'ils répètent sans cesse:  
Enfin ici nous sommes en sûreté! En général ils  
ont de ces physionomies que le malheur seul peut  
donner.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup>Addington to Glyn, 19 Sept. 1801, T.93/4, pp. 232-3.

<sup>122</sup>Portalis, Danloux, p. 155.

Abbé Barruel commented from his own experience, 'that it is impossible to express the exquisite sensations of a man, first translated from the regions of revolutionary tumult and horror, into the peaceful abode of personal security under a legal government'.<sup>123</sup>

Delight at reaching safety soon gave way to the problems of finding lodgings and some means of subsistence, while trying to cope with a new environment in which the geography and language might have been utterly unfamiliar. The refugees needed time to take stock, familiarise themselves with their surroundings, find the best places to shop and make new social contacts, if they were not already part of a group. Obviously, these tasks were easier if they lived in small towns or in Jersey, rather than in London. Again, the clergy were often the first to orient themselves, as they belonged to an organisation even in exile, and could depend on receiving an allowance from Wilmot's Committee if they were unable to support themselves.

As might be expected, therefore, the clergy on Jersey were among the first to take active measures to enrich life in exile. Spiritual needs took precedence; in 1792 the Bishop of Tréguier organised the construction of a chapel in St Hélier, and another three were built elsewhere on the island soon after. He opened a register there to record baptisms, marriages, and deaths, so that these records could be taken back to France. In 1793-4 the clergy organised retreats and conferences for themselves to maintain their religious studies, to refresh their souls and to decide on what attitudes and courses of action to adopt on their return to France.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Barruel, History of the Clergy, iii, p. 217.

<sup>124</sup> Connell, 'Breton refugee clergy', pp. 221-7; Plasse, Clergé Français, i, pp. 188-9, 332-3; Regis de L'Estourbeillon, Les Familles Françaises à Jersey pendant la Révolution (Nantes, 1886), p. 8.

Nor did they neglect the laity. Two priests, Abbé Carron and Abbé Chantrel, organised between them two libraries, two schools, a pharmacy, a home-visiting scheme and a workshop in which émigrées were paid small sums to produce inexpensive clothing for the clergy. Most of this was done in 1792-3, and benefitted clergy and laity alike.<sup>125</sup>

In London, the French deferred to Douglass, as Vicar-Apostolic of London, in the matter of places of worship; he arranged for their use of existing chapels, such as the one at St George's Fields, and supported several altars for their sole use. They were also allowed into a number of private chapels.<sup>126</sup> In January 1793, with the approval of Douglass, the French bishops arranged a week of funeral services for Louis XVI.<sup>127</sup> Douglass offered little in the way of material support to the refugee clergy, except to provide trappings such as wine and candles for their services, but he continued to take an active interest in their spiritual welfare.

The clergy occupied themselves with composing sermons and chants, and holding retreats and conferences. La Marche was particularly anxious that the clergy should preserve and even develop their spiritual life in exile, to keep them together as a community and to prepare the way for a resumption of their duties in France. On the temporal side, in 1794 the former Jesuit teachers from St Omer school in Belgium, where many English Catholics had been educated, founded Stonyhurst in Lancashire, in a house owned by the Welds of Lulworth.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Plasse, Clergé Français, i, pp. 335-8; Connell, 'Breton refugee clergy', pp. 228-231.

<sup>126</sup> Entry und., W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. b-c.

<sup>127</sup> The Times 28 Jan. 1793.

<sup>128</sup> Entry und., W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. d-e; Meignan, Prêtre Déporté, pp. 144-5; Kerbiriou, La Marche, pp. 448-51; Baston, Mémoires, ii, pp. 70-1, 79-80. New Catholic Encyclopedia, xiii, p. 726; French Exiles, pp. 50-1.

At this stage most of the work for the material welfare of the refugees in England was left to the relief committees, which provided allowances, clothing and medical care. After all, most refugees lived in the expectation of a speedy return to France, so in their view to commit themselves to long-term projects would be a waste of time, and might imply a lack of confidence in their expected reinstatement in France. Whilst the war raged in the Low Countries, and western France was in rebellion, the call might come at any time.

The failures of the Lowlands campaign and the Quiberon expedition shook the expectations of an imminent return home, and paved the way for the commencement of more long-term projects. Two of the first were the foundation of Penn School in Buckinghamshire and Maria Macnamara's school in Hammersmith. The former was Burke's idea, and the latter was strongly supported by the Marchioness of Buckingham, but the French themselves took the lead after the evacuation of the Channel Islands in 1796. The influx of refugees brought Abbé Carron and Abbé Chantrel to London, where they continued the work they had begun in Jersey, thereby supplementing the efforts of those French already in London.

At Douglass' request, George III had given the French permission to build chapels and to practise their religion.<sup>129</sup> The French built a chapel in Soho in 1795, with funds raised by La Marche and Mrs Silburne, and another in Southwark in June 1796. Subsequent to his arrival in London, Chantrel founded the Chapelle de Sainte-Marie in Somerstown, and this became the centre of his activities. From there he re-established his clothing workshop, and organised 'un service de bains pour les emigrés de toutes les classes'.<sup>130</sup> Carron arrived in July or August 1796, and opened a chapel in Conway Street in December. By

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<sup>129</sup> Lubersac, Journal, p. 32.

<sup>130</sup> Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, pp. 133-4.

1798 he had established a small 'seminary of students in Divinity' near the chapel.<sup>131</sup> In October 1797 he opened another chapel in a house in Tottenham Place. The house also accommodated a school for French children and a library for the French clergy.<sup>132</sup> For a while this became the nucleus for other activities. Dr Douglass has left us a description of Carron's use of two adjoining houses in Tottenham Place and another nearby, in 1798:

The parlour of No. 20 is an Apothecary's shop for the poor French, & attended by a French Priest. The 1st floor forms the chapel - the other rooms are inhabited by French Priests. The parlours of No. 21 &c serve for schools for the children (a few English are at this school). The house at the South corner of Southampton Court & Beaumont place is inhabited wholly by French Gentlemen Laicks, Barons, Marquis and others who devote themselves entirely to the service of God & salvation of their souls, under the direction of Monsieur Carron...<sup>133</sup>

In 1797-8 Carron established in Somerstown homes for the old and sick, one for clergy and one for women. In 1799 he added to them a dispensary and a room known as the 'Chambre de la Providence', which served as a depot for clothing donated for distribution among the refugees.<sup>134</sup> In the same year he moved his two schools there and enlarged their enrolment.<sup>135</sup> Henceforth, the Polygon in Somerstown formed the centre of his activities.<sup>136</sup> From here he

<sup>131</sup>Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, p. 131; Entry 15 Aug. 1798, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. 117. The Trappists at Lulworth also opened a school, but local opposition to their practice of shaving the boys' heads and dressing them in Trappist habits, caused the prior to close the school in 1800. He had earlier disregarded the protests of Thomas Weld, the owner of the estate at Lulworth: Entry 27 Oct. 1798, *ibid.*, p. 125; Entry 31 March 1800, *ibid.*, ii, p. 15.

<sup>132</sup>Entry Dec. 1796, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. 50; Lubersac, Journal, pp. 32-4, 48-9, 59; Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, pp. 121-3, 130-4.

<sup>133</sup>Entry 2 Sept. 1798, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, p. 119.

<sup>134</sup>Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 453.

<sup>135</sup>In 1802 it had over sixty boys and over sixty girls: Lubersac, Journal, p. 111.

<sup>136</sup>Entry 8 March 1800, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, ii, p. 11; Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, p. 131; Kerbiriou, La Marche, p. 453.



operated a visiting service consisting of clerics and volunteer women who helped nurse the sick.<sup>137</sup>

As the period of exile lengthened, the problem of educating the children became more acute. Each death diminished the reservoir of tradition and practical experience among the exiles, and the young had to be trained to replace them lest a restoration of the old ways became impracticable. Naturally, children were to be instructed in the Catholic religion, but for what sort of a life should they be prepared? The ecclesiastical and lay leaders had conflicting interests: the Church and the armed services both needed to have a continuity of recruitment to their ranks if they were to survive as a body. But should not the children be educated to earn their own living in exile? There was no immediate prospect of a restoration of church and monarchy in France.

These conflicts of interest were apparent as early as 1796, when Penn School was first set up. Burke was perturbed that La Marche intended to run the school as a seminary, and had made no provision for English to be taught.

Burke protested strongly:

I really consider, the Idea of forcing the miserable French boys to be foreigners here, is little less than downright madness; and the educating them as ecclesiastics, when we have nothing for them, by any possibility, but some chance of their struggling in some part of these dominions, in a military line, is I think not less so.<sup>138</sup>

Burke gained the concurrence of leading French noblemen in his objection to the school being run as a seminary,<sup>139</sup> and in fact it was conducted more on the lines of a military academy, with English included in the curriculum.

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Burke to T. Hussey, 25 May 1796, Edmund Burke, Correspondence of Edmund Burke ed. R.B. McDowell and J.A. Wood, vol. ix (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 20-1.

<sup>139</sup> Burke to La Marche, [?] June 1796, *ibid.*, p. 53.

Maria Macnamara faced similar problems at her girls' school in Hammersmith. She had to educate the girls to become the wives of gentlemen, while recognising the fact that they might remain in poverty in exile. Besides traditional subjects, the girls were taught English and 'everything that is necessary for girls who must be to depend [sic] upon their talents and industry'.<sup>140</sup> In 1801 the school was in financial difficulties, so the Marchioness of Buckingham solicited the help of her brother-in-law, Grenville. He thought that the government might contribute £700 towards its costs. In the event of its doing so, Maria Macnamara undertook

to educate, board, lodge, clothe the children without taking any of the Committee money, which would be a great help to the parents, and induce them to put their children to the school, instead of keeping them, as many do for the sake of the weekly allowance, in their wretched garrets, naked, starved and without instruction.<sup>141</sup>

Her school was an important one, as it and Penn were the two cheapest schools. Even Carron's schools were beyond most purses. In 1800 they cost thirty guineas a year for board and tuition<sup>142</sup> - twice the annual relief allowance for a gentleman. Either the government failed to come to the rescue of the Hammersmith school, or the aid was insufficient, for the school was soon forced to amalgamate with Carron's girls' school in Somerstown.<sup>143</sup>

One school was clearly established on the presumption of an eventual return to France. In 1799 Charles de Barentin, the former Chancellor of France,<sup>144</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Marchioness of Buckingham to Grenville, 10 March 1801, H.M.C. Dropmore, vi, pp. 268-9.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>142</sup> Entry 8 March 1800, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, ii, p. 11.

<sup>143</sup> Lubersac, Journal, p. 88.

<sup>144</sup> It is interesting to note that the English Lord Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, supported Barentin until 1801, making him an allowance of £50 a month. In 1801, 'having lost all hope of recovering in France the means of repaying his Lordship, which he (Mr Barentin) has always intended', Barentin applied for and was granted a like sum from the magistrates' list, of which he then had charge: Minutes 21 Aug. 1801, T.93/4, pp. 208-9.

started a school in London to train young émigrés as magistrates, so that the former system of law and administration could be restored in France when the monarchy was reinstated. In October 1800, Louis XVIII wrote to congratulate him and M. de Bourblanc, who ran the school, saying

'qu'il étoit inquiet sur les études de sa jeunesse qui, dans les pays étrangers même, pouvait se destiner un jour à la magistrature; je suis à present rassuré sur cet objet important.'<sup>145</sup>

If the arrival of Chantrel and Carron in London in 1796 gave impetus to the community development of the refugees there, the same could be said for the arrival of the French royal family in London from 1799. In that year Monsieur moved from Holyrood Palace to a rented house in Baker Street. The Duc de Berri, his younger son, and the Duc de Bourbon, Condé's son, settled nearby. In 1800 Condé's émigré army on the Continent was finally disbanded, and in 1801 Condé also moved to London. St Marylebone, already an area where the wealthier émigrés congregated, became a centre for the more ardent Royalists. In 1799 the French opened the Chapel of the Annunciation on the corner of Little George<sup>146</sup> and King Streets. The building was funded by subscriptions raised amongst the French community and sympathetic English people. La Marche and other prelates launched the project, with permission from Douglass and the government. The chapel became known as the French Chapel Royal and was the principal site for funeral orations, major religious ceremonies and royal occasions in the French community.<sup>147</sup> The chapel was also a welfare centre. The Archbishop of Aix, Jean de Boisgelin, called on his flock to aid themselves by raising money and

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<sup>145</sup> Louis XVIII to M. de Bourblanc, 30 Oct. 1800, quoted in Lubersac, Journal, p. 164. Barentin had instituted an enquiry into the teaching of jurisprudence in France in 1786, so his interest in legal education was longstanding: D.B.F., v, pp. 435-8.

<sup>146</sup> Now Carton Street: Weiner, French Exiles, p. 122.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., pp. 122-4; Plasse, Clergé Français, ii, pp. 159-73 passim.

seeking out those in need. A committee was formed for this purpose. Émigrée women, including nuns, took care of the sick women, and presumably the clergy tended the men. Boisgelin also instituted a scheme whereby refugees would pay a shilling and donate their services as nurses in return for receiving care when sick. It was administered through a central office, which maintained a roster of volunteers.<sup>148</sup>

By 1800 there were thus three main focal points for the French in London: the French Chapel Royal in St Marylebone, where the Royalists and wealthier émigrés congregated; the Polygon in Somerstown where Carron and his projects were located, and where the poorer refugees lived; and Mrs Silburne's house in Bloomsbury, the distribution point for refugees living in inner London. The refugees' homes were clustered in these areas, which were adjacent, and encompassed the Middlesex Hospital. The house in Bloomsbury was probably the most important determinant for the poorer refugees. They had to appear there in person to collect their monthly allowances, so they tended to live in those areas within walking distance where cheap housing was available.

The French royal family actively fostered their countrymen's sense of community. Artois and Condé, in particular, conscientiously visited the old people's homes, the hospitals and the schools. They attended prize-givings at the latter, often in the company of French bishops and Dr Douglass.<sup>149</sup> The French Chapel Royal also provided a religious, monarchical and ceremonial focus for the community in which French princes, aristocrats, bishops and clergy mingled with English nobles and prelates.<sup>150</sup> These activities all emphasised the partnership of church and monarchy, vital to the cause of the Royalists.

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., pp. 183-4; Weiner, French Exiles, pp. 127-8; Wilkinson, 'French émigrés', pp. 573-4.

<sup>149</sup> Entries 5 March, 21 April 1799, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. 140, 145; Entry 8 March 1800, *ibid.*, ii, p. 11; Lubersac, Journal, pp. 115-47.

<sup>150</sup> See, for example, Entry 16 Nov. 1799, W.D.A., Douglass' Diary, i, pp. 162-3; Entry 15 March 1800, *ibid.*, ii, p. 12.

This emphasis was increasingly important from 1800, as Bonaparte used successive concessions to the clergy and the less-committed lay refugees to split these twin foundations of the ancien régime, and to fragment each group.<sup>151</sup> The Concordat split the bishops exiled in England. The Pope ordered all French bishops to resign their sees, as Bonaparte now had the power to nominate candidates for them. Fifteen of the bishops in England refused to do so, and remained in exile. La Marche, a staunch Royalist, was a leading figure amongst the recusants. The fortunes of those bishops who stayed in England were now bound to the Royalist cause more tightly than ever.<sup>152</sup>

The welfare projects developed by the French greatly assisted Wilmot and Glyn. The need for them was great. In 1801 the Comte de Botherel complained

that the frightful accumulation of deceases [sic] within about one year, arises only from an exhausted state thro' want of nourishment. And how indeed, can a person live on one shilling, when bread alone is upwards of four pence per pound when a lodging in a bare garret costs almost as much every day, and that consequently the whole sum only affords, as one may say, dry bread and a shelter.<sup>153</sup>

Malnutrition stalked the poorer refugees, some of whom had no idea how to budget on a subsistence income. In consequence, health care was vital to the refugee community.

Most of the secours extraordinaire was expended as before, with the bulk going to the dispensaries, the doctors and the Middlesex Hospital, but Wilmot and Glyn were prepared to give small sums in support of French projects. In October 1800 Carron reported to them that he might be forced to close the house

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<sup>151</sup>Entry 13 Feb. 1800, *ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>152</sup>For an account of the debate among the bishops in England, see Douglass' entries for Sept. 1801 to July 1802 in *ibid.*, pp. 70-90 *passim*.

<sup>153</sup>Memorial of Botherel, 20 July 1801, B.M. Add. Ms 37868, f. 108. See also La Marche to Wilmot and Glyn [ca May 1800], T.93/2, f. 358. This is one of the very few examples I have found of an émigré writing in English.

at Somerstown where he maintained between thirty and forty aged and infirm clergy, as his private funds were almost exhausted. The Committee ordered the payment of a further four guineas a month towards the rent for at least six months, so they must have been contributing already.<sup>154</sup> Four months later Mademoiselle de Villiers<sup>155</sup> asked for aid for the French Female Hospital, and the Committee responded by ordering the supply of medicines to the hospital, and the grant of two guineas a month from government funds and one from the private fund.<sup>156</sup> This help was offered in spite of the Committee's own attempts to economise on medical care early in 1800.<sup>157</sup> Wilmot took an interest in Carron's projects and visited the home for the aged and sick clergy and the female hospital in February 1800, as part of a survey of health institutions.<sup>158</sup>

Wilmot and Glyn and the French themselves did what they could to provide health services for the refugees, but lack of money was a problem for two reasons: the rate of allowances was not high enough to allow the refugees to maintain an adequate diet, and there was little money available to expand health services beyond the level achieved in 1796. However, between them, and with the help of the Ladies' Committee, they gave the refugees a better standard of health care than that enjoyed by most of the English poor.<sup>159</sup>

## IV

By the end of 1802 the number of refugees on the major relief lists had dropped considerably, and it remained relatively stable thereafter. This is

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<sup>154</sup>Minutes 14 Oct. 1800, T.93/3, ff. 67-8.

<sup>155</sup>She was probably the daughter of the Comte de Villiers, who had charge of the Jersey list in London.

<sup>156</sup>Minutes 28 Feb. 1801, T.93/4, pp. 102-3.

<sup>157</sup>See above, pp. 350-1.

<sup>158</sup>Minutes 1 Feb. 1800, T.93/2, ff. 300-01. The survey was part of the attempt to economise.

<sup>159</sup>See Chapter 10.

demonstrated in the case of the clergy and laity under the control of Wilmot and Glyn:<sup>160</sup>

	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Laity</u>	<u>Special</u>
<u>1802</u>			
June	1199	977	165
September	870	774	86
December	835	757	86
<u>1805</u>			
March	858	740	83

Despite the recent addition of small refugee groups like the St Domingans and the Chouans, the period of administrative growth in refugee relief was clearly over. The administrative systems that had developed over the past decade were now likely to remain stable or be scaled down slowly.

Three types of administration had emerged in the period since 1792. The first was that of the charitable committees, as exemplified by the sundry country committees, Thomas' Committee and Wilmot's Committee in its first sixteen months. The second was an amalgam of private and government charity, given its institutional shape in Wilmot's Committee between December 1793 and February 1798. The third was the government instrumentality. All other organisations fitted into this category, the principal ones being Bouillon's administration in Jersey and Elliot's in the Mediterranean, and Wilmot's Committee after February 1798. The latter does not fit as neatly as the others, but from that date it had a formal basis apart from the earlier charitable committee, and Wilmot and Glyn received some sort of financial recompense from the government for their labours. Most of the organisations shared two features: funds, whether public or private, went first to a British

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<sup>160</sup> See accounts for clergy and laity, T.93/5, ff. 18, 19, 22, 23, 104, 105, 546, 547.

administrator or body of administrators, then passed through a distributor or a series of distributors, usually Frenchmen, to the pensioners; and these distributors did all the routine paperwork associated with the distribution, and often that involved in application procedures. The fact that these distributors were often themselves beneficiaries of relief immediately sets them apart from most ordinary welfare administrators.

The British administrators are interesting for another reason. The cases of Wilmot, Bouillon and Elliot all demonstrate the importance of one particular level of administrators in the relief structures: the chiefs of the relief organisations. Their connection with the under secretaries of the relevant government departments were the channels of communication through which information, requests and instructions flowed, as well as the money which was the life-blood of the organisations. These three men and La Marche provided a continuity in administration and a wealth of experience which was essential to the whole operation. All four remained involved in refugee relief for over a decade. On the government side, Charles Long of the Treasury and John King of the Home Office provided similar benefits until 1801, adding stability to the administrative processes. This continuity extended even to the ministerial level, despite the multiplicity of departments involved: between 1793 and 1801 Dundas, Pitt and Portland shared the major responsibility for refugee relief.

Through long association, Wilmot, Bouillon and Elliot became intimately acquainted with many of the refugees. This was particularly true of Bouillon and Elliot, who lived among them. They seem to have been on good terms with most Frenchmen directly involved in administration, such as La Marche, Cheylus, Le Mintier, de Villiers and de Nantiat. The evidence suggests, however, that the refugees were often exasperating to deal with, and they encroached heavily on



the time and energies of men who received little or nothing for their labours. The work was taxing emotionally as well, for the administrators were daily confronted with harrowing cases for which they could do little. Elliot expressed this well in a letter to his wife:

I never passed so severe a time as at Leghorn, in my life. The outer room was so crowded that People waited on the stair case & in the passages. I saw them one by one - the same unhappy story repeated almost in the same words by them all; every one convinced that his own case was the only one that deserved attention, & not one in twenty in which it was possible for me to give any relief, or comfort.<sup>161</sup>

The burdens of office seemed particularly onerous in Jersey, where Bouillon, Craig and Gordon tried at various times either to reduce the number of refugees on the island or to shed responsibility for them. But they always came to the rescue when the refugees were threatened with crises such as near-starvation in 1793 or the evacuation of the Channel Islands in 1796. If the attitude of the administrators towards their charges was one of sympathy mixed with exasperation, the former outweighed the latter at such times.

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<sup>161</sup> Elliot to Lady Elliot, 27 Feb. 1794, N.L.S. Ms 11049, f. 121.

CHAPTER 10

REFUGEE RELIEF IN ITS CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

In the previous five chapters I have discussed the development of British organisations for the relief of the French refugees, setting it within a chronological framework. It remains to sum up this development, and to see how the treatment of the French fitted into the context of assistance to other groups of the poor in late eighteenth century Britain. The French were, of course, a special group of poor people in that they were unfamiliar with the language and customs of England and totally unfitted for living at subsistence level. Against this, their background won for them assistance more favourable than for the ordinary poor. Their relief was administered, however, within the constraints imposed by the attitudes and organisational modes of the age. In this chapter I propose to look first at the charitable efforts on behalf of the refugees, in the light of contemporary philanthropic practices, and then to examine the government funded relief organisations in England and Jersey as a form of public assistance, against the background of ordinary poor relief, concentrating on Wilmot's Committee as the key refugee relief organisation in both contexts.

Norman McCord, in his article 'The Poor Law and philanthropy', divides philanthropic activity into three categories: organised societies, associations to meet temporary needs, and charity from individuals.<sup>1</sup> Charity towards the French refugees fitted into all three categories. Individual help was given throughout the period.

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<sup>1</sup>Norman McCord, 'The Poor Law and philanthropy', in Derek Fraser (ed.), The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1976), p. 90.

Temporary associations were formed in September and October 1792 to cater for the immediate needs of the French who flooded into England in the peak wave of the emigration. Most committees, such as those in Dover and Eastbourne, concentrated on providing food, clothing and temporary shelter for the incoming refugees, and transport to London for those who wanted it. The two major London committees, Wilmot's and Thomas', also expected the refugee problem to be temporary, but they fit more readily into the first category, as they were formally constituted societies designed to continue as long as the refugee problem persisted.

As such, these committees clearly belonged to the pattern of 'associated philanthropy' which both B. Kirkman Gray and David Owen see as characteristic of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee were voluntary associations of people who joined together to meet a case of special need: the destitute French clergy and laity. This was typical of eighteenth century English philanthropy, which concentrated on special cases rather than on general provision for the poor, the latter being the preserve of Poor Law authorities.

The refugee relief committees formally represented the interests of the subscribers, although membership was not elective, and interested people found no difficulty in joining. This followed the common principle that the people who provided the money should decide how it was spent.<sup>3</sup> Each Committee met regularly to decide on matters of policy and finance. In practice, the Committees' work was shaped by

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<sup>2</sup>B. Kirkman Gray, A History of English Philanthropy from the Dissolution of the Monasteries to the Taking of the First Census (London, 1905), pp. 79-80, 95-6; Owen, English Philanthropy, pp. 12, 60.

<sup>3</sup>McCord, 'Poor Law and philanthropy', p. 91.

those members who attended meetings most frequently.

The Committees had two main functions: to raise funds, and to spend them on the refugees. Both Committees used subscription lists to raise money, and advertised extensively to promote these lists. Such methods were typical of contemporary charitable organisations. Gray stresses the importance of publicity in convincing potential donors of the rightness of a particular cause, and the virtue that they would display by subscribing to it.<sup>4</sup>

The greater durability of Wilmot's Committee sprung in part from its more successful use of publicity. Financially, however, its greatest coup was the collection in the Anglican parishes, taken under a church brief authorised by George III and the Anglican bishops. This raised some £40,000. This form of collection had been commonly used in the seventeenth century in response to disasters such as fires, but the growth of the insurance industry had led to a decline in its use.<sup>5</sup> The parish collection was also unusual in its ecumenical aspects, for parallel collections were taken in Dissenting and Roman Catholic congregations. This gesture of the Anglican clergy on behalf of the French Roman Catholic clergy came only thirteen years after the Gordon Riots and eight years before George III refused to grant Catholic Emancipation in Ireland. The growth of religious toleration in Britain has been an uneven process, and the French clergy were fortunate to have arrived in a period of relative toleration, as evidenced by the Catholic Relief Act of 1791.

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<sup>4</sup>Gray, English Philanthropy, pp. 266-7.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 81-2.

Both Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee expended the major part of their resources on the payment of relief allowances. Wilmot's Committee also spent money on sending clergy abroad, on the provision of back-up services such as clothing and medical care and on group settlement schemes at Gosport and Winchester. I shall reserve discussion of these techniques until later, as most of them continued after the government assumed control of funding.

Like many contemporary charities, the members were drawn from a number of walks of life, including Anglican clergy, members of parliament, lawyers, businessmen, aristocrats and gentry. Gray sees the 'complex intermingling of men and schemes'<sup>6</sup> as an important feature of eighteenth century English philanthropy. The same set of men might be involved in various activities, or men from different groups might come together over the same activity. In this way, philanthropists might exchange ideas and experiences. In Gray's view, these connections led to a certain homogeneity of charitable administration and the development of a class of professional philanthropists.<sup>7</sup>

The members of Wilmot's Committee conformed to this pattern in several ways. The evangelicals William Wilberforce, Thomas Bernard and John Julius Angerstein, for example, could all be termed professional philanthropists, although their main interests fell outside refugee relief. They moved in much the same circles, but the Committee also brought together men of different religions, such as these evangelicals and Charles Butler, a prominent Roman Catholic, and men of different political allegiances, such as Edmund Burke and the Marquis of Buckingham. More importantly, the Committee included men with

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 96, 273-4.

considerable administrative experience who were prepared to take the lead in its affairs, such as Wilmot, Philip Metcalfe and Sir William Pepperell. Wilmot was important not only because of his key position as chairman, but for his legal training and extensive experience as a commissioner on the American Loyalist Claims Board.

Wilmot's Committee differed from most other philanthropic organisations in one respect: it was built on the administrative foundations laid down by members of the group to be relieved. The Bishop of St Pol de Léon had made the first moves towards organising assistance for his fellow-exiles. This produced another anomaly: although the Committee raised the funds and decided on matters of policy, the actual distribution of funds was organised by La Marche and staffed mainly by French clergy, some themselves the object of the charity. Similarly, members of the French lay community in Britain carried out much of the distribution work for Thomas' Committee.

One further aspect of philanthropic activity on behalf of the French refugees deserves comment: the formation of two separate Ladies' Committees, one in 1793 and the other in 1795-6. The former acted as an auxiliary to Wilmot's Committee, in that it raised funds for the French clergy, then turned those funds over to Wilmot's Committee. The second Ladies' Committee, which contained a core of members from the first, was a philanthropic organisation in its own right. It collected money and goods for the benefit of the French, and was active in home visiting and practical assistance. The main thrust of its activities was directed towards the care of female emigrants, and particularly towards care for women in childbirth. It was thus in the vanguard of the development of women's charitable associations, which spread rapidly in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>See above, p. 270.

In December 1793, after both Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee had run out of funds, the Treasury agreed to provide a monthly grant to Wilmot's Committee on the condition that it assumed responsibility for lay relief in England, as well as general ecclesiastical relief. The Committee accepted the offer.

The Committee continued to administer its expanded responsibilities for refugee relief, deferring to the government as paymaster, until 1798, when the charitable committee was superseded by a two-man committee appointed by the government. From this date, with the Treasury in control of funds and policy, and the Committee reduced to two men, Wilmot and Colonel Thomas Glyn, who had executive responsibilities, the Committee had become, in effect, a government instrumentality.

This development fits well into the three stage pattern of welfare agency development outlined by David Owen. In the first stage, philanthropists discover a need, and organise an association to relieve it. In the second stage, the government steps in with a grant-in-aid, and thereafter has an increasing say in policy. In the final stage, the service may become a state enterprise run by the government either alone, or with voluntary aid.<sup>9</sup> The example of Wilmot's Committee stands out in two respects. First, it passed through these stages in less than a decade. Secondly, this development occurred in the 1790s, while Owen's examples of the final stage are drawn mainly from the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries.<sup>10</sup> Thus the case of French refugee relief is interesting as an early example of central government involvement in a poverty problem.

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<sup>9</sup>Owen, English Philanthropy, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Chapter XVIII.

The government's outlay of between £100,000 and £250,000 per annum on the French refugees, while it provided no more than a subsistence for most of the beneficiaries, has to be seen as remarkably generous. It was unusual for late eighteenth century government to spend such sums, or to involve itself so closely, administratively, in alleviating distress. The nature of the particular group concerned goes a long way to explaining this involvement. When their numbers warrant it, refugees tend to form a special group in any community, and the British government assisted a number of such groups both before and after the 1790s.<sup>11</sup>

To sum up, charitable efforts on behalf of destitute French refugees fitted into the mainstream of contemporary philanthropic activities, particularly those on behalf of other refugee groups. Once the government stepped in with financial aid to Wilmot's Committee and to the organisation in Jersey, French refugee relief moved into the realm of public assistance. The French existed as a special group of the poor partly because they fell outside the net of parochial relief, as they did not qualify under the Law of Settlement. As the central government thus came to stand in place of the parish in providing poor relief for the French, it may be instructive to see how well it compared as an agent of social administration. There is one difficulty in so doing which should be noted in advance: local variations in contemporary parish relief were so great as to render hazardous the making of any generalisations.

The central government's grant of funds to the relief organisations in England and Jersey sidestepped two problems which long bedevilled poor

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<sup>11</sup>This context is discussed in detail in Chapter 11. For the grants, see below, pp. 392-3.



relief in England. First, there was no settlement problem, and minor disputes over the demarcation of the committees could be arbitrated by the government, without recourse to expensive litigation.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, no time or money had to be spent on fund-raising, thus reducing administrative costs, and there were not the inequalities associated with poor parishes having to raise more money for poor relief than rich ones.

The government's device of retaining and extending existing relief organisations, while it provided set monthly grants, had parallels with the contemporary practice in some parishes of farming out poor relief administration to contractors who agreed to assume this responsibility in return for a set yearly sum.<sup>13</sup> For the relief organisations, the set monthly grants were an aid to budgeting, but the system's inflexibility brought problems to Wilmot's Committee, which faced an increasing number of applicants for relief. Initially, at the Committee's request, the government augmented the grant several times, but in 1795 it refused to allow any further increases, and in 1797 it froze the number of places on the relief lists, barring eligible applicants from being admitted until vacancies arose. Parishes do not seem to have adopted this practice. Again, the system's rigidity meant that the scales of allowances did not rise until 1801, and were even lowered in some categories, so that the price inflation<sup>14</sup> during the Revolutionary Wars significantly eroded the value of the refugees'

<sup>12</sup> Geoffrey W. Oxley, Poor Relief in England and Wales 1601-1834 (Newton Abbott, 1974), p. 42.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 44-5, 100; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, English Poor Law History. Part I: The Old Poor Law (repr. London, 1963), p. 298.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, the rise in the index of consumer goods from 122 in 1792 to 228 in 1801 on the 'Schumpeter-Gilboy Price Indices - 1661-1823', part A, reproduced in B.R. Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics (Cambridge, 1971), p. 469.

allowances. For all its faults, the contemporary Speenhamland system adopted by some parishes allowed dole money and allowances in aid of wages to rise with the cost of bread.<sup>15</sup>

The centralisation implied by the government's control of finance was more apparent than real, as the government's ad hoc acquisition of responsibility for refugee relief had left Wilmot's Committee in the charge of the Treasury, and lay relief in Jersey in the hands of the War Department, before it passed back to the Home Office in 1797. The Treasury in fact had the more important role, because it supervised the major relief organisation and had ultimate control over both groups, although funds came in the first instance from the respective departments.

The failure to vest responsibility in one department meant that variations of policy and administration were possible, for the relief organisations were autonomous, but the variation was greater in specific decisions than in the administrative structure. Each organisation was headed by an administrator or administrative group who negotiated with the responsible department on matters of finance and policy. They estimated the annual and monthly expenditure, received the Treasury drafts and passed the money on to the distribution network, which was composed mainly of Frenchmen. La Marche managed the clergy network, the French Committee the lay network in England, and the Jersey Committee the lay distribution in Jersey. The distributors kept records and sent accounts of expenditure to the chief administrators, who in turn rendered accounts to their respective departments or superiors.

Administratively, the main exchange was between the English administrators and the Frenchmen in charge of the distribution. The

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<sup>15</sup>Mark Blaug, 'The myth of the Old Poor Law and the making of the New', Journal of Economic History, xxiii, no. 2, June 1963, p. 162.

latter screened relief applications before sending them on to the administrators, and acted as representatives of the recipients when making submissions to the administrators or directly to the government. The administrators ruled on applications and sent difficult cases to the appropriate minister for a final decision. The close links between the successive levels of administration, the high calibre of the administrators, and the fact that the distributors were the formal representatives of the recipients, were departures from the usual pattern of parochial relief.

The main criterion of eligibility for assistance seems to have been inability to work. In practice this meant the old, the sick, children under sixteen, gentlewomen and clergy. Except for the last two, these were the sorts of people most often covered by ordinary poor relief. Young refugees, however, had the advantage of being classed as children for several years longer than their English counterparts, and were not set to work in any way. Like the parishes, the government tried to provide employment for able-bodied men. It hit upon the expedient of inviting them to enlist in the *émigré* regiments in the British Army, which was chronically short of troops. With this option available, able-bodied men between the ages of sixteen and fifty were specifically excluded from relief. The clergy were exempted from this ruling, as military service was deemed inappropriate to their calling. In the same way, presumably, it seemed inappropriate to force *émigrée* gentlewomen to work, but reasonable to expect female French servants to find employment. Unlike most of the poor, the clergy and gentlewomen had a right to subsistence allowances, which were withdrawn only if they had other means of support.

Like the parishes, the relief organisations had the options of providing indoor or outdoor relief. They chose the latter, except for the attempts of Wilmot's Committee to set up colonies of clergy at Forton, Winchester, Thame and Reading. The first of these soon sent most of its inmates to Winchester, and the last two were formed when the Winchester colony disbanded, so only the Winchester scheme need be considered here. The settlement was the sort that Poor Law overseers could only dream of: the government lent and maintained the building, the inmates were clean, quiet and orderly, and they organised the cooking and cleaning themselves. The number of occupants was reasonably predictable, which made budgeting easier, and allowed the Committee's agent to negotiate favourable contracts for supplies with the local tradesmen. The occupants were not selected on the basis of age or infirmity, so they suffered less ill-health than those in the parish workhouses. They were all men, so there were no pregnancies and no problem of trying to segregate the sexes. Despite all these favourable circumstances, the Committee still complained that it cost more per head to maintain them there than outside the colony,<sup>16</sup> probably because semi-starvation was less easily tolerated under direct supervision. This suggests that the preference for outdoor relief on the part of many Poor Relief overseers<sup>17</sup> was amply justified financially. The tapestry and knitting workshop instigated by the Marchioness of Buckingham at Winchester<sup>18</sup> was the only attempt to use the labour of the refugees to defray the cost of their upkeep, and this was clearly a voluntary scheme of self-help. The notion of making pauperism pay its own way by setting relief pensioners to work,

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<sup>16</sup> See above, p. 203.

<sup>17</sup> Oxley, Poor Relief, p. 62.

<sup>18</sup> See above, p. 219.

inside or outside the workhouses, or that of outlaying funds to set up workshops to be run at a profit on their labour, played no part in refugee relief, because of the nature and background of the French.

The system of monthly allowances, the main form of relief, certainly fitted into the pattern of contemporary poor relief in one respect: they were insufficient to provide the recipient with adequate nutrition. The usual allowance for an adult refugee was about seven shillings a week. This seems reasonable when compared to the eight or nine shillings that a workman in the southern counties might then earn, but the latter might have his income supplemented to ten shillings under the Speenhamland system, and the rate fluctuated according to the price of bread.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, not only were refugee children classed as such until their sixteenth birthday, but their allowances were set at 2/6d a week, compared to the more usual 1/6d for pauper children. Again, refugee allowances were usually paid for the first two children and some of the subsequent children, while under the poor relief system normally only the third and subsequent children were eligible.<sup>20</sup> From the administrators' point of view, the French cost less in child allowances than most groups of the poor, due to the high proportion of Roman Catholic clergy.

In common with other poor people, the refugees suffered a high incidence of illness as a consequence of their poor diet. In response, the relief organisations and refugee leaders between them built up a network of medical services. The most sophisticated of these were in London, built on the foundations laid when Wilmot's Committee was still a private charity.

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<sup>19</sup>Blaug, 'Myth of the Old Poor Law', pp. 161-2.

<sup>20</sup>Mark Blaug, 'The Poor Law Report re-examined', Journal of Economic History, xxiv, no. 2, 1964, pp. 232-4.

The basic component of the services in London was consultations with medical practitioners who made their services available to the refugees. The initial enthusiasm which led some English doctors to donate their services soon died away in the face of heavy demand, so the Committee adopted the practice of paying set monthly fees to selected doctors, some of whom were drawn from among the refugees. The fee was usually set at between one and two guineas a month. Presumably the English doctors earned this in addition to income from private practice. Any French doctor eligible for relief was paid his normal allowance in addition to the fee. This system was similar to that used in some parishes of contracting with a doctor for him to provide the poor with drugs and medical treatment over a set period for a fixed payment.<sup>21</sup>

The consultation service was backed by dispensaries at which the refugees might obtain medicines prescribed by the doctors. Initially, Wilmot's Committee negotiated with existing charitable dispensaries in London to obtain free service for the refugees, but later it set up its own dispensaries, staffed by refugees and paid for out of the Committee's funds. Lunatics might be cared for at home, or the Committee might contribute towards the cost of their care at a private asylum. The latter method was quite a common practice among the Poor Law overseers at the time, and fostered the growth of these institutions.<sup>22</sup> The Committee also paid for the home care of some sick refugees, or allowed a French female servant to be added to a household where members needed special care. This use of servants as a form of home help seems quite unusual for its time.

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<sup>21</sup>Oxley, Poor Relief, p. 66

<sup>22</sup>S. and B. Webb, Old Poor Law, p. 301.

Other sick refugees who needed special care outside the home were catered for in several ways. In 1792 the Committee concluded an agreement with Middlesex Hospital whereby the latter set aside a ward for the refugee clergy and provided medical attendance in return for a weekly per capita fee, while the Committee was responsible for nursing attendance and food. A French nun ran the ward with the aid of one or more French clerics. The Hospital and Thomas' Committee made similar arrangements, which continued after Wilmot's Committee took charge of lay relief. In 1800 the Hospital provided twenty-five beds for sick refugees, a considerable undertaking for the period. The scope of hospital care was later broadened when the second Ladies' Committee arranged and presumably paid for several beds for female emigrants in one of London's lying-in hospitals.

The close nursing attendance on a small number of patients in the hospitals probably gave the refugees a better-than-usual standard of hospital care and nutrition. Again, the relatively generous payment of the doctors, the fact that they did not need to save money by skimping on medicines, and the attendance of French doctors on members of their own community, probably increased the refugees' chances of obtaining medical care reasonable by contemporary standards.

Other welfare projects were started on the initiative of the refugees themselves. From 1796 the lead was taken by Abbé Guy Carron, after he settled in Somerstown, where cheap rents had drawn many of the poorer refugees. From there he organised a lying-in hospital which accommodated up to thirty patients, a home for thirty-six aged and infirm clergy, a girls' school, a boys' school and a number of chapels for refugee congregations. These institutions were funded mainly from private donations and contributions from Wilmot's

Committee, and were run by volunteer labour from amongst the refugees.

The scope and success of these projects show clearly one of the great advantages that the French refugees held over most other groups of the poor: organisational ability. The clergy, aristocrats and magistracy might have been the economic drones of France, but they were also the classes with the most experience in leadership and administration. This was particularly true of the clergy, for the Bishop of St Pol de Léon and Abbé Carron were the prime movers in building the welfare apparatus, and much of the volunteer labour came from the clergy. Thus the French could come closer to the ideal of self-help than the ordinary poor, which in turn stimulated the generosity of the English. Sidney and Beatrice Webb have pointed out that there were few trained officers in the parishes, and that the whole system of accounting was defective and often subject to gross abuses.<sup>23</sup> The diligence of the French distributors, the quality of the English administrators, and the auditing of accounts at a number of levels, seem to have afforded the refugee relief organisations with a relatively high standard of accounting.

The refugees' status as a special group of poor directly affected the relief administration in several ways. First, their participation in the relief organisations and in welfare projects reduced administrative costs and increased the effectiveness of the relief measures. Secondly, their background and social standing gave them greater access to those who controlled the public purse. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the lack of stigma attached to their impoverished state led to a quality of relationship between relief administrators and those being assisted that differed from the norm.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 298.



The refugees were fortunate in the quality of the English administrators who gave their services to them. Men like Bouillon and Wilmot were experienced and able administrators, and were accustomed to working through government channels. Both stayed as heads of their respective organisations for over a decade, thus providing a continuity of competent and professional administration that was rarely achieved in the Poor Law parishes. They and their fellow administrators neither blamed nor punished the French for being poor; and this was reflected in administrative features such as the care for the sick, and the way in which penniless clergy and gentlewomen were entitled to allowances unless they succeeded in finding employment and means of support. This supports the view that the stigma attached to pauperism long hindered the development of public assistance and state welfare services.

PART IV: PERSPECTIVE AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 11REFUGEE ADMINISTRATION IN GREAT BRITAIN 1685-1945

## I

In the past three hundred years a succession of refugee influxes into Britain has elicited a variety of responses from her people and government. As a host nation Britain has faced the same problems as any other: how to control refugees, whether to assist them, and if so, how. There was also the question of where responsibility for these problems lay. In the eighteenth century the British government operated within what might be termed a 'federal' structure of administration, in which it reserved to itself certain functions such as foreign affairs and national security, and raised taxes to pay for them. It left residual functions and fund-raising to a network of local government units such as the counties, boroughs and parishes, and to other organisations such as the judiciary, the churches and charitable associations. Disadvantaged groups or individuals in society were left mainly to the care of the parish-based poor relief system and religious or private charity, with little direct government involvement. The rise of the welfare state in Britain in the nineteenth and particularly the twentieth century has seen the central government bureaucracy increasingly involved in the provision of social services, but the proliferation of private charitable associations and the involvement of local government in welfare matters has continued.

The control of aliens is linked to the maintenance of national security, and can be co-ordinated properly only on a national level, so that it has always fallen clearly within the province of the government. The responsibility for destitute aliens was less clear-cut.

Until the National Assistance scheme was introduced in 1948, poor relief was parish-based. Under the Laws of Settlement, paupers were eligible for relief only in the parish of their birth or prolonged residence. Foreigners thus found it difficult to qualify,<sup>1</sup> and were forced onto their own resources or the aid offered by charitable organisations or the state. A brief survey of a number of refugee influxes may serve to show the responses which they drew from the government and people, and what these responses had in common with refugee administration in the 1790s.

The Huguenots benefited from collections in the Anglican churches taken under briefs issued by Charles II, James II and William and Mary.<sup>2</sup> In 1689, when these funds proved insufficient, the French applied to parliament for aid. The description of their plight might well have been given a century later:

there still remain above 2,000 persons, some of them old, others infants, others sick and impotent; many of them heretofore rich and flourishing in their own country, but now reduced to the utmost misery and [who] must inevitably starve unless assisted by the house.<sup>3</sup>

Even before parliament finished its deliberations, Queen Mary stepped in with a grant from the privy purse. To administer the 'Queen's bounty', she appointed twenty commissioners who formed the 'English' committee.

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<sup>1</sup>Oxley, Poor Relief, pp. 18-21; Michael E. Rose, The English Poor Law 1780-1930 (Newton Abbott, 1971). For the problems this might cause, see the discussion re Irish immigrants in Catherine Jones, Immigration and Social Policy in Britain (London, 1977), pp. 56-60.

<sup>2</sup>These raised over £75,000: Shaw, 'Relief of Protestant refugees', pp. 663-5. Cf. the charity sermons which were a common method of raising funds in nineteenth century Ireland: Timothy P. O'Neill, 'The Catholic Church and the relief of the poor 1815-45'. Archivium Hibernicum, xxxi, 1973, pp. 132-45.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Shaw, 'Relief of Protestant refugees', p. 666.

The commissioners drew up rules for the guidance of a 'French' committee of twenty-four.<sup>4</sup> The grant was about £15,000 a year initially, of which £3,000 was distributed for the support of 'poor distressed French Ministers', and £12,000 for 'poor French protestants'.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of the German Palatines of the 1760s, well-wishers met at the 'King's Arms Tavern', formed a committee of twenty-one members to manage the expenditure of funds to be raised, and resolved to advertise in the newspapers for subscriptions. The committee successfully petitioned George III for permission to settle the Germans in South Carolina, foreshadowing the attempts to settle the Revolutionary refugees in Canada. The clergyman who originated the appeal wrote that

In the meantime I am assisted by four Gentlemen in purchasing suitable Cloathing, Provisions, and every necessary for the poor people, in providing apartments for the temporary reception of the sick, and of the women who are ready to lie-in; in whose behalf an eminent Physician, a Surgeon, an Apothecary,<sup>6</sup> and a Midwife have generously offered their assistance.

Many of these features were echoed in the treatment of the French refugees.

The Acadians and the American Loyalists alike directed their appeal for assistance primarily towards the government from the start, because the latter was in some measure responsible for their plight. Their claims on British generosity were quite different, of course, and their treatment differed accordingly. The Acadians were interned,

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 674. Cf. 'Rules & Regulations for the Guidance of the French Committee', Minutes 24 March 1796, B.M. Add. Ms 18592, ff. 209-14.

<sup>5</sup>Copy of King William's warrant of 20 July 1696, in A.O.3/903, unf. Also, see Shaw, pp. 666-9, 674; and see above, p. 249.

<sup>6</sup>Proceedings of the Committee, pt 1, p. iii. See also *ibid.*, pp. iv-viii; and see above, p. 249.

in effect, and their grant was administered by the Sick and Hurt Board of the Admiralty, which was also responsible for prisoners of war in England.<sup>7</sup> The French refugees were not subjected to this kind of treatment, although the clergy were placed in Forton Hospital in Gosport at least in part as a means of control,<sup>8</sup> and the building was used before and after their stay to house prisoners of war. The aid to the American Loyalists was partly as compensation for losses, and was to have parallels with that accorded to the Toulonese, Corsica and St Domingan pensioners.

There were several influxes of Jews into Britain in the eighteenth century, fleeing persecution in Bohemia, partitioned Poland and Gibraltar during the seige, but the Jewish community in Britain was left to provide all aid to them. The Anglo-Jews found the burden onerous, and sought aid of the government in restricting the entry of destitute European Jews. In response, the government forbade Jews to travel on a Crown packet unless they could pay the full price of the passage or produce a passport from a British minister abroad.<sup>9</sup> The latter expedient was tried, with the same concern for preventing the entry of destitute aliens, in the 1790s.<sup>10</sup> There was no parallel expectation that the Catholic community should provide for its own in the case of the French. On the one hand they were less capable of doing so, as the long necessity to shun the public eye in England had left the Church without a vigorous organisation to meet large-scale humanitarian tasks or a network of wealthy families.

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<sup>7</sup>Griffiths, 'Acadians in exile', pp. 69-70.

<sup>8</sup>See above, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup>George, London Life, pp. 132-8.

<sup>10</sup>See above, p. 127.

to draw funds from.<sup>11</sup> On the other, the willingness of the British public and government to assist the French obviated the need for English Catholics to take the lead.

In terms of relief, administration on behalf of the French refugees was both the successor of earlier attempts to assist refugees, and the product of its age, as discussed in the previous chapter. The closest precedent was the case of the French Huguenots, where the state stepped in with a grant when charitable efforts, including a collection in the Anglican Churches, proved inadequate. The Huguenot grant too was administered through an English and a French Committee. The American Loyalist case lacked the dimension of organised charity, but it too had a group formed by the claimants that co-operated with the British commissioners. The latter's principle that need was the main ground in awarding pensions was followed by Wilmot's Committee, although the differential rates among the laity and the special allowances to bishops, magistrates, and army and naval officers showed deference to rank. The payment of pensions rather than a dole to the St Domingans, the Corsicans and some Toulonese showed the presence of a 'compensation' aspect which linked them closely with the case of the Loyalists.

The case of the French refugees was distinguished by the scale and complexity of the relief operations. The outlay on the American Loyalists was far greater, of course, but the French were the largest group to be supported for a continuing period until the advent of the Belgian refugees in 1914, and grants to them were by no means inconsiderable. Accurate and sustained figures are hard to come by, but Parliament granted £260,396 from the Civil List to Wilmot's Committee

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<sup>11</sup> These problems continued into the nineteenth century: see Robert Kent Donovan, 'The denominational character of English Catholic charitable effort, 1800-1865', Catholic Historical Review, lxii, no. 2, April 1976, pp. 200-23.

alone in the year ending 10 October 1798; the total expenditure on civil government in 1798 was only £2,678,599.<sup>12</sup> The grant for 1798 seems to have been the peak outlay under the Civil List:<sup>13</sup>

<u>Period ending:</u>	<u>Clergy and Laity of France</u>	<u>Toulonese</u>	<u>St Domingans</u>	<u>Total</u>
10.10.1794	£ 27,692			£ 27,692
10.10.1795	135,910			135,910
10.10.1796	129,350			129,350
10.10.1797	204,460			204,460
10.10.1798	260,396			260,396
10.10.1799	172,353	9,000		181,353
5. 1.1800	47,081	5,400		52,481
5. 1.1801	<u>195,718</u>	<u>19,500</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>249,218</u>

The secours extraordinaire and the network of support services such as the dispensaries, the hospital wards at the Middlesex, the attendance of doctors, and the allocation of servants in some cases of need do not seem to have been equalled among other refugee groups in the eighteenth century.

## II

The passing of the 1793 Alien Act and the development of the Alien Office clearly made the 1790s a seminal period in alien administration, although it was not really built on for over a century. The successive Alien Acts were replaced in 1826 by 7 Geo. IV c. 54, an 'Act for the Registration of Aliens', which carried no powers of deportation.<sup>14</sup> Thus

<sup>12</sup>Great Britain, Accounts and Papers, xxxv, 1868-9, pp. 219, 448-9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 448-9, 453-4. The 'Clergy and Laity of France' were those assisted by Wilmot's Committee. Figures for Jersey are not included because they came under War Extraordinaries; presumably the Toulonese did too until Wilmot's Committee assumed charge of their grant. This table should be compared with that in Weiner, French Exiles, pp. 223-5.

<sup>14</sup>Dinwiddy, 'Deportation', p. 210; Bernard Porter, The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics (Cambridge, 1979), p. 71.



the small bands of political exiles who sought asylum in the nineteenth century, such as the Polish, Italian and Hungarian nationalists, and the French exiles of 1830, 1848 and 1870, were allowed to stay without interference from the government. An act empowering deportation was passed in 1848, but never implemented.<sup>15</sup>

Aid to these groups was left almost solely to charitable organisations. Norbert J. Gossman lists several formed for that purpose: the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland; the Garibaldi Fund Committee; the Society of the Friends of Italy (supporting Garibaldi and Mazzini); the Ladies Garibaldi Benevolent Association; the Garibaldi Unity Committee; and the Kossuth Fund and Relief Committee.<sup>16</sup> Five popular subscriptions were opened between 1849 and 1866.<sup>17</sup> The Hungarian Relief Committee, established in 1851, raised money mainly for the purpose of sending refugees on to America.<sup>18</sup> The only government aid of any substance was a grant of £10,000 in 1834 for the relief of Polish refugees. It was continued annually, rose to a peak of £15,000 in 1839 and declined to £3,000, given grudgingly, in 1862.<sup>19</sup> As in the case of the French refugees, the British government found temporary assistance could be long-lasting indeed, but the grants to the French were far greater. The Continental exiles of the nineteenth century received slightly over a quarter of a million pounds from all sources<sup>20</sup> - less than the grant to Wilmot's Committee alone in 1798.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-3.

<sup>16</sup> Norbert J. Gossman, 'British aid to Polish, Italian and Hungarian exiles 1830-1870', South Atlantic Quarterly, lxxviii, 1969, p. 241.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>19</sup> Porter, Refugee Question, pp. 68, 73, 82.

<sup>20</sup> Gossman, 'British aid', p. 242.

The reception of the Eastern European Jews in the latter part of the nineteenth century was a different story. As before, the initiative and much of the burden of relieving the destitute fell to their co-religionists. The Anglo-Jewish community had many charitable organisations to aid its poor, but the common prerequisite of six months residence in England before qualifying for relief restricted their usefulness from a new arrival's point of view - as was intended.<sup>21</sup> From 1859 the refugees received some aid from the Jewish Board of Guardians, a body set up to co-ordinate statutory and voluntary aid to poor Jews, much along the lines as the subsequent Charity Organisation Society.<sup>22</sup> The Board concentrated on exacting maximum assistance from local Poor Law Unions and the Poor Law Board, particularly in the provision of medical care, thereby avoiding duplication of services, and husbanding its own resources.<sup>23</sup> English Jewry feared the adverse effect on their own position of a mass influx of Jews, so the Jews Emigration Society and the Emigration Committee of the Jewish Board of Guardians helped them to emigrate elsewhere, particularly to America.<sup>24</sup>

Given this attitude, the large numbers of aliens involved,<sup>25</sup> their destitution, and their unpopularity amongst the enfranchised British workers, it is not surprising that the government tried to stem the flow through legislation. The 1905 Aliens Act, which followed the

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<sup>21</sup> Jones, Immigration and Social Policy, pp. 85-6.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 91. For details of the Charity Organisation Society see Kathleen Woodroffe, From Charity to Social Work in England and the United States (London, 1962), espec. Chapter II.

<sup>23</sup> For a discussion of the Jewish Board of Guardians, see Jones, Immigration and Social Policy, pp. 91-102.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-7.

<sup>25</sup> The numbers of Russian, Russo-Polish and Rumanian aliens recorded in censuses rose from 100,638 in 1871 to 284,830 in 1911: ibid., p. 69.

recommendations of the 1903 Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, forbade the entry of penniless aliens unless they could prove themselves to be refugees from religious persecution.<sup>26</sup> It required aliens to land only at specified 'Immigration Ports', and to make declarations much in the manner of the 1793 Alien Act, of which the 1905 Act was clearly a descendent.

The outbreak of war in 1914 brought in its wake Britain's largest single influx of refugees - almost 250,000 evacuees from Belgium. Such numbers placed great strain on British hospitality and on alien control and administration. Measures of control had been drawn up before the war, with a small enemy alien population in mind.<sup>27</sup> They were promulgated on 5 August 1914 as the Aliens Restriction Order, and subsequently amended twenty-seven times. The original Order restricted alien traffic to eleven ports, and banned enemy aliens from residing in prohibited areas such as most of Scotland, the south and south-eastern coastal areas of England, and military districts. Enemy aliens had also to register with local police, and to procure a permit to travel more than five miles from home.<sup>28</sup> All these measures were reminiscent of the 1793 Alien Act. They did not take account of friendly aliens, so a further order of 9 September 1918 required these to register with the police in prohibited areas, and thereafter the government tried to deter them from entering or residing in the prohibited areas.<sup>29</sup>

The growth of the Home Office over the preceding century, and the

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 89. See also Roche, Key in the Lock, pp. 65-7.

<sup>27</sup>Peter James Cahalan, 'The treatment of Belgian refugees in England during the Great War' (Ph.D. thesis, McMaster University, 1977), pp. 106-7.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 358-9.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 359-60.

development of specialist agencies under its control, meant that operational work on aliens was dispersed through several of these agencies. Business at the ports was conducted by the Aliens Office. The Aliens Restrictions Order of 1914 provided for a network of Aliens Officers at the ports and docks; these were drawn from the Home Office and the Customs Service,<sup>30</sup> following the precedent set in the 1790s. They had wide powers of detention and examination, and could despatch enemy aliens to internment camps. From February 1917 they were empowered to attach conditions to the acceptance of any alien, a new development. Thus they were recognisable forerunners of Britain's present-day Immigration Officers.<sup>31</sup>

Once aliens were inside the kingdom, much of the administrative burden of controlling them fell on the local police, who thus assumed many functions borne by magistrates, justices and local government officials in the 1790s. Under Orders of November 1914 and April 1915 Belgian refugees and other friendly aliens had to obtain registration certificates and notify any intended change of address to the police, who would monitor the journey and subsequent re-registration. The April order also required hotel and boarding-house keepers to keep a register of aliens staying there. Belgian refugees were specifically required to have 'satisfactory identification papers' in order to enter a prohibited area.<sup>32</sup> By these regulations, the British were rebuilding a system of internal controls similar to those under the 1793 Alien Act and its successors.<sup>33</sup>

In welcoming the Belgians, Britons once again found cause to

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<sup>30</sup> Roche, Key in the Lock, pp. 79-80.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 79-82, 87.

<sup>32</sup> Cahalan, 'Belgian refugees', pp. 374-5.

<sup>33</sup> See *ibid.*, Chapter X, for a detailed examination of the multiplicity of regulations and their administration. The contradictory interpretations of alien laws by the various agencies involved created difficulties for the overburdened police: *ibid.*, pp. 368, 370.

congratulate themselves on their reputation for tolerance. The Pall Mall Gazette of 24 September 1914 commented that 'A Protestant people are extending their arms of affection to a Catholic one, and the common enemy is Pagan',<sup>34</sup> echoing the newspapers of a hundred and twenty years before, and one relief committee did hark back to the welcome accorded to the French émigrés.<sup>35</sup> The Belgian influx was much larger than the earlier French one, its composition much more varied, and the period of exile much shorter, but the development of British relief administration does show a number of common features.

The impetus and most of the operational work for refugee relief came from voluntary charitable activities. The main charitable organisation, the War Refugees Committee, was created within a few days of the evacuation of Brussels at the instigation of Dame Flora Lugard, who modelled the Committee on the scheme prepared by the Ulster Unionist Council to evacuate Protestants from Ireland in the event of civil war there.<sup>36</sup> Dame Flora quickly sought patrons, gathered recruits, and helped to prepare a letter to the press to publicise the organisation. She tapped the energies of the pre-war women's movements, such as the Victoria League, and women took the lead in the embryo organisation.<sup>37</sup>

The Committee was recruited mainly from London's social élite, but it drew together people of different political persuasions, such as Dame Edith Lyttleton, widow of a Tory Cabinet Minister, and Herbert Gladstone, the Liberal former Home Secretary, who became the Committee's

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<sup>34</sup>Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 30-2.

'chief man of business'.<sup>38</sup> Gladstone, the arch enemy of women's suffrage, worked closely with ardent suffragists such as Lord Lytton and Willoughby Dickinson.<sup>39</sup> Lytton had begun raising money for the Belgians from the business world as soon as war had broken out.<sup>40</sup>

The Committee suffered from publicising its cause before it had worked out its organisation and policy. It received an unexpectedly large response of offers of hospitality and volunteer workers, and it erred in believing that aid would be needed mainly for women and children. It also suffered from competition from the Belgian Relief Fund, organised by the Belgian Ambassador to fund relief in Belgium itself. Perhaps for this reason, the Committee received more in kind than cash, which later increased its dependence on the government.<sup>41</sup>

The Committee had appealed for government aid almost immediately, as it needed assistance in transporting and housing the refugees, and money for their keep. Prime Minister Asquith passed the matter over to the Local Government Board, which instructed the Metropolitan Asylums Board to prepare accommodation and medical care for the refugees.<sup>42</sup> The government has thus brought into refugee relief very early, and the Committee took on the role of co-ordinating its own work with that of the numerous local committees and the government.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 34. The Committee had little initial success in its efforts to recruit Catholics, although it later gained considerable help from the Catholic Women's League: *ibid.*, pp. 37, 150. For a discussion of the Committee's membership see *ibid.*, pp. 32-8.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 39-40, 51-3.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 61-4, 71.

The Committee was organised into seven departments: Correspondence, Finance, Transport, Clothing, Employment and an omnibus department dealing with other matters, including liaison work with other organisations, education, health and tracing missing relatives.<sup>43</sup> Through these departments, the Committee developed a comprehensive system of welfare encompassing housing, employment, wage supplementation, clothing and advice on dealing with the British bureaucracy.<sup>44</sup> The Local Government Board actually warned the Committee not to be seen to be giving the Belgians more favourable treatment than the English poor received<sup>45</sup>

Relations with the government, represented by the Local Government Board, changed with time, mainly for financial reasons. The Committee raised £97,000 up to June 1916, and less than £10,000 thereafter.<sup>46</sup> Over the whole period, the government granted £1,713,205 to the Committee, and the Local Government Board spent as much again on its own behalf.<sup>47</sup> The Committee was thus always, and increasingly, dependent financially on the state; it in turn needed the Committee's operational contribution, for it provided most of the management and labour in refugee relief. Before July 1916 the Committee was to the fore. The government wished to keep in the background as much as possible, as the Committee's ability to recruit voluntary workers, or to draw extra efforts from paid workers, kept administrative costs down at first. As time passed, however, the increased war effort, the rise in the cost of living and higher taxation reduced the time and money volunteers were prepared to devote to the

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>44</sup>See *ibid.*, especially Chapter IX.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 406.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 408.

refugees, and the latter became more self-sufficient anyway, through better orientation and increased work opportunities. In the early period, the government's role was to provide funds, and to ensure through inspections and audit checks that they were properly spent and accounted for. The audit report of July 1916, however, pointed out that the government's involvement was now well-known, and recommended more direct control. The government then appointed a Commissioner of Belgian Refugees.<sup>48</sup> The Committee managed to hold some ground through its greater contact with the refugees and its expertise in dealing with them, but the balance of power had shifted to the government. The Committee was evolving into a government funded and directed body, although its operations were still largely in the hands of the voluntary workers; much the same pattern of development had characterised Wilmot's Committee.<sup>49</sup>

British aid to Jewish refugees in 1933-45 showed a similar pattern of state aid following in the wake of voluntary efforts, with volunteers providing much of the necessary administration. From 1933 until the outbreak of war, the Jewish community raised three million pounds to aid the fifty-five thousand Jews who fled Nazi persecution.<sup>50</sup> The principal Jewish fund-raising and administrative organisation was the Central British Fund for German Jewry,<sup>51</sup> which raised nearly half a million pounds in 1933-5.<sup>52</sup> The burden did not rest entirely on the Jewish community. Lord Baldwin sponsored an appeal, and many private

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 435-6.

<sup>49</sup>This brief summary of the relationship between the War Refugees Committee and the government is based mainly on *ibid.*, Chapter XI.

<sup>50</sup>Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (London, 1979), p. 82; Austin Stevens, *The Dispossessed* (London, 1975), pp. 71-3.

<sup>51</sup>It was later called the Council for German Jewry and then (1939) the Central Council for Jewish Refugees: Stevens, *The Dispossessed*, p. 122.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 120-1.



citizens offered accommodation.<sup>53</sup>

The Central British Fund was a policy-making body, with operational subsidiaries in the London-based Refugees' Committee, and its Professional Committee, which assisted those with professional qualifications.<sup>54</sup> The Refugees' Committee was the operational lynch-pin, as it arranged sponsorship, training, employment, re-emigration and other services.<sup>55</sup> The proliferation of voluntary aid organisations, Jewish and Gentile, was such that in 1938 they were brought together under the Central Co-ordinating Committee, later known as the Joint Consultative Committee on Refugees.<sup>56</sup>

The government initially displayed its usual reluctance to become involved with refugee problems. In 1933 English Jewry guaranteed that it would support any Jewish refugees allowed entry, 'without ultimate charge to the State'.<sup>57</sup> The government maintained its restrictions on the entry of the destitute, and held English Jewry to its promise until 1940. In December 1939 the voluntary organisations sought government aid in supporting the 13,000 refugees in their care. The Cabinet Committee on Refugees endorsed the Home Secretary's proposal that the government should pay half the cost of their support. The voluntary committees were unable to maintain their share, despite a further appeal which raised £350,000; and by 1945 the government bore the entire cost, although its annual grant had dropped from £553,000 in 1940 to £140,000 in 1945.<sup>58</sup> Once again the government had acted as a residuary benefactor

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 121; Wasserstein, Britain and the Jews, p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> Stevens, The Dispossessed, pp. 120, 126-8.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 109, 121-2, 136. Its founder, Otto M. Schiff, had assisted Belgian refugees in the Great War: *ibid.*, p. 121; Wasserstein, Britain and the Jews, p. 38.

<sup>56</sup> Stevens, The Dispossessed, p. 122.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 70; Wasserstein, Britain and the Jews, pp. 9, 82.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-3.

to refugees.

The government adopted stern measures to control aliens during the Second World War, prompted in part by newspaper campaigns and panic over the possible infiltration of fifth columnists. In May 1940 Churchill's new government established a 'protected zone' along the south-east coast, and by June 1940, thirty thousand aliens, mainly Germans and Austrians, had been interned. The government also deported some eight thousand aliens, mainly to Canada and Australia. Scandals over the treatment of deportees on the Dunera and the Ettrick and in the Canadian camps and the impact of the deaths of 599 deportees when the Aranda Star was sunk en route to Canada, turned public opinion against the policies of deportation and mass internment. From July 1940 the government progressively released certain classes of internees, such as the young, the old, the sick, skilled workers and those prepared to enlist in the pioneer corps. By 28 August 1941 only some thirteen hundred internees remained. The Jewish refugees suffered greatly from these measures, even though they were victims, and sometimes active opponents, of the Nazi régimes.<sup>59</sup>

### III

There are several recurrent features in British administrative responses to the successive waves of refugees to Britain. Alien control was always the prerogative of government. Before 1905, the government generally ignored small groups of refugees, or those who could support themselves; it interfered only when large groups of destitute or potentially dangerous refugees tried to enter the kingdom. Measures for

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<sup>59</sup> On the government's wartime policies and administration towards aliens see *ibid.*, pp. 82-133 and Aaron L. Goldman, 'Defence Regulation 18B: emergency internment of aliens and political dissenters in Great Britain during World War II', Journal of British Studies, xii, no. 2, May 1972, pp. 120-36.

the control of aliens within the kingdom were closely associated with the three great wars of 1793-1815, 1914-18 and 1939-45, and generally took the form of moving aliens from south-east coastal areas, and keeping a check on their residence and movements through some kind of registration system. Two refugee groups suffered internment: the Acadians during the Seven Years War, and the German and Austrian Jews in the Second World War. The Revolutionary refugees and the Belgian refugees endured restrictions, but not confinement, but the latter were friendly aliens; the former suffered comparatively little considering their status as enemy aliens.

The British government was consistently reluctant to take the lead in succouring refugees, preferring to leave care of the destitute in the hands of affinity groups, such as the Anglo-Jews, and private charitable organisations. Government and voluntary organisations alike were prepared to expend funds to transport refugees elsewhere. The government acted as a benefactor of the last resort to the Huguenots, the Revolutionary refugees, the Belgians and the German and Austrian Jews, when voluntary funds and agencies were overtaxed; in each case such agencies were involved in the administration of the grants. Funds were spent on relief allowances, and in the case of the subjects of this study, and the Belgians, on the development of auxiliary services.

The British administrative response to the influx of French in 1792-1802 thus fits best into the context of refugee administration, although some of the administrative agencies and the relief measures adopted were part of contemporary philanthropy, whether voluntary, government, or a mixture of both. The context of refugee administration is underlined, however, by reference to the contemporary American response to the influx of Revolutionary refugees there. They differed

from those in Great Britain in that most of them were colonial French, and they covered a far wider political spectrum. This reflected American opinion, as the Revolution had more admirers there than it did in Britain. The neutral status of the United States also meant that the French government was represented there. In consequence, part of the relief afforded to the French refugees in the United States came from French government funds. These were used principally to provide free passages to France for the refugees, whatever their political sympathies, and subsistence allowances for those with acceptable reasons for remaining in the United States. The French legation also underwrote hospital care for the sick. It was not prepared to assist those in the United States who had means of their own, or who held counter-revolutionary views.<sup>60</sup>

American aid to the refugees came from a variety of sources. The refugees were scattered over several states, mainly South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and Rhode Island. Voluntary committees raised subscriptions in a number of cities. The Philadelphia Committee raised \$14,600, which it proposed to spend mainly on sending St Domingans to France or St Domingo, and on a scheme for settling refugees on western lands.<sup>61</sup> The Baltimore Committee spent over \$20,000 assisting three thousand refugees there.<sup>62</sup> New York City raised \$11,000 and also supported a hospice for old men, women and children.<sup>63</sup> Several state legislatures granted funds for relief. Pennsylvania granted aid to old men, women and children who were destitute, New York State granted \$11,000 in aid, and Massachusetts also provided aid.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Childs, French Refugee Life, pp. 86, 175-7.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-6.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 87.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-6.

Early in 1794 Congress appropriated \$15,000 in relief funds against the debt to France, in response to appeals from New York, Baltimore and Norfolk, Va.<sup>65</sup> Randolph, the Secretary of State, asked state representatives to submit estimates of the number in need, and the minimum cost of subsisting them. On the basis of the returns, he proposed that \$10,000 should be distributed through the local committees, which should account for the money and report their proceedings to the President.<sup>66</sup> The grant, amounting to approximately \$5 a head, was exhausted in two months, and the Federal Government proposed spending the remaining \$5000 on returning refugees to St Domingo. Not all the refugees were willing to return, however, so relief remained a problem.<sup>67</sup>

The Federal Government, by allocating a fixed grant, instead of monthly payments in the British mode, managed to avoid continuing involvement in refugee relief. As a new form of government, it had no precedents to follow in the matter, and it did not share the British government's anti-Revolutionary commitment. In 1798, when Franco-American relations deteriorated temporarily, Congress did pass an Alien Act giving the President the power to expel any alien considered a danger to national security, to imprison an alien for non-compliance, and to arrest or deport enemy aliens in time of war. These powers do not appear to have been ever exercised formally.<sup>68</sup>

The Americans, with similar numbers of French refugees to cope with, thus also instituted alien legislation and refugee relief measures, although not to the same degree of administrative sophistication as the British. Its relief funds came from voluntary organisations and the

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-7.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 88-9.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-90.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 118, 187.

central government, with the state legislatures as additional benefactors. On a per capita basis, however, the American financial contribution was only a fraction of the British. A greater proportion of the relief effort appears to have gone into sending the refugees abroad. Presumably the lack of a large ecclesiastical component among the refugees meant that there were more able-bodied men deemed capable of earning a living. Relief seems to have gone principally to the old, the sick, women and children, much as was the case with lay refugees in Great Britain. It would be fair to say, however, that whether compared to their counterparts in the United States, or other refugee movements to Britain, the subjects of this study fared remarkably well.

CHAPTER 12CONCLUSION

The influx of French refugees into Britain between 1789 and 1802 created two major problems for Britain as a host nation: the maintenance of national security and the welfare of those refugees unable to support themselves. Both these problems elicited an administrative response in 1792: the government initiated the legislation embodied in the 1793 Alien Act, while members of the public set up relief committees to succour needy refugees. This difference in origin was reflected in the subsequent administrative developments of the organisations.

The legislation on aliens was conceived, sponsored and enforced by the central government, which remained the guiding force behind alien administration. The 1793 Alien Act laid down a formal set of procedures which the Home Office had to implement. It appointed or assigned internal personnel to deal with business arising from the Act. This rationalisation of business and the subsequent expansion of personnel to deal with it, formed the basis for the development of the Alien Office as a distinct section within the Home Office. The Alien Office was characterised by linear development with a gradual but limited growth determined by the extent and rate of alien traffic, both at border controls and within the kingdom, and by the cost of supervising it.

The development of Wilmot's Committee, the largest of the relief organisations, shows quite different characteristics. It did not initiate a comprehensive code of procedures which it then tried to administer, because it was partly based on the existing organisation founded by Jean-François de La Marche. Thus it incorporated distribution procedures which he had already devised, and continued to use the services of a

core of workers already under his direction. The Committee expanded the existing distribution network, and concentrated its energies in the collection and control of finances and the development of auxiliary health services.

The government added another layer to this organisation in December 1793, when it assumed financial responsibility for and ultimate control of refugee relief. Thus responsibility for the provision of funds moved successively from La Marche to Wilmot's Committee and thence to the Treasury. At the same time, the government transferred responsibility for the French laity in England from Thomas' Committee to Wilmot's Committee. Once again Wilmot's Committee retained and subsequently expanded the existing distribution network. Thereafter Wilmot's Committee acted as a nucleus to which the government devolved administrative tasks concerning various groups of French refugees.

Although the government had assumed financial control of Wilmot's Committee, the latter retained responsibility for the financial administration of refugee relief. The government influenced this administration by its decisions on the scale of the grants. Typically, the government decided the total to be spent, but left the Committee to work out the ways and means of spending it to best advantage. The Committee would then submit its proposals to the government for approval, which was usually given. Thus Wilmot's Committee was the central agency for the formation and execution of policy. It was the initiating body, and the government the responsive one, in contrast with the latter's central direction of alien administration.

The responsive role of the government in refugee relief can be seen even more clearly through the way in which responsibility for



various groups of French refugees came to be split between different departments. Wilmot's Committee and Thomas' Committee both approached the Treasury for funding, and it granted the requests, although relief to the laity was subsumed into Wilmot's organisation. Colonel Craig reported the plight of the laity in Jersey to Dundas, the Home Secretary, in his capacity as the minister responsible for the conduct of the war, and he granted them funds out of the war extraordinaries. Sir Gilbert Elliot was also successful in obtaining aid from Dundas for the evacuees from Toulon. When Pitt reorganised his portfolios in July 1794, however, Dundas took responsibility for the refugees in Jersey with him to the newly-created War Department, while the Toulonese remained with the Home Office, now under Portland. As a result, the government never achieved a concerted or centrally-directed policy on refugee welfare. The manner in which bureaucratic bungling deprived first the Jersey evacuees and then the refugees remaining in Jersey of much-needed funds in 1796-7, demonstrated the dangers inherent in such a wide dispersal of responsibility. The subsequent narrowing of control to the Treasury and Home Office, and the augmentation of the role of Wilmot's Committee in actual or merely financial management, reduced but did not solve the problem.

The differences between alien administration and refugee relief administration thus illustrate how the centrality of an issue to the perceived sphere of government can affect administration. Alien administration was clearly the province of the central government, hence it was based on legislation, and was directed through a single organisation under ministerial supervision. In contrast, refugee relief was handled at the departmental level, in a series of ad hoc

responses to specific pressures and circumstances. The absence of legislation or even parliamentary debate on the issue, and the lack of co-ordination between or even within departments, reflected its low political priority, and resulted in a very decentralised form of administration.

Although alien and refugee relief administration evolved different structures between 1792 and 1802, their style of administration did show two important common features. The first was that changes in policy and procedures were made by ad hoc responses to problems as they arose, with occasional or periodic codification of these changes into formal regulations. The successive Alien Acts of 1798, 1802 and 1803 are examples of this form of change. The most comprehensive reviews of relief regulations were undertaken by the relief organisations themselves, usually in response to financial imperatives, geographical relocation or changes in the composition of the pensioners or administrators, such as the musical chairs over the Jersey evacuees in 1796 and the assumption of control by Wilmot and Glyn in 1798.

The second common feature relates to the role of the government. In both cases, it inhibited growth of the central bureaucracy by farming out field supervision and administration to local government officials, existing salaried officials and volunteer workers. In the case of alien administration, there was limited growth in the form of the Alien Office employees, some of whom actually worked in the ports. In the relief organisations, much of the routine administration was done by the French themselves. None of the government departments involved in refugee relief appear to have recruited extra personnel to deal with it. The volume of correspondence was small and usually was handled by the under secretaries.

I have argued already that the charitable organisations for the relief of the French refugees were typical of eighteenth century organised philanthropy. Government administration of alien legislation and refugee relief also fitted its period in a number of features: its dispersal among several departments of responsibility for one problem, its ad hoc responses to outside influences and to specific problems as they arose, and its manner of limiting central bureaucratic growth. Except perhaps for the last, these features might be considered characteristic of bureaucracies, rather than applicable to the eighteenth century alone. But refugee administration also foreshadowed nineteenth century administration in a number of ways: alien administration with its tight central control and field representatives, and relief administration through its mixture of voluntary and state assistance. It was also marked out from the eighteenth century by the absence of sinecurists or profiteers: the administrators were either unpaid volunteers, or salaried professionals; and their work seems to have been efficient and cost-effective by contemporary standards.

Alien legislation and administration in the 1790s represented Great Britain's first comprehensive attempt to control the entry and residence of aliens, and provided the foundation for later initiatives in immigration control. The central government's gradual involvement in refugee relief was an early venture into the welfare of a distressed group in the community. The government and the relief organisations between them developed a comprehensive system of allowances and auxiliary services in health and education. The British thereby demonstrated the level of social administration that could be achieved in the late eighteenth century through a combination of public funding,

high-calibre administrators and a non-recriminatory attitude towards the recipients, the French. The study of administration thus contributes to our knowledge and understanding of refugee administration in Great Britain at the close of the eighteenth century.

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