Encountering the French: A New Approach to National Identity in England in the Eighteenth Century

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Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sussex

September 2010

Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree. However, the thesis incorporates to the extent indicated below, material already submitted as part of required coursework and/or for the degree of Master of Arts in Early Modern History which was awarded by the University of Sussex.

Research material collected as part of a Master of Arts dissertation has been used for Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Signature: _____

Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Peter Campbell for his wise words and expert guidance throughout. Grateful thanks also to Dr. Naomi Tadmor who kindly took the time to read through the thesis and offered insightful and helpful advice. I would also like to thank Dr. James Livesey who offered encouragement and support exactly when it was needed.

Thanks also go to the numerous and extremely helpful staff at the National Archives in London and the various county and city archives used in research, especially Dr. Darryl Ogier at the Island Archives in Guernsey for his enthusiastic support and advice.

University of Sussex

Mark Anthony Williams: Doctor of Philosophy in History

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Summary

This thesis examines instances of sustained or regular encounter between British and French nationals in the second half of the eighteenth century and considers the evolution and form of a national identification which occurred for the English participants in the light of such contact. It is distinguished from previous historical studies of British nationality at this time in several respects. First, it is an approach derived from anthropological studies which have examined episodes of interaction between proximate national groups to consider the impact these have on the development of national awareness or identity. In choosing this approach the thesis, therefore, looks at encounters between people as opposed to between discursive frameworks, so often in the eighteenth century informed by stock and inaccurate stereotypes of the French to be found in British print culture and which constituted a form of 'virtual' encounter between the two nationalities. This study is distinguished in a further capacity in that it uses archival source material that was not produced with the intention of mass publication or readership, but which instead reflects personal or private opinion and identity with respect to the nation.

That the French nation occupied an important and influential position in the development of national identities in Britain at this time is fully recognised. However, the principal argument is that notions of Anglo-French opposition and enmity frequently portrayed in the British press were inevitably modified by the experience of encounter between various respective national groups. As a result, the binary model of a developing British nationality in contrast and opposition to perceived French characteristics must likewise be re-assessed. Instead, this study demonstrates that the form of a national identification and its course of evolution, for those who engaged in regular encounter with the French, was fluid and differentiated for a variety of individuals and groups. Understood in terms of a process, this then has implications for the way in which nationality developed among those individuals and groups who had experienced no direct contact with the French.

Contents

Illustrations and Tables

Abbreviations

BCA	Birmingham City Archives
BLARS	Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Record Service
BLHL	Brighton Local History Library
BRO	Bristol Records Office
CKS	Centre for Kentish Studies
CRO	Cornwall Records Office
CuRO	Cumbria Records Office
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DsRO	Derbyshire Records Office
DRO	Dorset Records Office
EKA	East Kent Archives
ERO	Essex Records Office
ERYRO	East Riding of Yorkshire Record Office
ESRO	East Sussex Records Office
HLRO	House of Lords Records Office
HRO	Hampshire Records Office
IAG	Island Archives Guernsey
LA	Lincolnshire Archives
LMF	Library and Museum of Freemasonry
LRO	Liverpool Records Office
LLRRO	Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland
NA	National Archives, London
NpRO	Northamptonshire Records Office
NdRO	Northumberland Records Office

NoA	Nottinghamshire Archives
NRO	Norfolk Records Office
NYRO	North Yorkshire Records Office
PLG	Priaulx Library, Guernsey
PWDA	Plymouth and West Devon Archives
SA	Shropshire Archives
SARS	Somerset Archives and Record Service
SRO	Southampton Records Office
SuRO	Suffolk Records Office
UNA	University of Nottingham Archives
WSRO	Wiltshire and Swindon Records Office

Introduction

This thesis examines instances of direct encounter between British and French nationals in the eighteenth century and considers the evolution and form of a national identification which occurred for the English participants in the light of such contact. Historically, studies of national identity have understood it as a discrete and definable phenomenon. Classical anthropological approaches to the idea of space or territory have often assumed that it could be divided unproblematically into separate social or cultural domains. Each country or nation-state therefore was understood as capable of embodying its own distinctive cultural identity.[1] In the last twenty years also, historical studies of identities in eighteenth century Britain have similarly argued for the development of a widespread nationality, increasingly appropriated and expressed in uniform ways and cohered around various foci such as the person of the monarch or the notion of imperial rule.[2] This assumption, however, that collective cultural identification may be designated along national lines has since been challenged, initially by anthropologists who have highlighted the arbitrariness of delimiting individual and group identities along the lines of randomly drawn territorial boundaries.

Notably in studies on encounter among border communities, which represent both a physical proximity to supposedly alternative national cultures and also, frequently, a separation from the influences of a domestic core, a high level of cross-cultural appropriation spanning border and frontier spaces has been demonstrated by

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[1] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 'Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1992, p. 6.

[2] For example, Jack Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution', in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. 2 The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998 for arguments concerning the notion of empire, and Linda Colley, 'The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation, 1760 – 1820', *Past and Present*, No. 102, 1984, pp. 94-129 for an argument in favour of a national identity focussed on the person of the king in the late eighteenth century.

anthropologists.[3] The outcome of such a process, usually the result of sustained and regular interpersonal interaction between communities sited on either side of the borderline, has been a hybrid identity which defies the descriptive label 'national'. Moreover, such work shines a spotlight on the weaknesses inherent in historical models of nationality and inclusive national identification. Historical studies, as shall be seen below, responded to this increasing discernment in approach with greater recognition of the fluidity of personal and group identities generally and of the possibility of their strategic appropriation. However, with respect to the study of national identification in the eighteenth century, the concentration has been on the development of discourse in Britain. Therefore, inspired both by this newer understanding of the nature of identity, and by the approaches of anthropology, this thesis looks at cases of sustained or regular contact between British and French to examine the attitudes and identities formed with respect to 'nation' as a result. In taking an existing focus of historical study, namely eighteenth century national identities in Britain, and deriving an approach from an anthropological standpoint of encounter, a novel, critical appraisal of the existing histories may be undertaken.

Furthermore, such a study is significant in two key respects. First, the evidence arising from direct contact may be used to reflect with greater discernment upon individual or group identities. A great deal of our understanding of identity is dialogical, and historical arguments such as that of Linda Colley posit the French as an antithetical 'other' against which a notion of Britishness was formulated.[4] Characteristic features of national identity at this time were therefore understood to have evolved in diametrical

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[3] See, for example, J. Cole and E. Wolf, *The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley*, London, Academic Press, 1974 on the Tyrol; Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: the making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989; Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan (eds.), *Border Approaches: Anthropological Perspectives on Frontiers*, Maryland, University Press of America, 1994.

[4] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 – 1837*, London, Pimlico, 1992. See also Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, London, St. Martin's Press, 1987; Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies*, London, Duckworth, 1987.

opposition to corresponding French traits. However, regular or sustained encounter between various groups of British and French would suggest a level of cross-cultural exchange and appropriation which altered the form of national awareness for those involved and which thus renders too simplistic the binary understanding of national identification. Second, a study of encounters is significant in that it may be used to shed light on attitudes more generally, such as with respect to the development of the state machinery or the conduct of war. When examining the evidence of encounters one finds that identity is rarely the most explicit or important issue presented. Instead, encounters arise from, and are conducted within, concerns about issues such as commerce or, in the case of smuggling, about escaping the law. In looking at encounters within these wider contexts, and considering the attitudes and opinions formulated in their respect, it enables us to understand them in new ways.

A study of Anglo-French encounter at this time is inherently fascinating due to the scale and nature of contact that took place, for example through legal commerce or the illicit trade of smuggled goods, through military engagement or through the quotidian interaction of displaced or settled groups in British communities. Within such varied contexts this thesis will examine the nature of responses to the French among a variety of social and occupational groups in England and use this evidence to reflect upon the implications for the development of a national identification. The timescale focus for the study will be the latter half of the eighteenth century to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. This is to render the project more manageable in the light of a wealth of primary source evidence. It also coincides with several periods of war between the two countries, identified by a number of historians as critical episodes in the formation of national identities and particularly in those studies of the eighteenth century, as shall be seen in due course. A final chapter will focus on perceptions of the French among the

English population between 1793 and 1815. Its purpose is two-fold. First, as a period of sustained national hostilities against the Revolutionary and, later, the Napoleonic regimes in France, the chapter concentrates exclusively on the effect of war on the formation of national identities thus enabling a critical reflection on its influence and relative importance as a developmental factor. Second, an examination of perceptions, without the experience of encounter, allows the findings of earlier chapters to be placed in some sort of context and to ascertain more clearly the extent to which contact mediated attitudes and opinions and therefore altered forms of national awareness.

Encounters with the French has been chosen as the focus for this thesis because of the unique position both the country and its people are said to have occupied in the British psyche in the eighteenth century, and hence its influential position in the evolution of a national identity. The relationship itself between Britain and France at this time was an extremely complex one. One critic compared it to a rope, with so many interconnected strands that tensions merely bound them closer together.[5] Alternatively, the relationship has been likened to that of unruly twins, at one and the same time marked by mutual admiration and intense rivalry.[6] English and French often regarded themselves as 'opposites' in religious beliefs, the one's state religion was Protestant and the other Catholic. To many, the success of William III in taking the English throne in 1688 was the key to superiority over the Catholics. [7] With a Protestant King on the throne, a powerful anti-Catholic discourse could attain currency which led to the understanding that Protestantism and liberty were essentially 'British' characteristics and that France - a powerful and moreover geographically close Catholic country - was a natural adversary. This sentiment was intensified by repeated wars against the French

[5] D. Horn, *Great Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1967, p. 39.
[6] G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, p. 2.
[7] Tony Claydon, and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity, Britain and Ireland c.1650 – c.1850*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 33, 56.

from the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth, and by political events such as the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 which signified to many the proof of Catholic barbarity. There was also the threat, for the whole of the first half of the eighteenth century, of a Catholic Stuart restoration in Britain backed financially by the French and supported by a French army of invasion.[8]

Britain and France were also believed to be vastly different in political culture. To many Britons the constitutional balance of King, Lords and Commons signified a benevolent political liberty, in contrast with the perceived despotism of the Bourbon kings, and this ideology informed relations for much of the century. The two countries did enjoy an extended period of peaceful co-operation following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 when France and Britain became political and diplomatic allies until 1731, as well as negotiating terms of a free trade agreement of mutual reciprocity in 1714. The period was marked by considerable co-operation at governmental level, for example France's refusal to support Jacobite claims to the British throne on the death of George I in 1727, and both countries co-operated at international peace conferences at Cambrai (1722 – 1725) and Soissons (1728 – 1729) to ensure the peaceful settlement of European problems. However, as Jeremy Black has argued, the relationship was primarily one of convenience formed out of mutual weakness and marked by mutual suspicion and both countries would have readily exploited any power imbalance in their favour.[9]

Certain similarities between the two countries lie in the fact that both competed for the same trading markets and both were driven by the same colonial impetus. Imperial rivalries for territory and resources were fought out in the islands of the West Indies, the Atlantic seaboard and eastern hinterlands of North America, in the Indian

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[8] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 24.
[9] J. Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies*, p. 12.

subcontinent and, later in the eighteenth century, in the drive to claim ownership of Australasian territory. In commercial endeavour Britain and France strove to become the main entrepôt for re-export to the European market in West Indian produce and East Indian silks and calicoes.[10] They competed more directly to export Newfoundland fish to the Catholic states of the Mediterranean and finished cotton manufactures to Turkey and the Levant.[11] Rivalries in military, political and cultural domains between Britain and France were centuries old and indeed, throughout the eighteenth century, both countries developed an acute sense of their own importance in the world in terms of maritime endeavour, commercial prowess and cultural vitality. Yet these similarities, as much as the differences, could bring them into competition as well as co-operation. This relationship, along with the close proximity of the two countries, made France important above all others for the formation of British attitudes and identities.

On the face of it France should have been dominant. Throughout the period under study, it was by far the more populous country of the two and, being almost four times the size of Britain, contained more plentiful natural and industrial resources. William Pitt noted in 1787 how the French population at twenty million outstripped that of Britain by almost three to one, and this was after half a century of sustained population growth in England.[12] The French were also perceived to hold the commercial upper hand. Writing as early as 1663, the merchant Samuel Fortrey remarked that France was 'rich, populous and plentiful'. He went on to list the various commodities imported from there, including velvets, satins, silks, saffron, soap, honey, almonds, olives, capers and prunes, and he expressed his consternation that this left England with

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[10] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 79.
[11] John Egleton, *A vindication of the late House of Commons in rejecting the bill for confirming the eighth and ninth articles of the treaty of navigation and commerce between England and France*, London, 1714, p. 27.
[12] Andrew Hinde, *England's Population: A History Since the Domesday Survey*, London, Hodder Arnold, 2003, p. 181.

a trade deficit of 'at least sixteen hundred thousand pounds a year'.[13] For Fortrey and many of his contemporaries this was specie flooding out of England to line the coffers of the French king and his people. France was also far more powerful militarily on land than Britain and pushed hard to rival British naval power in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757) John Brown stated, 'The French, in land Armies, are far our Superiors: They are making large and dreadful Strides towards us, in naval Power. They have more than disputed with us the Empire of the Mediterranean. They are driving us from our Forts and Colonies in America.'[14] And yet this is the period in which Britain rose to be a world power whose commercial and financial strength enabled her to challenge France with considerable success, either directly in the colonies, or partially indirectly through the financing of her continental allies. It was a period of considerable tension between the two countries and one in which rivalries were conceived of in national terms and frequently articulated as such in the press and in satirical imagery. But if the predominant discourse of British nationality was formed in a framework of competition and opposition, and the enduring propaganda message delivered to the populace repeated the same formulations, yet still we cannot be sure that those on the receiving end appropriated the ideology of 'nation' in the same way, if at all.

An important feature of the approach of this study then, is that it looks at encounters between people whereas previous studies have focused on encounters between discourses. Whether it be in terms of a national or an imperial identity, the basis of previous studies has often been through evidence of 'virtual' encounters experienced via printed media often employing stock and inaccurate stereotypes, or the interaction of discursive frameworks with the suggestion that these were accepted

[13] Samuel Fortrey, *England's Interest and Improvement*, Cambridge, 1663, pp. 2, 14, 25.
[14] John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, London, 1757, p. 143.

uncritically by the British population. In choosing to focus on encounter, this study suggests that the points at which most intense cultural exchange takes place are those instances in which individuals or groups of different cultural backgrounds come into direct contact. It is within this sphere of interpersonal interaction that cultural and national discourse is formed and refined with greater immediacy and greater variety, for it provides the opportunity to challenge as well as to reinforce established conceptions arising from the 'virtual' encounter.

Print Culture and the Creation of a 'Virtual' Encounter with the French

One of the key components by which views of the French people were disseminated, and virtual encounter thus created, was through satirical iconography. Most commonly these were etchings and copperplate engravings in which image and, usually, explanatory and commentary text combined to issue a snapshot message of French and British nationality to observers.[15] Moreover, as the weight of evidence demonstrates, the portrayal of the French people was highly likely to be negatively stylised. Indeed Jeremy Black has described the tone of the English press at this time as 'stridently xenophobic'.[16] An image dated 1762 entitled *A Poor Man Loaded with Mischief, or John Bull and His Sister Peg* (Figure 1) contains one of the earliest portrayals of the fictional representation of nation, John Bull.[17] In this representation he is shown as blind, cuckolded and carrying Scotland on his back in the form of a harridan

[15] The best known proponents of this form of publication in the eighteenth century are William Hogarth, James Gillray, George Cruickshank and Thomas Rowlandson. The following provide some useful biographical information and critiques of their work: Ronald Paulson, *Rowlandson: a new interpretation*, London, Studio Vista, 1972; Robert Patten, *George Cruickshank: A Revaluation*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1974; Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1996; Richard Godfrey, *James Gillray: the Art of Caricature*, London, Tate Publishing, 2001; Michael Rosenthal, *Hogarth*, London, Chaucer, 2005; Mark Hallett and Christine Riding, *Hogarth: the Artist and the City*, London, Tate, 2006.
[16] Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, London, Croom Helm, 1987, p. 208.
[17] Unknown author, *A Poor Man Loaded with Mischief, or John Bull and his Sister Peg*, 1762, (c) British Museum.

woman. France is represented with sinister monkey-like features making overtures to Scotland with an olive branch and gold. Such simian representation occurred frequently and alluded to the British belief in French stupidity, but also their capacity for deviousness and cruelty.[18] In a later engraving of 1779 entitled *Politeness* (Figure 2), John Bull is shown as sitting back-to-back with a Frenchman and both are eyeing one another with distaste. He is rotund, ruddy and of middle class appearance whilst the French figure is skinny, as if underfed, powdered and obviously aristocratic.[19] This mode of representation not only reflected a belief that the French were half-starved; it also demonstrated the perception that they were obsessed with outward appearances. These specifics of national stereotyping, moreover, were taken as representative of wider political and cultural differences between the two nations. The elaboration of French dress, the evident preened appearance stood for an effeminacy totally at odds with the British view of themselves as forthright, independent and honest.[20] Further supposedly 'British' qualities of courage, wealth, comfort and pride were held up against French cowardice, poverty and vanity. In these genres the portrayal of stereotypical and binary oppositions between British and French was commonplace.[21]

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[18] Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748 - 1815*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000, p. 31.
[19] James Gillray(?), *Politeness*, 1779, (c) British Library.
[20] There are a number of works which examine the concept of effeminacy and national culture in the eighteenth century including, Michelle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National identity and language in the eighteenth century*, London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 5-6; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727 – 1783*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, pp. 567-587; Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715 – 1785*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 71-73, 94-95, 185-205, 219-221; Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 122, 241; Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth Century England*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, p. 63; G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp. 81-82. For a gendered understanding of effeminacy in the early modern period, see Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500 – 1800*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 83-98.
[21] A number of historians have examined the dichotomous portrayal of national stereotypes from the point of view of the British at this time, see Eugene Weber, 'Of Stereotypes and of the French', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 25, No. 2/3, 1990, pp. 169-203; Robert and Isobel Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy*, London, Heinemann, 2006; Colin Haydon, "I love my King and my Country, but a Roman Catholic I hate': anti-Catholicism, xenophobia and national identity in eighteenth century England', in Tony Claydon & Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*. Robin Eagles looks at such portrayals within a discourse of francophilia, see *Francophilia*, pp. 14-38.

But should it necessarily be inferred that the audience of this imagery viewed the situation in these terms, or indeed that imagery was appropriated in the ways in which its authors intended?

A number of historians have argued that this was indeed the case and that depictions such as these constituted a reality for the society in which they circulated. Kathleen Wilson has written that material such as this served to proffer ideals, organise knowledge and mobilise identities.[22] Herbert Atherton has likewise stated that the satirical images of the period provide documentary evidence of cultural and intellectual history which reveal basic beliefs and attitudes, so too Diana Donald who has claimed that the imagery profoundly affected those who saw them.[23] Gerald Newman has also stated that, by the eighteenth century, there was a longstanding sense of enmity with the French among the lower orders and indeed that their understanding of English liberty in the 1750s was, 'about three parts Gallophobia to one of constitutional guarantees.' This, he maintained, was fed by stereotypes and the material itself suggested, 'how very deep, elemental, carnal, even in some way manic, was the folkish attitude towards France.'[24]

Certainly most of the British population had never met a Frenchman or woman and therefore the virtual encounter of propaganda would have offered the single or dominant discursive view of them available. However, the conclusion that this then constituted a popular mentalité is open to question. In the first place, Eirwen Nicholson has demonstrated the rather limited circulation of such imagery. Because of the deterioration of the original plate, initial print runs of pictorial material would have been restricted to between 100 and 600 copies, thus instantly delimiting the size of the

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[22] K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 38.
[23] H. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: A Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974, p. 266; D. Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, p. 2.
[24] G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp, 25, 79. For similar arguments about the widespread Francophobia of the English population see also, H. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth*, p. 266; Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies*, p. 98.

potential audience.[25] Secondly we can never be entirely sure that the propaganda messages were received and understood in the ways intended by the producer.

Figure 1: *A Poor Man Loaded with Mischief or John Bull and his Sister Peg*, 1762.

[25] Eirwen Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: the Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth Century England', *History,* No. 81, 1996, pp. 5-21, p. 11.

Figure 2: *Politeness*, 1779.

Roger Chartier's work on cultural appropriation has highlighted the space between the production and the consumption of a text so that, between the two taking place, the meaning or message becomes altered. This alteration is at the point of consumption which, far from being a passive process, is creative and contextual.[26] Texts are also appropriated by an audience according to the discursive context within which they are read; the gender, social status, religious belief or social habitus of the reader singularly or cumulatively affect reading practices. Furthermore they are encountered within a physical and temporal framework which bears upon their appropriation.

[26] Roger Chartier, 'Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France', in Stephen Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture*, Berlin, Mouton, 1984, p. 234; Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print: Power and Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1989, p. 4; Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995, p.92. Similar arguments about reading and appropriation may be found in Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Printing and the People: Early Modern France', and Elizabeth Eisenstein, 'Some Conjectures about the Impact of Printing on Western Society and Thought: A Preliminary Report', both in Harvey Graff (ed.), *Literacy and Social Development in the West*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 69-95; Michael Schudson, 'How Culture Works: Perspectives from Media Studies on the Efficacy of Symbols', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1989, pp. 153-180.

Interaction with a text is different on a solitary basis compared to that of a group, or indeed if text is being read aloud.[27] In the space between production and consumption however, the message may be refracted. The reader may change hierarchies of themes within the message or may differently understand the function of the text, for example accepting a didactic piece as entertainment.[28] Notwithstanding, the original message becomes fundamentally altered.

The process of appropriation therefore raises the question of how far stereotypical portrayals of the French expressed in this way may be taken to have been representative of the attitudes of those who saw them. Were such messages holding a mirror to public opinion, were they more proactive in forming that opinion or did they merely represent the views of the narrower group of those who produced them? Historians of the printed media at this time are in general agreement that the interactive process between consumer and producer was mutually reinforcing. In other words, the messages which were conveyed in the press both reflected wider attitudes held among the audience whilst at the same time informing and constituting those attitudes.[29] A publication whose ideology was at odds with much of its readership would be in danger of losing its audience. It therefore paid for newspapers and other similar publications to appeal to the prejudices and notions already held by its readership in order to raise

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[27] For discussions on the sociability of reading in the early modern period see, Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth Century England*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 27-31; N. Zemon Davis, 'Printing and the People: Early Modern France' in H. Graff, *Literacy and Social Development,* pp. 71-72; R. Chartier, 'Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France', in S. Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture*, pp. 241-243; J. Black, *The English Press,* pp. 297-302.

[28] Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice*, London, Arnold, 2000, p. 190; R. Chartier, *Forms and Meanings*, p. 93.

[29] There is wide agreement on this point. See Stephen Botein, Jack Censer and Harriet Ritvo, 'The Periodical Press in Eighteenth Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1981, pp. 464-490; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1995, pp. 203-204; Robert Harris, *Politics and the Rise of the Press: Britain and France, 1620 – 1800*, London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 2-3; H. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth*, pp. 67, 266; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 40-41; D. Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, p. 22; K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 37.

sufficient funds to continue.[30] Given the fact that numerous stereotypical portrayals of comparative British and French nationality have survived from the eighteenth century, it is reasonable to conclude that the theme was a commercially successful one.[31] The messages of Anglo-French rivalry and opposition must therefore have resonated to some extent with the opinions of their audience in whichever way they were appropriated.

The nature and composition of this audience, and therefore the extent to which these ideas were accepted, is however difficult to ascertain. The messages of propaganda sought to create an imagined community of like-minded members, united in their views of the French. Through caricature and personification they spoke of national antagonisms and differences suggesting a coterminous community united in their disdain of the French. However, this type of propaganda was not equally accessible to all. Indeed, it might be argued that the intended audience was but a limited section of the national community. Notwithstanding that the format of this type of propaganda was primarily pictorial they were not necessarily more 'accessible' to those who were unable to read.[32] This was largely because each image was invariably accompanied by an element of text, without which the meaning would have been incomplete. Moreover, it is possible that the propaganda of Anglo-French rivalry was not intended for the whole population. Eirwen Nicholson has argued that iconographic material of this sort often supposed a level of prior knowledge among its audience.[33] If the successful transmission of a satirical message, that is, in the form intended by the producer, was

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[30] H. Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion*, p. 4; J. Black, *The English Press*, p. 51.
[31] Some examples of where this type of propaganda may be seen include: H. Atherton, *Politics in the Age of Hogarth*, appendices; D. Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, pp. 75-108; R. Eagles, *Francophilia*, pp. 14-38.
[32] E. Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: the Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth Century England', *History*, pp. 6-8 considers the problems with labelling the genre of satirical imagery as 'popular'.
[33] E. Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: the Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth Century England', *History*, p. 14.

predicated upon a certain pre-knowledge, of the ideas informing the message or of the tropes and techniques of the medium itself, then this could not be guaranteed for everyone. Usefully, Nicholson has distinguished between the 'spectators' of imagery and 'consumers' of the same.[34] The former constituted an accidental audience, perhaps observing the image in a shop window. The latter were the intended audience, those whose money made the genre successful and whose understanding and acceptance of the message was therefore vital.

In the wider study of the printed media of the eighteenth century, historians have identified a contemporary concept of 'the people'. Although the terminology could be relatively fluid in meaning depending on the context of its use,[35] in the main it was used to refer to those whose wealth, status and education were deemed to give them a legitimate say in the political affairs of the state. In social terms it extended to the middle ranks and to wealthier craftsmen and artisans, for example.[36] Effectively they were an 'extra-parliamentary' nation located outside formal political and government structures but whose opinion nevertheless, when united, carried considerable influence. In political debate MPs frequently called upon or cited the backing of 'the people' to

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[34] E. Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: the Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth Century England', *History*, p. 8.

[35] Kathleen Wilson has shown that the term could be used to refer to newspaper readership, all adult males or a degenerate 'mob' depending on the context of usage, however, the most common use is described in the main text. K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, pp. 17-19.

[36] There are numerous studies which have considered the concept of 'the people' or 'public opinion' in the political domain. See J. A. Gunn, *Beyond Liberty and Property: The Process of Self-Recognition in Eighteenth Century Political Thought*, New York, McGill-Queens University Press, 1983, p. 73; Tim Blanning and Peter Wende (eds.), *Reform in Great Britain and Germany, 1750 – 1850*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 25-27; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, pp. 176-177; K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, pp. 3, 17-19. For an examination of 'the people' in relation to newspaper readership see, H. Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion*, pp. 2-4. For a study of caricature see Herbert Atherton, 'The Mob in Eighteenth Century Caricature', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1978, pp. 47-58. Shelley Burtt has looked at the role of the ideology and practice of 'civic virtue' in English politics, *Virtue Transformed: Political Argument in England, 1688 – 1740*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992. For wider studies of public involvement and influence in local and national politics see John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976; E. P. Thompson, 'Eighteenth Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class', *Social History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1978, pp. 133-165; Frank O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: the Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734 – 1832*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989; Nicholas Rogers, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989.

add weight to their argument,[37] and it was therefore the approval or backing of this group that was important, below this, opinion carried much less weight. Rather like the distinction proposed by Nicholson, these were the consumers of satirical iconography, those lower down the social scale were the spectators.

Nevertheless, this accidental audience could and would have appropriated the messages in their own way and formed an opinion of the French from what was portrayed. In the absence of records left by such people giving specific details of their response, a recognition of modes of appropriation and of attitudes is difficult indeed. Roger Chartier has acknowledged this problem and has offered a partial solution. Instead of looking directly at the point of reception, look to other sources of evidence which provide clues as to either the reaction or the anticipated response of the audience.[38] So, although a detailed study is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is telling that the tone of broadsides published in 1803, just after the resumption of war against Napoleonic France, reflected the deep fears of the authorities at the loyalty and support of the population at large.[39]

What is also of great significance is that where positive views of the French were expounded, these were often as a result of interpersonal encounter. *The London Magazine,* published in 1747 on the debate taking place in parliament for a Bill of general naturalization remarked on how the Huguenot settlers had brought valuable

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[37] H. Atherton, 'The Mob in Eighteenth Century Caricature', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, p. 48; J. Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics,* p. 236.
[38] R. Chartier, *Forms and Meanings*, p. 93.
[39] These broadsides have been reproduced in full in Frank Klingberg and Sigurd Hustvedt, *The Warning Drum: The British Home Front Faces Napoleon, Broadsides of 1803*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1944. For critiques of their content see Stella Cottrell, 'The Devil on Two Sticks: francophobia in 1803', in Raphael Samuel, *Patriotism: the Making and Unmaking of British Identity, Vol. 3 National Fictions,* London, Routledge, 1989; Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British,* New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, pp. 38-71.

industrial techniques and produce to Britain and praised the French for their good sense and frugality in business.[40] Lancelot Temple wrote of the French:

> In general there seems to be much good Sense and Propriety in the Behaviour of the French in common life. I have heard much of their Levity, but saw very little of it; and to me they appear as solid and serious as most other people. Their politeness and agreeable manners are universally acknowledged.[41]

Temple's ideas appeared in print in 1771 under the title *A Short Ramble through some parts of France and Italy* following a European tour. Similarly, John Andrews later said of the French after having sojourned there, 'It is here that the nature and disposition of the French is perfectly discovered: polite yet warm, impetuous yet affable, full of life and vigour, and no less replete with obligingness and complacency'.[42] Like Temple's, Andrew's ideas were intended for wider public readership as part of a travel guide for young gentlemen undertaking the Grand Tour in Europe.

It is important therefore, to recognise the dynamic between interpersonal encounter and stereotypical representations as constitutive of attitudes. Actual encounter may also be mediated by the stereotypes produced through virtual encounter. People may perceive in reality what they have been led to expect to see, and this may not be a 'true' representation based solely on their actual experience of encounter.[43] Much depended on the character and outlook of the traveller and the particular situation in which they found themselves.[44] Hogarth's arrest at Calais in 1748 served to confirm his

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[40] W. Cobbett and T.C. Hansard, *The Parliamentary History of England, Vol.14, 1747 – 1753*, London, Hansard, 1813, p. 136.
[41] Lancelot Temple, *A Short Ramble through some parts of France and Italy*, London, 1771, p. 86 quoted in R. Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 141.
[42] John Andrews, *Letters to a Young Gentleman on his setting out for France*, London, 1784, p. 4 quoted in R. Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 128. Further examples are to be found in general studies of the phenomenon of the Grand Tour undertaken by gentlemen at that time. See C. Hibbert, *The Grand Tour*, London, Spring Books, 1974; Jeremy Black, *France and the Grand Tour*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2003.
[43] Nick Hopkins and Christopher Moore, 'Categorizing the Neighbours: Identity, Distance and Stereotyping', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 3, 2001, pp. 239-252. This point is asserted in histories of the Grand Tour and British tourism to France in the eighteenth century, see Katherine Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe, 1750 – 1800: authorship, gender and national identity*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, p. 21; J. Black, *France and the Grand Tour*, pp. 185-191.
[44] C. Hibbert, *The Grand Tour*, p. 39.

prejudices as demonstrated in his satirical print *The Roast Beef of Old England* (Figure 3) in which the stock stereotypes of the fat, greedy Catholic priest and a starving populace are reproduced.[45] In a similar way, Elizabeth Montagu, a well-to-do lady travelling in 1776 with a companion and small retinue of servants reflected on her experiences there and on her impressions of the French people in a series of letters. At one point she noted of the city, 'Mrs Gregory and I are not yet cured at our astonishment at the nastiness, the stinks and the narrowness of the street, the wretched appearance of the common people, the miserable air of the Shops, and the mesquinerie of the Theatres'. Evidently she was not enjoying her time there, believing the place to be squalid and the people too poor. Within this negative experience she later remarked more generally on national character and to denigrate the French even further. She explained, 'An English character is indeed often a beauty disgraced to a certain degree by being a sloven in manners, the French (sic) one is frequently ugliness well drest and adornd'. [46] What is also noteworthy is that her views reflected the stereotypical representation of French elites in the propaganda of British print culture as being excessively concerned with their outward appearance or of attempting to mask personal poverty with the flawed semblance of finery. Examples of this included the portrayal of French nobility wearing shoes without soles, or sporting sleeveless shirts beneath jackets.[47] In this instance, instead of being challenged, the negative stereotypes of the French appear to have been duplicated and even reinforced by Mrs Montagu's experiences in Paris.

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[45] William Hogarth, *The Roast Beef of Old England*, 1748 (c) Tate Gallery, London. For critiques of this artwork see Timothy Erwin, 'William Hogarth and the Aesthetics of Nationalism', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No.3-4, 2001, pp. 383-410; D. Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, pp. 403-407.
[46] R. Blunt, *Mrs Montagu; 'Queen of the Blues': her letters and friendships, Vol.1*, Edinburgh, 1923 p. 328, 333.
[47] C. Knight, 'The Images of Nations in Eighteenth-Century Satire', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 1989, pp. 489-511; D. Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, pp. 150-151; R. Tombs and I. Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy*, pp. 100-104.

Figure 3. William Hogarth, *The Roast Beef of Old England*, 1748.

Nevertheless, just as a contact may have been mediated by stereotypes, could these in turn be modified, even moderated, by the contact itself? Black has stated that the improved communication and transport links and the increased levels of trade in the eighteenth century resulted in a greater degree of actual contact between peoples across Europe. The result, he argued, was a degree of religious homogeneity that crossed national boundaries. For example, news spread of the Huguenot persecution in France towards the end of the seventeenth century which led to expressions of sympathy and solidarity in England. Could such a process not prove equally influential in the cultural domain? Indeed, Black has commented, ‘The European continent was too small,

integrated and interdependent to reduce all aliens to cartoon monsters.'[48] This assertion is supported by contemporary comment. William Hazlitt expressed the belief that the complexities of the respective national cultures had led each country to misunderstand the other and to exaggerate the other's negative characteristics. He believed that this situation could only be improved by 'contact and collision'.[49]

The likelihood that attitudes formed through a 'virtual', second-hand encounter with the French nation might be altered as a result of actual encounter raises important questions regarding the interactive processes between the stereotypes of national opposition and real encounter, and the form of national identification produced as a result. Despite the focus of this thesis on actual contact and encounter, this does not preclude the influence of a wider, national discourse based on stereotypes during any interaction. It is important, therefore, to understand that identities are formed or evolve both at the points at which direct experience and contact take place but also within a wider paradigm of social and cultural discourse that may not have been formed from direct contact. The narrative of nationality offered by the state may, for those who engaged in contact, be challenged as it becomes clear that the French do not embody the extreme stereotypes of propaganda. Equally however there may be conscious efforts by those involved to retain a sense of national distinction and stereotypical representations are employed to confirm notional oppositions.[50] As this thesis will demonstrate, much rests on the form and context of the encounter. Notwithstanding this, however, it is clear that nationality and national identification is changed in some way through the process of interaction.

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[48] Jeremy Black, 'Confessional state or elect nation? Religion and Identity in Eighteenth Century England', in Claydon and McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, p. 74.
[49] R. Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France, 1750 – 1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 198.
[50] Nick Hopkins and Christopher Moore, 'Categorizing the Neighbours: Identity, Distance and Stereotyping', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, pp. 240-241. These processes are shown in practice in Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1985, pp. 138, 144.

These alternative approaches towards the study of encounters, between the study of discourses and of people, between virtual and real interaction, are therefore mutually enlightening and equally valuable. Certainly the place of a Francophobic discourse among sections of British society in the eighteenth century is fully acknowledged and understood. From the evidence of printed journalistic and satirical material, moreover, this was the predominant publically-oriented form of representation. However, the acceptance of anti-French portrayals of nationality must also be understood in the context of the challenges presented to such narratives by the experience of encounter. The articulation of a national awareness therefore becomes increasingly fragmented, even individualised, and context-dependent. A complex discourse is thus rendered even more opaque.

The Study of National Identification and the Implications for the Approach of this Thesis

Before considering the place of this thesis within the framework provided by existing historical study, it is important therefore to clarify in general terms as far as is possible the nature of the object of study, namely national identification. In doing so, this enables a better understanding of the implications for a historical study and delimits the scope of any conclusions which may be drawn. For this thesis is not intended to supplant existing historical interpretations but to recognise the approaches of alternative academic disciplines and, in so doing, to provide a more nuanced picture of the role played by the French nation and people within this narrative.

Studies in the fields of anthropology, sociology and social psychology have revealed much that is useful to a historical approach both in terms of the nature of identity and with respect to the formative and developmental processes involved in producing identification. What has become increasingly evident is that identity in

general terms is by no means monolithic, and this is equally true on an individual basis as well as across larger collectives. Instead, studies have shown the very nature of identity to be fluid and relational.[51] For identity is not just about self-perception or the internalisation of different features or characteristics which make up the individual or group, it is characterized by fracture and space; both the space between self-perception and the front presented to outsiders, and the space between the portrayal of identity and how that identity is received and understood by those around. Indeed, Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper have offered an alternative terminology of 'identification' which recognises the difference between how one identifies oneself and how one is identified by others and, in doing so, they have allowed a more fluid understanding of the phenomenon.[52] Social psychologists Jan Stets and Peter Burke have similarly identified the differences between what they have termed 'social identity theory' and 'identity theory'. Both refer to collective identities but whereas the first relates to an individual's awareness of belonging to a group and the processes of self-categorization and comparison which take place, the second describes the adoption of roles within groupings and the attendant negotiation and interaction which takes place in relational positioning.[53] By its very nature therefore, identity continually establishes and re-establishes symbolic boundaries between the self or the collective and others forming new relational positions.

These boundaries, moreover, may be re-drawn in different circumstances and as different classifying principles gain salience. The work of Karen Cerulo has

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[51] Mary Crain, 'The Social Construction of National Identity in Highland Ecuador', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 1, 1990, pp. 43-59, p. 55; Michelle Lamont, 'National Identity and National Boundary Patterns in France and the United States', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1995, pp. 349-365, p. 350; Karen Cerulo, 'Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 23, 1997, pp. 385-409, p. 396.

[52] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, xxix, 2000, pp.1-47, p.2.

[53] Jan Stets and Peter Burke, 'Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, September 2000, pp. 224-237.

focussed on what she has termed 'critical moments in collective histories' as points at which identity formation may be studied in the belief that, at times such as these, personal and collective identities are confirmed or developed in new directions.[54] What she has demonstrated is that certain aspects of identity will be brought to prominence, for example at times of perceived threat or collective celebration, but thereafter give way to alternative identities with changing circumstances. This is a phenomenon identified across academic disciplines including those of historical focus and with respect to national awareness.[55] What results is an altered and altering balance of identity incorporating new features whilst reasserting the old. In terms of a national awareness therefore, in a situation of national threat such as war or invasion, identification with nation becomes a dominant feature. As that danger is seen to recede, however, so too does the aspect of national affiliation in favour of other, particularist, identities. Nevertheless, the awareness of national belonging does not disappear completely but instead is incorporated into the wider make up of identity.

This is indeed a further critical feature of identities, that they are multi-faceted. The totality of personal and group identities is explained by reference to different features or aspects such as gender, social class, occupation, locality, political affiliation or religious belief, for example.[56] Each aspect may achieve prominence or be de-emphasized in different contexts and situations. National identity therefore is not only continually contested and in competition with other forms of identity in terms of

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[54] K. Cerulo, 'Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions', *Annual Review of Sociology*, p. 396.
[55] R. Grillo (ed.), *'Nation' and 'State' in Europe: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Academic Press, 1980, p. 12; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 11; J. Gillis, *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994, p. 30; J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, *Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 4; R. Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: the Making and Unmaking of British Identity*, p. xiv.
[56] This notion is identified in a number of studies, both historical and otherwise; Anthony Smith, *National Identity*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1991, p. vii; R. Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity: the British and Others*, London, Longman, 1994, p. 205; Michael Wintle, *Culture and Identity in Europe: perceptions of divergence and unity in past and present*, Aldershot, Avebury, 1996, p. 2; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 12.

salience, it may also be received and developed in different ways because of those competing identities.[57] National identification, like other aspects, is situational and indeed historians such as Katherine Turner have noted how issues of gender and of class emerge in British travel literature of the eighteenth century in texts which ostensibly discuss national differences and characteristics.[58] However the very way in which nationality is appropriated and reproduced is similarly governed by factors such as social status, ethnicity, gender or religious background.

This raises the interesting question of the extent to which identities in general, and national identification in particular, exist through a process of construction or else are formed from inherent determinants. Certainly someone's ethnicity is inherent and yet so too are aspects such as gender, social status and community so deeply and solidly embedded from birth as to constitute immutable factors. And yet identification may also be seen as essentially subjective. The different facets of personal and group identities serve to form the subject rather than the object of thoughts and actions which thereby suggests a greater degree of construction.[59] Moreover 'nation' is, in itself, a constructed ideology presented for appropriation by a particular collective audience thus inferring that identity in this respect is a manipulated and constructed form.

There are a number of views on this dichotomy which have been offered by historians. The essentialist view is that national identity is a completely inherent phenomenon. As Michael Wintle has pointed out, factors such as geography, climate and food as well as a national character shape people both physically and mentally. He has also highlighted the alternative viewpoint, that of a constructivist understanding of

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[57] The idea of forms of identity in continual contest and competition is identified by Kathleen Wilson, 'The island race: Captain Cook, protestant evangelicalism and the construction of English national identity, 1760 – 1800', in T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, p. 267; R. Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity*, p. 205; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 12; R. Samuel, *Patriotism*, p. xv.
[58] K. Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe*, pp. 2, 8.
[59] J. Gillis, *Commemorations*, p. 4.

identity as a wholly constructed process of development in which the influence of environment is downgraded and the possibility of being born with a national character disputed.[60] Raphael Samuel has argued that national identification is formed in the latter mould, that it is an identity we are not born with, but which is imposed upon us.[61] Isaac Land has written of how the ideology of Britishness would be improvised before being articulated, whilst the basis of Linda Colley's argument for the development of a British national identity between 1707 and 1837 was that it was superimposed upon existing particularist identities.[62] Others however, have explained national identification in terms of a balance between constructed and inherent factors. Anthony Smith has argued for collective identity being formed in part from inherent aspects such as ethnicity and community, and in part consciously manipulated from symbolisms, ideologies and commemorations.[63] Similarly, in terms of a national awareness, Eric Hobsbawm has argued that it results from a two-way process, both imposition from above and appropriation from below, however, it achieved greatest coherence as an identity when built upon prejudices and beliefs already held.[64]

These interpretations revisit the argument surrounding the relative importance of social 'habitus' and agency in the production of identities. Social habitus is a concept explained by Pierre Bourdieu in his book *Outline of a Theory of Practice* whereby its members had the propensity to respond in given situations according to a certain cultural repertoire.[65] Agency is the freedom of the individual or group to respond

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[60] M. Wintle, *Culture and Identity in Europe*, pp. 115-119.
[61] R. Samuel, *Patriotism: the Making and Unmaking of British Identity*, p. xv.
[62] Isaac Land, 'Bread and Arsenic: Citizenship for the Bottom Up in Georgian London', *Journal of Social History, Vol.* 39, No. 1, 2005, pp. 89-110, p. 90; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 6.
[63] A. Smith, *National Identity*, pp. 4-15.
[64] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 10, 92.
[65] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009 reprint, pp. 78-87. For critiques and uses of Bourdieu's ideas see, H. Giroux, 'Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis', *Harvard Educational Review*, No. 53, 1983, pp. 257-293; Norbert Elias, *The Society of Individuals*, New York, Continuum, 1991;

outside of these societal or cultural constraints. However, the manner in which each should be viewed within identities is not as extremes on a spectrum of response but, as Bourdieu has explained, in terms of an implicit tension. Social habitus provides the space within which free response may be exercised but at the same time delimits the scope of that response. In the context of Anglo-French encounter therefore, each interaction is governed by what he terms the 'objective structure' of the relationship between the parties involved and the 'systems of dispositions' which determine the respective linguistic or, where stereotypes may be concerned, the cultural competence. These are the limiting structures through which habitus works but within which the participants are free to act.[66] Although Bourdieu's notion of the interaction between habitus and agency has been criticised as over-deterministic and rigid, and the relationship subsequently re-imagined as being mutually reinforcing to a greater degree, the point of understanding for this thesis is that identities are the product of both inherent and constructed factors, of both habitus and agency.

This has implications, however, for the way in which national identification in the eighteenth century may be understood, both in terms of its development and its variety. Several anthropologists have highlighted the importance of an alien or contrasting 'other' in the development of collective identities. Indeed, Cohen has asserted that every aspect of otherness serves to add a further dimension to a view of the self.[67] Identities are therefore constructed in response to this whilst inherent aspects of individual or group psyche affect the form of that construction and are perhaps even emphasized as characteristic features. In terms of national otherness, however, the concept is too vague and the potential collective too large to achieve any level of

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Richard Harker and Stephen May, 'Code and Habitus: Comparing the Accounts of Bernstein and Bourdieu', *British Journal of Sociology Education*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1993, pp. 169-178.
[66] P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 81.
[67] R. Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity*, pp. 197-199. For similar ideas see P. Scott, *Knowledge and Nation*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1990, p. 7 who called the phenomenon 'clubbability'.

coherency. As a model of opposition in the eighteenth century the French nation presented such a wide range of otherness, among others political, commercial, social, constitutional and cultural oppositions, for example, that the reference points for what it meant to be British or English were too diverse to produce an identity of any coherency. Instead of providing the several aspects which served to add a further dimension to self-identity, each could be appropriated and emphasized in different ways so that to be British simply meant to be 'not French'. However, it would even have been evident, to English Catholics or to those of noble status for example, that in several respects they shared more in common with their French counterparts than they did with their compatriots. Indeed, because of these problems of scale and definition both Michael Wintle and, writing together, Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, have highlighted the difficulties in tracing a history of national awareness.[68]

This is in part due to the problems of separating cultures across 'national' boundaries, but also because of the difficulties in ascribing a precise definition to 'nation'. As Charles Tilly has pointed out with respect to the process by which both states and nations come into being, whereas state-making is concerned with the imposition of institutional and organisational structures, nation-making is concerned with the appropriation of minds, loyalty and acquiescence.[69] From Tilly's explanation of terminology, however, two problems immediately become evident. First, that of the relationship between 'state' and 'nation', and how the development or existence of one may affect the other, and second, the problem of ascribing any sort of definitive description to the concept given the vagueness of the objective to recruit hearts and minds.

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[68] M. Wintle, *Culture and Identity in Europe*, p. 114; T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, p. 5.
[69] Charles Tilly, *The Formation of Nation States in Western Europe*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975, p. 80.

As both Eric Hobsbawm and Elie Kedourie have pointed out, the primary meaning of 'nation' came to be increasingly politicised through the eighteenth century into the nineteenth century and to equate 'the people' with 'the state', with the latter a manifestation of their collective sovereignty.[70] Indeed, Otto Dann and John Dinwiddy have noted that the concept of 'nation' carried three distinctive meanings in the eighteenth century, that of a group of people of common origin, that of a collective holder of sovereignty and a third carrying political referents of common organisation and common laws.[71] J. C. D. Clark has explained how the nature of state formation will affect the collective sense of national identity by influencing the images of the polity held by its members.[72] And yet states may exist without nations and likewise nations may stretch across states or be coterminous with state boundaries.[73] Therefore, whilst states and nations as both an ideological construct and the outcome of a process of development may be mutually affective, the nature of the relationship between them, where it exists at all, is difficult to explain and the extent of that mutual influence even more so.[74]

The second problem to arise from Tilly's approach is that of explaining the concept of nation with any clarity. Commonly, definitions of 'nation' refer to a group of people or a community bound together through a consciousness or a sense of solidarity with one another, the recognition of a common culture, in terms of values, ideas and

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[70] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, London, Hutchinson, 1966, p. 6; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 18.
[71] Otto Dann and John Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, London, Hambledon, 1988, pp. 3-4.
[72] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 2, 2000, pp. 249-276, p. 250.
[73] For further definitions of the terms 'state' and 'nation-state' see Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, London, Methuen, 1977, p. 1; D. B. Knight, 'Identity and territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, No. 72, 1982, pp. 514-531, p. 517; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983, p. 4; R. Grillo, *'Nation' and 'State' in Europe*, p. 6; M. Wintle, *Culture and Identity in Europe*, p. 18.
[74] J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, *Nationalism*, p. 4.

symbols, and the sharing of language, history or descent in common.[75] What is abundantly clear then is the difficulty to be had in ascribing any kind of exact or definitive meaning to the concept. This is not only because the referents themselves are vague in definition. How, for example, is one to explain 'culture' or 'values' in generic terms let alone as labels for national characteristics? It is also because the relative importance of elements such as ethnicity, language and territory, or subjective aspects of will and memory are continually disputed.[76] The idea of 'nation' therefore is based upon unstable definitions and to try to define a national grouping by any fixed criteria necessarily always throws up exceptions to the rule. Indeed, as has already been seen, shared aspects of identity are not bounded by state or territorial borders, nor are those aspects appropriated equally and in the same manner by those inside.[77]

For nation to exist as a recognisable entity it would appear, then, to be a matter of collective will and recognition. It is a situation akin to the thesis proposed by Benedict Anderson of an 'imagined community' whereby members of a national community, despite that collective being too large and populous for each member to have personal knowledge of all others, imagined themselves bound together by aspects of common language, territory, culture or polity.[78] But this understanding is in itself highly problematic. Is there, for example, a numerical limit to the membership of nations below which a community is merely an organisation or a group? As Hobsbawm has argued, if consciousness is the criterion for nationhood, this makes the

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[75] T. Linsell, *An English Nationalism*, King's Lynn, Athelney, 2001, p. 61; E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 7; R. Grillo, *'Nation' and 'State' in Europe*, p.6; H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 1; M. Wintle, *Culture and Identity in Europe*, p. 114. Leah Greenfeld has examined the history of the semantics and the meaning of nation in the early modern period in *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 3-27.

[76] E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 7; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 5; J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, *Nationalism*, p. 4; T. Linsell, *An English Nationalism*, p. 62.

[77] Craig Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity', *Annual Review of Sociology*, No. 19, 1993, pp. 211-239, p. 215.

[78] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983, p. 6.

developmental process a matter of choice and therefore overlooks the complexities of the ways in which individuals and groups attempt to define themselves. And at what point exactly in that evolution of consciousness and self-definition does a nation come into being?[79] Once again the criteria are unclear beyond, as Linsell has claimed, the existence of a 'we-sentiment' and a 'they-sentiment' whereby the empathy among group insiders exceeds that between insiders and outsiders.[80] All of this means that trying to objectively define the notion of national identification is extremely difficult.

Geographers such as David Hooson and D. B. Knight have argued that national identity and territory are implicitly linked and that communities inhabit places and identify with their territory to an increased scale and, over time, this territory is viewed as archetypal and as carrying emotional significance.[81] Historians have also acknowledged and explained these links, such as Simon Schama's research in his book *Landscape and Memory*.[82] However, national identification is a cultural phenomenon also that includes specific elements common to the group such as language and ethnicity as well as territory. It also comprises aspects of shared symbolism and memory. In this respect Anthony Smith has argued, national identity can therefore be taken to mean 'sameness' in terms of common language, mode of dress or self-definition, for example. However, it can also be understood on a philosophical and anthropological plane of shared national character and ontology.[83] A novel examination of these, he argued, made for the 'cultural populism' that existed in Britain in the eighteenth century.

Smith's use of the term 'cultural populism' is interesting in its avoidance of any reference to either 'nation' or 'identity', and yet the thrust of his argument was for a

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[79] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 7-8.
[80] T. Linsell, *An English Nationalism*, p. 62.
[81] David Hooson, *Geography and National Identity*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1994, p. 1; D. B. Knight, 'Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, p. 516.
[82] Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, New York, Vintage Books, 1995.
[83] A. Smith, *National Identity*, p. 75.

collective, initially culturally-based, awareness of community which found increasing purchase among the British population through the eighteenth century as on a continuum. So, from a neutral 'nationality' of belonging to a nation, men and women at that time increasingly appropriated the ideology of nation so that it became the principal reference point for personal and group identities and culminated in the aggressive nationalism that was to exist in the nineteenth century.[84] Julian Hoppitt has argued against the use of terminology of 'identity' as anachronistic and that instead the study of 'interest' is more appropriate as it reflects contemporary usage of vocabulary.[85] Such a theoretical and philosophical consideration is beyond the scope of this thesis, however the reader should be aware that the terminology of 'national identification', 'national identity' and 'nationality' are employed to reflect the quality of belonging to a nation as well as the constructed elements of identity, such as relating oneself implicitly to the national polity or culture, the appropriation of the ideology of 'nation', or of recognising and labelling characteristics as nationally shared. Their use does not reflect an opinion on national identification as part of a general developmental process stretching beyond the eighteenth century in either direction. There was, however, tension during this period between the burgeoning of a 'British' national identification as opposed to the continuance or intensification of an 'English' form in terms of chronological

[84] A number of academic works consider the definition of vocabulary relevant to nation in this regard. For 'nationality' see; H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 3; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 92 whose understanding of nationality is as a form of proto-nationalism. For definitions and discussions of the phenomenon of nationalism see Mary Crain, 'The Social Construction of National Identity in Highland Ecuador', *Anthropological Quarterly*, pp. 43-59, p. 43; Dror Wahrman., 'National Society, Communal Culture: an argument about the recent historiography of eighteenth century Britain', *Social History*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1992, pp. 43-72, p. 62; J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1993, pp. 81-88; David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France*, Cambridge Mass. Harvard University Press, 2001, p. 3; J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, p. 250; O. Dann and J. Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, p. 54; T. Linsell, *An English Nationalism*, p. 90.

[85] Julian Hoppitt (ed.), *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1650 – 1850*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2003, p. 10.

development. It is a point of debate among historians of the period and is examined within an overview of the historiography of the subject which will now be considered.

An Appraisal of Historiography on Eighteenth Century Identities in Britain

Historians have identified a variety of periods and developments before the eighteenth century during which an awareness of nation may be pinpointed among the population of England. J. C. D. Clark has noted how the writings of the Venerable Bede contained references to a national Church and that a belief in providential selection or destiny served as a cohering point for national members from the Middle Ages.[86] The notion of individual rights and liberties embedded in English law coupled with a highly developed market society and a social mobility based on wealth as opposed to blood became acknowledged in a national ideology by the late fifteenth century according to Alan Macfarlane.[87] Others have contended that developments such as administrative centralization and the extension of monarchical power, urbanisation and the fixing of a vernacular language, as well as national military victories such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 meant that an English consciousness was already complete by the end of the sixteenth century.[88] For the fruition of an English identity in the seventeenth century, Tony Claydon and Ian McBride have argued for the cohering effect of the events of 1688 and, more generally, the popularisation of cultural forms such as ballads, by which nationality could be spread to a wider audience.[89]

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[86] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 267-269.
[87] Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1978, pp. 165, 179, 249-276.
[88] J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, pp. 81-88; David Cressy, 'National Memory in Early Modern England', in J. Gillis, *Commemorations*, pp. 61-62; L. Greenfeld, *Nationalism*, pp. 6-7; H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 8.
[89] T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, pp. 8, 56. Hans Kohn has argued for the development of an English identity at this time also, see Hans Kohn, 'The Genesis and Character of English Nationalism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, i, 1940, pp. 69-94.

Clearly then, a form of awareness of 'Englishness' had existed among the population long before the eighteenth century and yet principally for two reasons this period has been at the focal point of historical study of national identities. Firstly, it was in the eighteenth century that, according to Linsell, the means by which the governing elites were able to manipulate the loyalty and identities of the subject population were changed. During this period the mechanisms of capitalism and industrialization and the increasing scale of war enabled those elites to mobilise more resources in order to pursue policy goals in the name of the national interest.[90] This was also a time when the technologies of print and distribution advanced to be able to reach a greater proportion of the population with the 'national' message and the ideology itself was being framed with greater coherency and sophistication. The eighteenth century represented a period during which a national identification was said to become the dominant aspect of personal and collective identity.

The second reason why the eighteenth century has become a particular focus for study is that, aside from the debate on the prominence of a national identification, its exact nature has also been under dispute. With the Act of Union in 1707 Scotland was brought into the fold alongside England and Wales in the creation of a Great Britain. Historians have therefore had to untangle the exact nature of a national identity where it developed as being either English or British. Perhaps the seminal work on this topic is Linda Colley's *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 – 1837* in which she has argued for an inclusive British identity being superimposed upon existing, particularist identities throughout the eighteenth century and as a result of the provision of a sustained and concerted message of Britishness coming from the centres of political and cultural

[90] T. Linsell, *An English Nationalism*, pp. 66-67.

power.[91] This idea of the construction of a British identity encompassing and de-emphasizing others has found wide agreement, notably from the likes of Alexander Murdoch, Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer who have all contended that the foundation for nationality at this time shifted from a dynastic towards a commercial and capitalistic basis. The success of trading and financial ventures and the wars fought in order to protect the same were increasingly seen as British concerns and British victories.[92] Krishnan Kumar has noted that the process was so successful that an English nationalism did not return until the end of the nineteenth century.[93] However he has also argued that the nature of a British identity was different to that of an English form in that it had largely a civic or political basis whereas the latter was primarily a cultural identity.[94] Indeed, although there has been broad agreement about the manifestation of a British identification, historians such as Clark and Adrian Hastings have asserted that, despite the apparent acceptance of British national ideology, notions of Englishness still commanded strong emotional attachments and were never far below the surface. In several respects 'Britishness' was just 'Englishness' re-labelled or with slight adaptation, or indeed was an idea that was strategically appropriated for specific purposes and in specific contexts.[95]

An alternative view of national identity at this time has been presented by Gerald Newman in *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740 - 1830* in

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[91] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*. See also Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2, 1992, pp. 309-329.
[92] Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer, *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History*, London, Routledge, 1995, p. 233; Alexander Murdoch, *British History 1660 – 1832, National Identity and Local Culture*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998, pp. 62-65.
[93] Krishnan Kumar, 'Nation and Empire. English and British National Identity in Comparative Perspective', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 5, 2000, pp. 575-608, p. 592.
[94] Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 147.
[95] Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood, Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 63; J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 263, 275. Sarah Prescott, 'What Foes More Dang'rous than too Strong Allies? Anglo-Welsh Relations in Eighteenth Century London', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 69, No. 4, 2006, pp. 535-554, p. 535; I. Land, 'Bread and Arsenic: Citizenship from the Bottom Up in Georgian London', *Journal of Social History*, p. 80 have also noted the same.

which he has argued for the development of an English national consciousness championed by the literati and focused against the perceived degenerate and pervasive influence of French cultural practices on the English ruling elites.[96] For him the middle decades of the eighteenth century saw a flourishing in Britain of national cultural institutions and attempts to define 'national' characteristics. The outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756 exacerbated a sense that France was Britain's natural enemy, not only in the military arena but also, for example, in commercial, cultural, diplomatic and religious spheres.[97] This general unease was intensified by a sense of French influence already having insidiously taken hold among the British aristocratic classes who came to be viewed as morally degenerate. His argument was for a notion of Englishness which was constructed initially by artists and writers such as William Hogarth and Henry Fielding in works such as *Marriage à la Mode* (1743) and *Joseph Andrews* (1742), and then which found ready acceptance among an already Francophobic population.[98] Newman's argument has been criticised not least because of his reliance on British as opposed to English literary sources,[99] however, as scholars of the period have pointed out, contemporaries seemed often to use the vocabulary of 'English' and 'British' interchangeably.[100] It was however, Newman's model of a developing nationality, that it was cultivated in the glasshouse of Anglo-French rivalry and competition, that found particular resonance with the work of others.

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[96] Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism. A Cultural History*. The theory of 'educator-intellectuals' as the source of national revival is supported by Anthony Smith, *National Identity*, p. 67.
[97] This process has been identified in France too. See Peter Campbell, *The Ancien Regime in France*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1988 and David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France*.
[98] For a general appraisal of the role of 'national' literatures in the construction of nations and nation-states see Sarah Corse, *Nationalism and Literature: the Politics of Culture in Canada and the United States*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.
[99] K. Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, p. 177.
[100] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, p. 274;
K. Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe*, p. 18.

Linda Colley's perception of the rivalry between Britain and France at that time was much wider than that of Newman's, encompassing commercial, religious and military domains as well as cultural representations.[101] Like Newman, Colley has written of a middle class reaction to the perceived francophilia of the elites. She has shown the foundation of industrial and trade societies such as the 'Laudable Society of Anti Gallicans' established in 1745 and 'Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Commerce and Manufactures in Great Britain' founded in 1754 to be overwhelmingly middle class creations and specifically anti-French.[102] However, for Colley it was the accelerating effect of repeated wars against France throughout the eighteenth century that helped to define national characteristics and galvanise national awareness. The particular feature of identity development has been widely, although not universally, supported among historians, with those such as Clark rightly pointing out that national wars created internal tensions and divisions as well as unities.[103] For Colley, however, it was the enmity of the French that was key to the creation of a British national identity and the fact that throughout the eighteenth century both countries found themselves at war repeatedly and on an ever increasing geographical, military and financial scale. The apogee of this process therefore was marked by the protracted and exhausting wars against Revolutionary and, later, Napoleonic France.

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[101] David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France* takes a similar focus of Anglo-French rivalry in his study of French nationality.

[102] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 88-90. She also noted how elite participation and membership was nominal, such as through the provision of initial funds, as opposed to fully participational, p. 94.

[103] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 259-263. For those who have placed war as a central component in the formation of a national identity see also, Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, pp. 38-41, 73-76; Lawrence Stone (ed.), *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 2, 4, 6; Stephen Conway, 'War and National Identity in the Mid Eighteenth Century British Isles', *English Historical Review*, No. 468, 2001, pp. 863-893; Colin Haydon, 'I love my King and my Country, but a Roman Catholic I hate: anti-Catholicism, xenophobia and national identity in eighteenth century England', in T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, pp. 44-45.

For both Newman and Colley therefore, France played a key role in the development of a national identity in the eighteenth century, for it represented a cultural, political, social and often military antithesis against which the British could define themselves.[104] Whereas the British perceived themselves as Protestant and liberty-loving, the French were depicted as slaves to a despotic regime. Whereas the British saw themselves as well-fed, feasting on roast beef and plum pudding, the French were seen as half-starved, nourished by frogs or soupe-maigre alone. Whereas the British imagined themselves as a nation shod with comfortable leather shoes, the French were understood to wear nothing but wooden shoes. Both historians argued that this binary model of difference and tension served to draw the disparate and fractured identities of the British population together into a more coherent whole by uniting it against a perceived and clearly defined 'other', in the form of France and the French. Colley and Newman had not been alone in invoking such a dialogical model of identity. Christopher Bayly, for instance, had commented that national awareness 'needed its villains as well as its heroes.' One villain in particular was to be found in the 1790s in the figure of Napoleon Bonaparte.[105] Eric Hobsbawm has similarly stated, 'there is no more effective way of bonding together the disparate sections of restless peoples than to unite them against outsiders.'[106]

This model of 'otherness' has, however, been contested both directly with respect to the French, and obliquely through the identification of alternative 'others' against which the English or British saw themselves drawn. Robin Eagles has highlighted the prevalence of a pro-French discourse within British society most directly refuting the model of a French 'other'. For Eagles, French cultural influences

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[104] Colette Beaune has similarly placed the British as antithetical 'other' in her study of the development of French identities in the Middle Ages. Colette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology. Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, Oxford, University of California Press, 1991.
[105] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World*, London, Longman, 1989, p. 113.
[106] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 20.

permeated British society in the eighteenth century, and this was important despite the existence of Gallophobic sentiment. The elites cultivated links with their French counterparts and adopted French affectations and manners. Large volumes of French luxury goods were, sometimes illegally, imported into Britain and readily purchased by people of all social backgrounds, and industry benefited from the knowledge and skills brought by French refugees and economic settlers. The point of his interpretation was that, in fact, far from representing the pervasive influence of an alien 'other', French cultural mores were a standard to which to aspire. Eagles was careful not to contradict directly the notion of a rising Gallophobia based on the increasing cultural and economic power exerted by patriotic mercantile and middle classes, however for him the binary model of Anglo-French rivalry has been too starkly drawn.[107]

Further criticisms of Anglo-French otherness have been levelled on the basis that the French were never the only or the abiding focus of antithesis. As Katherine Turner has pointed out, the function of travel writing in the 1760s and 1770s was largely to create a European other and that Francophobia was just a component of this to be used strategically.[108] In terms of religious belief also, the Roman Catholicism of the French was not necessarily perceived as the greatest threat to British integrity. Dissenting Protestants at home have been identified as a focus of antagonism whilst the Protestant Dutch were most feared for the competition they offered in a commercial and military capacity in the decades immediately following the Restoration of the monarchy in England. Similarly, a century later Britain found herself ranged against her co-religionists in the American colonies in their fight for independence. In place of an anti-Catholic francophobia therefore, Clark has argued that 'popery' was seen as the threat to Protestant welfare. This was a wider concept incorporating ideas of luxury, pride,

[107] R. Eagles, *Francophilia*, pp. 4, 5, 8.
[108] K. Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe*, pp. 55, 69.

universal monarchy and uniformity that was certainly to be found in French society and culture as well as her Church, however was not embodied by France alone.[109] Indeed, in some respects the French and the English were seen as bound together through a belief in ancient and common ancestry. Colin Kidd's thought provoking study on the place of ethnic identities in Europe before the advent of nationalism highlighted the commonalities perceived to exist between the English and the French through their descent from a common Gothic stock. Ethnic identity was not necessarily a reflection of biological descent but, just as with cultural identities, these could be constructed and appropriated. The antithesis represented by the Catholic French nation, he wrote, was viewed by some more as a corruption of that Gothic legacy rather than a completely alien 'other'. Kidd has conceded that a demonization of the French people can be traced in the eighteenth century, but has asserted that this 'Gothicist' discourse served to moderate the extremes of francophobic sentiment in some, and that the common descent was acknowledged, and even celebrated, especially among the elite classes.[110]

The model of Anglo-French otherness has been criticised more fundamentally, however, in that, to be relevant, a ready established awareness of antithesis is necessary for it to exist. In other words, the understanding of various aspects of opposition pre-supposes a self-identification in those respects in order to be able to draw the contrast in the first place.[111] As a model of historical explanation therefore, Anglo-French rivalry in the eighteenth century is flawed. It places too heavy a focus on a negative understanding of identity formation as a reactionary process of contrast and gives little room for

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[109] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 259-263.
[110] Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 211-216.
[111] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, p. 263; A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, 'Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology*, p. 13.

internally generated, perhaps more positive, views of the collective and its capabilities and achievements.

Historians have indeed identified the existence of cultural and political consensus within the national group based on more positive tenets that engendered pride or solidarity such as maritime endeavour or commercial vitality.[112] P. J. Marshall has written of Britain's imperial expansion during the eighteenth century and has explained an identity framed within idealist characteristics of Britain being a benevolent maritime and commercial power and its civil society marked by liberty and adherence to the Protestant faith.[113] In their consideration of the ideological bases of British imperial awareness, both Kathleen Wilson and David Armitage have also supported this argument for a more positive basis to British identity at this time, whilst Tony Claydon and Ian McBride have emphasized the binding effect of Protestant faith and people's belief in their mission to evangelise to mis-believers.[114]

That their faith served to unite many people in England into a religious community of sorts is without doubt; their shared Protestantism coupled with a belief in providential favour or blessing created unique bonds of perceived commonality. However, the membership of that community has been debated. Whereas Linda Colley has asserted that Protestantism was central to the British psyche and experience thus casting Roman Catholicism, and therefore the French as both proximate and powerful, as deadly enemies, Claydon and McBride have argued for an internationalist understanding of Protestant election.[115] By its nature, religion strives towards

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[112] I. Tombs and R. Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy*, p. 7.
[113] P.J. Marshall, (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire. Vol. 2, p.* 5.
[114] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 8; Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History,* p. 12; T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, p. 7.
[115] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 11-54; L. Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness', *Journal of British Studies*, pp. 309-329; T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, p. 7. The idea of internationalism is also supported by Jason Nice, 'The Peculiar Place of God: Early Modern

cosmopolitanism and inclusivity and Claydon and McBride have demonstrated, through an examination of the rhetoric and meaning behind the phrase 'the True Church', referring to God's chosen people, that reference was being made to the faithful of any nation and not just those in Britain. Indeed, certain groups at home, namely Catholic recusants, dissenting Protestants or the morally corrupt, could most certainly not be regarded as God's elect. Instead, by studying aspirations of godliness in the place of religious description and labelling, they have shown a considerable solidarity to have been perceived with devout co-religionists overseas. Religious unity in Britain, they have argued, was merely rhetoric which neither went unchallenged nor was rigidly enforced in the case of both Catholics and dissenting Protestant sects.[116] In short, religious identity in Britain could not be substituted for a national identity because of its inherent fracture at home and inclusivity abroad.

Historians such as S. Connolly and P. Buckner have sought to explore identities among specific religious and ethnic groups including the Scots, Welsh and among Catholics, and have argued convincingly that 'Britishness', as a reference point for individual and group identification, was more about behaviour rather than place of birth.[117] Others such as Jack Greene has shifted focus yet further to examine the effect of empire and imperial expansion. Greene has noted that, by the middle of the century, to the British 'empire' was an equally important facet of identity as other features.[118] Such a view inevitably affects the chronology of a national identity, or the interpretation of its development. D.K. Fieldhouse, as well as P. J. Marshall and David Armitage,

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Representations of England and France', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 121, No. 493, 2006, pp. 1002-1018; K. Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, p. 114.

[116] T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, pp. 12-13, 63.

[117] S. Connolly, 'Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian State', in A. Grant and K. Stringer, *Uniting the Kingdom?*, pp. 193-207; P. Buckner, 'Making British North America British, 1815 – 1860', in C. C. Eldridge (ed.), *Kith and Kin: Canada, Britain and the United States from the Revolution to the Cold War*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1997, pp. 11-44.

[118] J. Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution', in P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, p. 220.

have all argued for the decisive shift in identities as a result of the resounding success of the Seven Years War.[119] Not only did this present the population with a truly 'British' victory from which to take inspiration and pride but, through treaty agreement, Britain's territorial and commercial sphere of influence was greatly expanded to a global scale. As it evolved, then, imperial identity placed Britain at the centre of her dominions thereby creating a greater sense of national unity and pride. However, it also had the effect of extending identities beyond the territorial boundaries of 'nation' as subject colonies were brought within the British fold.[120] Understood in this way, the qualities of Britishness were more expansive and less insular than interpretations which confine such identity to the British Isles alone, once more demonstrating the importance of behaviour and appropriation in national identities.

The Place of this Thesis in Relation to Existing Historical Studies

With such a wealth and diversity of studies on national identification focussing on the eighteenth century, this research aims to distinguish itself in several respects and, in so doing, contribute further detail to the picture presented thus far. An important feature of the approach of this study, then, is that it looks at encounters between people whereas previous studies have focused on encounters between discourses. Whether it be in terms of a national or an imperial identity, the basis of these studies has often been through evidence of 'virtual' encounters experienced via printed media often employing stock and inaccurate stereotypes and with the suggestion that these were accepted uncritically by the British population. To be sure, a considerable body of scholarship already exists on certain types of Anglo-French encounter in the seventeenth and

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[119] D. K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1965, p. 72; P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, p. 1; D. Armitage, *Ideological Origins*, p. 171.
[120] D. Armitage, *Ideological Origins*, p. 172.

eighteenth centuries. In particular, two groups of French nationals and their experiences living in Britain, namely the Huguenot refugees of the late seventeenth century and the political émigrés of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, have been singled out for study.[121] These histories, however, concentrate on the day-to-day lived experiences of these groups within a host community. And although they examine issues of reception and the cultivation of cultural distinctiveness within the encounters, they do not reflect upon the implications of such interaction for the development of a national identity in Britain.

In the light of this extant body of work, however, this thesis distinguishes itself in several key respects. Firstly it aims to examine the identities of a much wider cross-section of the English population with respect to 'nation' and national identification. Secondly, it focuses upon instances of encounter or contact brought about in the course of what may arguably be described as the everyday or mundane. By this is meant contact engendered through the regular conduct of business or commercial operations, or the sustained contact enjoyed between French prisoners of war and their host communities. This approach would necessarily encompass the experiences of French religious and political refugees residing in Britain at this time. However, given that comprehensive studies already exist on these people, and due to the limitations of time and space in this thesis, I have chosen to concentrate on alternative groups for study. In order to do so a specific type of source material has been used.

As the notion of encounters is an organising principle for my research, in terms of the sources used, the thesis is distinguished from previous histories which examined

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[121] Bernard Cottret, *The Huguenots in England: Immigration and Settlement 1550 – 1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991; Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: émigrés in London, 1789 – 1802*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999; Roger Kershaw and Mark Pearsall, *Immigrants and Aliens: A Guide to Sources on UK Immigration and Citizenship*, London, Public Records Office, 2000. The experiences of these groups are also examined in thematic studies of immigration, see Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, London, Little Brown, 2004.

the development of discourse and which relied upon literary, satirical and artistic representations designed for a mass consumption and originating with the political and cultural centres of power.[122] Instead this study seeks to include material which provides evidence more directly of popular opinion and national awareness rather than that refracted through the messages of propaganda or through official and administrative discourse. In terms of emphasis, therefore, the evidence favoured is that which reflects personal or private attitudes in that it is not produced with the intention of mass readership or publication. Where the records of central administration, such as government departments or diplomatic correspondence, have been used, the focus has been on that which illuminates private opinion, for example, through petitions, memorials or direct references to the same.

Structure of the Thesis and Sources Used

In terms of type, a wide range of archival source material informs this thesis. Documentation produced in an official capacity, including ministerial and diplomatic correspondence, parliamentary enquiries and surveys, royal proclamations and government directives, provide not only valuable evidence for the context within which popular identities were formed, but also afford an insight into the perception of those in authority as to the tenor of popular opinion. The statutes and Orders in Council regarding the naturalization and denization of foreign nationals provided the legal discourse within which applications were to be made and modes of British nationality expressed. Similarly, the rules laid down governing the movement and behaviour of prisoners of war at parole elicited attempts by sections of the British populace to harass

[122] Gerald Newman's work on English nationalism drew its interpretations from the evidence of literary and artistic sources such as the works of William Hogarth and Henry Fielding, whilst Linda Colley's interpretation is based largely on the evidence of mass circulated satirical imagery, commentaries and pamphlets; G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*.

the men acting in contravention of those rules in order to receive monetary reward. Alternatively, ministerial correspondence on the phenomenon of smuggling demonstrated a fear at official level that many of the British smugglers acted as French spies, a view that is not supported by evidence deriving from the smugglers themselves.

This type of source material also provides valuable evidence more directly for popular attitudes and identities with the inclusion of petitions and representations originating from particular occupational or social groups or individuals. The evidence for encounter between the British and French fishing fleets or between French prisoners and English host communities, for example, may be found through the enclosure of petitions within correspondence exchanged at ministerial level. These petitions, most often recounting incidents of conflict, cite grievances in great detail and are reflective of attitudes held by respective persons or groups towards the French 'other'. Similarly, within the legal format for the application for citizenship the opportunity was provided for testimonials of support which elaborated the ideal qualities of Britishness. In a similar way, private opinion may be reflected through public action thus providing a particularly valuable source of evidence whereby the strength and prevalence of opinion may be gauged. For example, concerns at the poor and insanitary conditions in which the French prisoners of war were incarcerated were aired through local administrative channels via private correspondence. These concerns were so deeply held or forcefully expressed that the government appointed officials to carry out a nationwide inspection of these premises.

With such a wide and varied range of source material the potential exists for two specific problems to arise. Firstly, that it presents such a fractured and incoherent picture of British attitudes and identities that uniformities cannot be identified. However, it is one of the aims of this thesis to explore such a variety of responses to

provide a more nuanced picture of the British psyche with respect to the French and its own national status. If the evidence suggests so fractured a picture of attitudes, then this is a valuable conclusion in itself to bring against arguments for a coherent British identity in the eighteenth century. Secondly, with the aim of providing a view from below, a particular difficulty exists in locating material produced by them directly. Often their opinions are paraphrased within official channels, such as with reports of violence against the French prisoners of war, or are recorded from spoken word, such as the taking of legal depositions or examinations. To some degree then, the opinions and attitudes of the lower orders, and therefore their identities, have been mediated by others.[123] Written and documentary evidence remaining directly from these people is also notoriously difficult to come by, a problem bemoaned by many historians who have attempted to study the lower social ranks.[124] Studies into social literacy rates of the period have shown a higher proportion of the lower orders to be unable to read and write than those of higher status.[125] Others have claimed that theirs was primarily an oral culture.[126] This would mean that proportionately less written evidence was produced by such people and that consequently less survives to the present day. However, whilst a degree of mediation through reportage is realised, this approach is still of value in its reflection of popular attitudes and actions. And by examining the way

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[123] For a stimulating discussion on the modes and channels of mediation and the ways in which the historian can surmount these difficulties of study see Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1994, pp. 65-87.
[124] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 73; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 289.
[125] Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England, 1640 – 1900', *Past and Present*, No. 42, 1969, pp. 69-139; David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980; Rob Houston, 'Literacy and Society in the West, 1500 – 1850', *Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1983, pp. 269-293; *David Vincent, Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750 – 1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989; W. B. Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland and Wales, 1500 – 1800', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 1990, pp. 545-571; Barry Reay, *Popular Cultures in England, 1550 – 1750*, London, Longman, 1998, pp. 36-70; Harvey Graff (ed.), *Literacy and Social Development in the West*.
[126] This is a particular problem noted by historians of popular culture of the period: E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, London, Penguin, 1993; Tim Harris (ed.), *Popular Culture in England c. 1500 – 1850*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1995, p. 6; P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 65; B. Reay, *Popular Cultures*, p. 39.

in which the French were perceived by the British in the context of 'real' encounters, the full range of attitudes that derived from virtual contact may be put into clearer context and a picture of national identification be reproduced.

The principal argument of this thesis therefore is that publically oriented forms of representation of the French as portrayed in the British printed media, and constitutive of a form of 'virtual' encounter with the French people, were inevitably modified by direct interpersonal contact between social groups of the two nationalities. As a result, British attitudes and identities formulated with respect to the French reveal a greater degree of diversity and fracture than is present in the relatively coherent picture of British nationality presented in historical studies to date. In doing so it presents a case against any implied linear development of a national awareness in Britain through the eighteenth century, instead stressing the contingency of attitudes and the significance of particularist identities and concerns, such as occupational or local. By exploring the nature and incidence of these differences, it argues that, in many cases, responses need to be categorised along broadly social, geographical or occupational lines.

Due to limitations of time and space however, this thesis looks specifically at English attitudes as opposed to British. A 'British' study must inevitably consider the Scottish dimension of Jacobite sympathies, or the attitudes that prompted a number of Irishmen to volunteer for the French army at the end of the eighteenth century. It would need to account for claims to Welsh cultural and linguistic distinctiveness made regularly in St. David's Day sermons of the period and an emerging Welsh patriotism dating from the middle of the eighteenth century.[127] Such a wealth of source material would not only make such a study unwieldy it would also therefore lack focus. It is important however, to acknowledge the 'British' context within which these histories

[127] Sarah Prescott, 'What Foes More Dang'rous than too Strong Allies? Anglo-Welsh Relations in Eighteenth Century London', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, pp. 535, 542.

took place, as indeed the study is predicated on the supposed maturation of a ‘British’ national identity. References to ‘Britain’ have been retained where appropriate, for example with reference to documentation which uses the term. Nevertheless, the reader should be aware that this is specifically an English study and therefore archival evidence has been taken from across England only.

Chapter one looks at the applications for British citizenship made by French nationals in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Often coming after periods of several years’ residence, this documentation reflects a perspective of British nationality from those wishing to join the national collective. Although at times formulaic, these applications also came in the form of lengthier petitions to parliament and provided details on the socio-economic background of the applicant, their situation, and their reasons for requesting citizenship. Occasionally they were also accompanied by statements of support or testimonials from British nationals. As such, therefore, they are invaluable in providing evidence on what people believed to be the ideal qualities to be embodied by a British national both from the point of view of the French applicants and their British referees. Due to the relatively high costs of the application process and social attitudes which valued the support of those of reputation and status, this chapter reflects the views of the wealthier members of English and French society. The chapter considers in greater detail the ideology of ‘Britishness’ presented to the nation during the eighteenth century by those in power and how this was constructed and changed throughout the period. It argues that the cases presented by the French to acquire naturalized or denizened status were carefully formulated to prove Britishness through empirical criteria such as marriage, business ownership or length of residence. And while tropes of service and of religious and political loyalty were employed, because of the ultimate aim of the application was to prove suitability, they received less emphasis

than is to be found in the British testimonials of support. These, it is contended, demonstrate how the British notion of nationality was primarily rooted in cultural and moral discourse.

Chapter two focuses on Anglo-French encounter in the English Channel through the experiences of two specific groups, smugglers and fishermen. Socially therefore the emphasis is shifted to the lower ranks of English society who were primarily involved in these activities. However, having vastly different experiences of French nationals through a discourse of either co-operation or competition, they provide a valuable comparative study of the development of a national identification among this social order. The English Channel itself also provided a unique arena within which interactions were conducted. Just like territorial land borders, those at sea were eminently permeable, however, the exact nature and location of a sea-based boundary was vague or differently conceived by those on either shore. If certain mid-points were understood as being without nationality, they were not necessarily viewed as neutral spaces by those whose livelihoods relied on their access. In considering the national identification of the fishermen, I also draw on evidence of Anglo-French encounter in Newfoundland waters to further illustrate the problems of notional national boundaries. The chapter argues that the context of the encounter is significant in determining individual and collective relationships to state and nation. Conflict seemingly exacerbated notions of difference with the French and in turn strengthened ideas of national belonging, whilst co-operation could transcend national divisions. However, the picture of nationality was not so clear cut and I demonstrate how, for the fishermen, a national identity was appropriated and strategically employed whilst the smugglers, despite their actions placing them in opposition to their own state, still retained a strong identification with nation.

Chapter three looks at the experiences of French prisoners of war detained in England at various times through the latter half of the eighteenth century. Unlike the smugglers and the fishermen, the nature of contact in this instance was both continuous and prolonged, with French officers paroled in English host communities sometimes for periods of several years. This difference is advantageous in that it enables a broader social spectrum to be studied within a similar milieu of encounter, but it also provides evidence of responses and identities within a framework of quotidian and mundane interaction. The chapter is additionally the first of two to examine the role played by war in galvanising a national identification and, as such, provides a further, useful perspective on historical theories of its centrality in the process. The French prisoners may be divided into two groups, those of officer class who were detained among host communities and those of lower rank held in prisons for the duration of their detention. By examining the full diversity of encounters experienced by the French prisoners, I argue that, in the case of the men on parole, responses were frequently socially determined with greater levels of hostility directed from the lower orders of English society. However, through a consideration of the phenomenon of popular violence against the prisoners from the time of the Seven Years War to the conflict against Napoleonic France, it demonstrates a decline in the number of incidents and argues that contact and encounter served to moderate hostile or oppositional attitudes which might otherwise have been expected by the enmity in war. In examining the plight of the men incarcerated in British gaols and the British response to the conditions in which they were held, the nature of national allegiance and character is once more addressed with evidence drawn from professional and middling ranks of society. In this regard, I argue for an increased appropriation of ‘humanity’ as a national characteristic by the end of

the eighteenth century by demonstrating its use as a rhetorical strategy to argue for the better treatment of the French prisoners.

Chapter four continues the focus on war as a determinant of attitudes and identities and examines the variety of responses to the national crisis brought about by the war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France through the realm of military recruitment. It focuses on the able-bodied, adult male population eligible for military service and the sources that derived from the numerous government surveys into available manpower and resources that might be called upon in the event of a French invasion. The premise here is one of non-contact which allows a wider geographical and numerical study of the population, and is also a valuable means by which attitudes and identities arising from encounter may be given greater context. This chapter argues that the desire to ensure national security as a motive for enlisting in military service was a temporal response linked to fears of an immediate French invasion. It maintains that at all other times personal circumstances and particularist concerns primarily determined men's response to the call to arms beyond any hatred of the French or even national awareness.

Throughout the eighteenth century ideas of both British and English nationality were repeatedly presented to the population of Britain and were reaching a wider audience than ever before. To create a model of nationality these ideas looked internally to selectively mythologize a past and idealise a social and political culture. They also looked outwards and focussed on France, as the nearest neighbour geographically and source of rivalry and competition historically, as a useful model of contrast. Frequently crudely stereotyped, the French people offered an example of how not to be and, all the while they could be held at arm's length, this portrayal represented the dominant discourse for those British who observed it. Contact upset this equilibrium and

challenged the stereotypes. Whatever the reason for encounter, be it hostile, friendly or otherwise, the British could see for themselves that the French were not all the emaciated dandies or avaricious monks of domestic iconography. In doing so, this shifted the basis of nationality and therefore its appropriated form. A study of this kind, then, is of value because of the contextual variety in which encounters took place – in wartime and peacetime, in co-operation and competition – and because of the social and occupational diversity of the groups studied in offering alternative models of national identification. Consequently, it may shed further light on the matter of Anglo-French relations beyond the epicentres of political rule and on the question of national identification in England to complement studies carried out to date.

Chapter 1: An Open Nationality? French Applications for British Citizenship in the Eighteenth Century

In July of 1811, Charles St Barbe, a banker in Lymington in Hampshire, provided a written testimonial in support of Francis Clark, a Frenchman of the Royal Foreign Artillery, in his application for British citizenship. Barbe noted how Clark was in possession of 'considerable sums of money' and that he wished to purchase a freehold estate in England, something that could not be done under his legal status as an alien national. The statement concluded, 'I have always considered him very loyal and strongly attached to this Government having often heard him declare that he would end his days here or otherwise in the Service of this Country if elsewhere.'[1] Francis Clark had fled his country of birth in 1792 amidst the upheaval of revolution. Thereafter he served in various emigrant army regiments overseas before settling in England in 1797. He had lived in the community at Lymington for fourteen years by the time of his application for naturalization and, as the testimonials provided in support demonstrated, he was a respected and fully integrated member of society there. Indeed, Clark himself had anglicised his name from Francois Joseph Le Clerq indicating a further aspect of actual or perceived assimilation into English society.

Clark's application for legal status as a British citizen was one of a number made by French nationals throughout the eighteenth century, each of which sought to present evidence of their suitability for inclusion in the national collective.[2] In effect, those who sought legal recognition set out to demonstrate an existing or potential cultural integration into their adopted nation. In doing this, they also articulated their understanding of what constituted the ideal qualities of Britishness and what attributes

[1] NA HO 44/43.
[2] The word 'citizen' is used to reflect the legal category of a person as a naturalized member of a state or nation, but without the connotations of popular sovereignty that were to evolve in the French Revolution. The word 'subject' is also used when referring to status reflecting the meaning of living under the rule of a monarch or a government.

were considered suitable for membership of that collective. Therefore, by taking as its focus French nationals residing at length in England, and in examining the point at which they sought fuller and official British citizenship, this chapter aims to reflect on the form and nature of the nationality into which they hoped to be accepted.

The documentation left by this process of naturalization or denization of foreign nationals is valuable to a historical study of nationality in several respects. Firstly, it provides evidence of the legal discourse surrounding citizenship and on the freedoms and disabilities of legal status accruing to various forms of national belonging or exclusion. Secondly, as already stated, the cases presented by the French for consideration indicate the nature of Britishness by offering an idealised image of citizenship chosen to reflect prevailing cultural discourse. But more than this, and thirdly, it enables contemplation of the nature of nationality in more general terms at this time, both with respect to its potential for being appropriated by alternative nationalities and to its fluidity as an identity among different individuals and groups.

The sources that have provided the basis for this chapter are those records which specifically relate to the protocol and procedure of application for British citizenship. The documents kept in the Home Office department of the National Archives in London have been extensively consulted, including the petitions submitted by French nationals and, where they have survived complete, the testimonials provided by British supporters. The focus is especially on the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. However, applications from throughout the eighteenth century have been studied in order to examine changing notions of Britishness across a longer period. The petitions presented often contained information on the applicant's occupation, marital situation and length of residence in England providing evidence of social background and extent of encounter, in addition to the statements demonstrating integration in other

ways. The testimonials sometimes attached were largely character references which emphasized a person's reliability, loyalty to the regime and sometimes their financial solvency. However, they are important in providing a domestic perspective on the nature of Britishness and the personal qualities deemed desirable for belonging to the national collective. Unfortunately, for the majority of applications, this supporting documentation is missing, however the main petition itself often included details on the number and the social background of those willing to provide testimonials enabling, at the very least, a consideration of the social basis of the process and an awareness of the limitations in this regard. Occasionally denization documents were contained in Chancery Department archives and, although largely formulaic and identically worded, these give evidence of the socio-economic status of the French applicants. Where it exists, the correspondence passing between the relevant authorities has also been consulted to ascertain reactions to petitions on an individual basis. This material however, has not survived in any significant volume. Finally, other sources that have been examined are the texts of the official grant of naturalization and denization themselves which informed the process through the statement of terms and conditions under which citizenship was granted and which therefore provide valuable discursive evidence on the legal framework of British citizenship.[3]

Aside from being incomplete in terms of tracing a process of application and consideration in a majority of cases, the sources are limited in certain other respects. The testimonials themselves originated within a restricted social cross-section of English society. In a manner similar to defendants in criminal cases at that time, a favourable character reference from a member of the wealthy or professional classes

[3] It falls beyond the scope of this thesis to undertake a full and detailed examination of statutory provisions for the naturalization and denization of foreigners. W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization, 1701 – 1800*, London, House of Lords, 1923, pp. vii-xxxiii has provided a comprehensive account of relevant legislation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

was believed to be influential in acquiring a sympathetic hearing as their very social rank deemed them to be trustworthy and their word honourable.[4] Nevertheless, this was a limited number of people and therefore, from a British perspective, the evidence represents the views of a certain section of society only. Moreover, the applications for citizenship similarly represent a small proportion of the French nationals living in England with the majority choosing, or, alternatively, having no option but to remain 'alien' nationals in the eyes of the law. Some of the reasons for this will be explored further in due course, however the cost of the application procedure, being one factor of dissuasion, meant that British citizenship was easier for the wealthy to attain (although there are instances of middling and artisanal ranks applying for citizenship as a group which served to reduce costs). As a result, the extant source material reflects the beliefs and aspirations of the wealthier members of French immigrant society.

The sources are also limited to an extent by the discursive nature of their creation for they arose from the whole process of state formation, the perceived need to police national borders and to define membership of a national group with the concomitant bureaucratization of citizenship that such processes brought about.[5] As a result the applications were somewhat formulaic in format and, to a degree, in content. Tropes of political and religious fidelity were to be expected given the legal discourse surrounding British citizenship as will be demonstrated in due course. Yet the fact that these and other, similar, arguments repeatedly formed the content of applications, whether or not they were fictions, is of value in itself in demonstrating the state's view of citizenship as well as ideal 'British' qualities to be exhibited by the applicant.

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[4] J. A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550 – 1750*, Harlow, Longman, 1984, pp. 94-120; J. M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England, 1660 – 1800*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 440-449. For an example of this phenomenon in practice see Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker, *Tales from the Hanging Court*, London, Hodder Arnold, 2006, pp. 130-135.

[5] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 1-4, 23; Craig Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity', *Annual Review of Sociology*, No. 19, 1993, pp. 211-239. Each of these works consider the process of state formation with respect to establishing the boundaries of citizenship.

Formal citizenship, as defined by the ruling classes, was therefore a powerful form of social closure to be exercised, for it fell to the state to designate exactly who could and could not enjoy membership of the national collective.[6] Territorial borders, both land and sea-based frontiers, were porous to an extent, although the majority of foreigners arriving in England in the eighteenth century did so through the major port towns such as Dover, Gravesend, Portsmouth, Harwich, Bristol and Falmouth, there were miles of unpoliced coastline through which clandestine or illegal entry could be made.[7] And yet, although physical entry into the country could be achieved without the consent of the state, legal acceptance was impossible without negotiating the borders placed around citizenship. Once legal acceptance as either a denizened or naturalized subject was conferred it signified membership of the national collective which carried with it certain rights of activity, interaction and economic status that could not be enjoyed by those outside. In this respect the state assumed great power, not only in defining the national group and determining its personnel, but also in the articulation of sovereignty. The control over citizenship status could also bring with it more empirical outcomes such as the raising of revenue or the augmentation of the population.[8]

There were two methods by which foreigners could attain legal status as an English, later British, subject, namely through naturalization and denization. The principal distinction between the two methods of conferring citizenship is that

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[6] R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, p. 23.

[7] Further consideration of the nature of land and sea borders may be found in Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan (eds.), *Border Approaches: Anthropological Perspectives on Frontiers*, Maryland, University Press of America, 1994, pp. 3, 7; Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan, *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 9. Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After*, New York, Cornell University Press, 2006 considers this aspect with respect to French land borders and immigration in the eighteenth century, p. x. This phenomenon is discussed at greater length, including a consideration of anthropological approaches to the subject, in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

[8] P. Sahlins, *Unnaturally French*, p. ix. For a detailed examination of the aspect of augmenting the English population which was perceived to be in decline in the second half of the seventeenth century see Daniel Statt, 'The City of London and the Controversy over Immigration 1660 - 1722', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1990, pp. 45-61; Caroline Robbins, 'A Note on General Naturalization under the Later Stuarts and a Speech in the House of Commons on the Subject in 1664', *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 1962, pp. 168 – 177.

naturalization originated with parliament as a process of legislation and denization originated with the royal prerogative and was carried out under Letters Patent issued by the crown. Without the status as either naturalized or denizened subject the alien could own neither real property nor a lease in England, they could not bring a legal action relating to real property, they could also not inherit or have an heir themselves.[9] Alien nationals could neither vote nor hold office and were prohibited from owning an English ship. They were also subject to higher customs and duties levies.[10]

To become a naturalized subject required an Act of Parliament, under the terms of which the applicant had to swear the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy in the House of Lords testifying to their religious and political fidelity, and also provide proof of having received the Sacrament in a Protestant church within one month prior to the introduction of the Bill.[11] Until the Act of Settlement in 1701, Acts of naturalization conferred on the successful applicant all the privileges of a native subject. Thereafter no foreigner, even if naturalized, could hold office in parliament, the Privy Council or the armed forces, neither could they receive grants of land from the crown.[12] These latter provisions were intended to prevent favourites of any foreign monarch from acquiring excessive power. Unlike naturalization, denizened citizens did not have to give proof of having received the Sacrament, nor did they have to take any of the oaths. Commonly denization has been interpreted as conferring restricted rights on the citizen, for instance a naturalized subject commonly held rights of purchase, holding and transmitting land

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[9] D. Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen: The Controversy over Immigration and Population 1660 - 1760*, New Jersey, Associated University Press, 1995, p. 33. NA C217/151 and C217/126 demonstrate the same.
[10] D. Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen*, p. 33; D. Statt, 'The City of London and the Controversy over Immigration 1660 - 1722', *Historical Journal*, pp. 46, 53-54.
[11] D. Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen*, p. 34.
[12] C. Robbins, 'A Note on General Naturalization under the Later Stuarts and a Speech in the House of Commons on the Subject in 1664', *Journal of Modern History*, p. 169.

whereas often the denizened subject did not.[13] However, as W. A. Shaw has pointed out, in reality the distinction between the two forms of citizenship lay in the locus of their origin, with denization coming under the remit of royal prerogative. As such, the fact that more restrictive terms were granted to denizened subjects was more a measure of the power of that prerogative as opposed to one of definition. The monarch could impose any conditions they thought fit, including permissions with respect to land ownership and indeed there does exist a number of Letters Patent of denization that include as full rights as naturalization by act of parliament.[14] By the eighteenth century then, grants of denization regularly included clauses allowing the recipient to hold or purchase land, rents or services and inherit the same.[15]

Being a parliamentary process, naturalization began by the introduction of a Bill into parliament. These usually carried a number of petitioners' names rather than a single name or family largely because the whole process, aside from being time-consuming, was relatively expensive. So although naturalization bills rarely encountered opposition by MPs, the length of the process meant that many were lost as parliament was prorogued or turned its attention to more pressing business. The petition therefore had to be re-submitted and, naturally, a new bill incurred new fees. Daniel Statt has suggested a figure in excess of £65 payable by the applicant which is a considerable sum in itself aside from the costs of repeat fees.[16] By contrast, a 1798 source put denization fees at £25.00, but in practice these were often remitted.[17]

The relatively high cost of acquiring legal citizenship necessarily determined the social background of those who could apply, with only the wealthy in a position to

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[13] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. vi; D. Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen*, p. 33; C. Robbins, 'A Note on General Naturalization under the Later Stuarts and a Speech in the House of Commons on the Subject in 1664', *Journal of Modern History*, p. 169.
[14] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. vii.
[15] NA HO 4/1.
[16] D. Statt, 'The City of London and the Controversy over Immigration 1660 - 1722', *Historical Journal*, p. 46. In addition, a House of Commons committee report of 1732 cited a fee of £63.
[17] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. xxxiii.

afford the costs of naturalization outside those periods when the process was simplified and made much cheaper. For example, the Act of General Naturalization passed in 1709 set the fee at one shilling. The costs of denization, although comparatively much lower, still meant that citizenship was restrictive. For the period July 1681 to August 1688 certain cases of denization were subject to a reduced fee. Denizations made under the Order in Council of 1681 representing grants to persecuted Huguenots were not liable to fees whereas other foreign nationals had to pay the usual costs.[18] For the period 1752 to 1791, of the records available which show the rank or profession of the applicant, out of a total of 68 people, eighteen gentlemen and two esquires were given denization. The remainder were craftsmen, artisans and manufacturers such as button-makers, builders, merchants, furriers, tailors, sugar-bakers or clerks.[19] Those of lower income or social status were effectively excluded from the process. Notwithstanding, as Statt has pointed out, these ranks of people were unlikely to be affected by the legal disabilities in force upon resident aliens and therefore would have been less likely anyway to have sought citizenship.[20]

Such an interpretation would however suggest that changes of nationality were made for purely pragmatic reasons, that those French who sought some form of native British status only did so because they stood to gain materially. Notwithstanding the extent to which this view was true, it overlooks completely the notion of any emotional attachments which may have existed and therefore can only ever be partially accurate. The cases put forward by the French applicants would doubtless have been constructed within a discursive framework of what they believed the British authorities wanted to hear and themes such as service and loyalty are recurrent ones. But beyond this, the

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[18] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 124.
[19] NA C 97/ 1-4 and 6-14.
[20] D. Statt, 'The City of London and the Controversy over Immigration 1660 - 1722', *Historical Journal*, p. 46.

petitions demonstrate a real level of attachment to their adopted country, perhaps through longstanding marriage to a native Briton or through military service in support of the British. Viewing the application process from the perspective of any potential emotional attachment or loyalty, moreover, raises interesting questions about notions of 'home' and the fluidity of a national identity.

'Home' and Identity

Arguing from the perspective of cultural anthropology, Liisa Malkki noted how people became tied to places in an unnatural way when being ascribed 'native' status by anthropologists.[21] Such an approach, she wrote, was loaded with an understanding that people not only came from a certain place but somehow intrinsically belonged there as if culturally and psychologically conditioned. On the one hand it was an assumption that served to confine people and tie them unrealistically to place of birth, on the other it suggested that outsiders could never 'belong' in the same way despite their legal status. In doing so, it superimposes a rigid definition of national identification upon populations without giving sufficient scope to the fact of individual agency in identification. However, studies in anthropology and sociology have shown national identification to develop through a process of construction rather than being somehow inherent to the individual and organic among the collective.[22] For this reason it is believed to be a fluid form of identification, not just in terms of the differentiated meanings that may be applied to it, but also as something that can be appropriated in different ways and by different groups.

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[21] Liisa Malkki, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialisation of National Identities among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1992, pp. 24-44.
[22] This is the thrust of Malkki's argument, however, it is widely supported among a variety of disciplines. Mary Crain, 'The Social Construction of National Identity in Highland Ecuador', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 1, 1990, pp. 43-59; Karen Cerulo, 'Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 23, 1997, pp. 385-409; Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity, 1650 – 1850*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 4, 267. This subject is discussed at greater length in the Introduction.

Place does indeed have an impact on individual and group identification but attachments are by no means confined to place of birth. Malkki has demonstrated that there are a number of alternative relationships that can be formed between person and place, for example, the attachment to where one lives or the constructed memory or imagined attachment to a distant place, whilst D. B. Knight has explained notions of belonging in terms of past, present and future as a means by which the collective may be unified.[23] Like Malkki, Knight's concept of past belonging rested on a notion of territorial rights of ownership, whether or not that territory was currently a site of occupation, and thus represented an ideological 'home' to the subject.[24] A sense of 'home' therefore is likewise a fluid concept. Jeffrey Lesser, in his study on Japanese immigrants and second generation Japanese in Brazil, noted how a sense of 'home' to these people changed according to both generation and to social status and was even influenced by their location whether in Brazil or overseas.[25] Home therefore is tied to nation both as a concept and as a place, but it can change in nature and even with respect to the national focus of identification. Home can be place of birth whether or not one resides there, but equally it can be appropriated to where you are, for the attachment is never simply spatially informed but also emotionally constructed.

As a concept, then, 'nation' is multi-dimensional. Not simply territorial, it comprises, among others, political, social and cultural aspects and this allows for a multitude of different attachments, each of which are a form of nationality. Identification with a 'national' culture is different from identification with a 'national' territory and yet both are forms of national awareness. The space is therefore created for

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[23] L. Malkki, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialisation of National Identities among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology*, p. 38.
[24] D. B. Knight, 'Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, No. 72, 1982, pp. 514-531, pp. 521-522. In contrast to the territorial belonging described by the 'past', Knight's concept of 'future' belonging rested on the formation of ideological ties among the collective.
[25] Jeffrey Lesser, *Searching for Home Abroad: Japanese Brazilians and Transnationalism*, London, Duke University Press, 2003, p. 2.

the appropriation of nationality beyond purely territorial limits, and indeed the discursive framework of naturalization and denization acknowledged this simply by recognising that foreigners might become British citizens. Many of the petitions for citizenship submitted by French nationals sought to demonstrate such a level of cultural, political or social attachment to Britain as proof of a new nationality. In doing so they presented a case for national identification not tied to birth place, but to an adopted 'home' and based upon both emotional attachment and social assimilation.[26] In effect, as aliens, they sought to prove their 'Britishness' in order to become British subjects. Their reference point, and the cultural model of 'nation' and of British national characteristics in the eighteenth century, centred around notions of the 'Freeborn Englishman' and the promotion of national rights and liberties.[27]

Creating Nationality in the Eighteenth Century

The cultural and ideological form of 'nation' to which the French petitioners desired to prove attachment was, in itself, a fluid and multi-dimensional concept which evolved and changed throughout the eighteenth century. Ideas of national characteristics, later to be attached to the label 'British', existed in embryonic form at the end of the seventeenth century, centred around broad notions of the benefits of a mixed constitution in government, the desire to see the Protestant religion triumph over its Catholic adversary and a general sense of antagonism towards the French model of government and society. However, this was not, as both David Cressy and Colin Kidd

[26] P. Sahlins, *Unnaturally French*, p. 2.
[27] As Krishnan Kumar has pointed out in D. Morley and K. Robbins (eds.), *British Cultural Studies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 41 and Adrian Hastings in *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 63, there was a tendency at that time on the part of the English to subsume everything British under the label 'English'. The discussion on the cultural construct of nationality refers to it as 'Britishness' reflecting the usage of historians on the matter, whilst at the same time employing the contemporary vocabulary of 'Freeborn Englishman' to reflect usage in this regard. The historical debate on the existence of a 'British' or an 'English' national identity is considered in the Introduction.

have claimed, a fully fledged national awareness along the cultural lines of 'Britishness' that was later to evolve, but instead a wider discourse incorporating political and religious viewpoints and the notion of a collective heritage.[28] Throughout the eighteenth century, then, these generalised notions became increasingly tied to sentiments of national pride and superiority and a national identification was accelerated among the population.

The process by which this ideology was developed was in part organic and in part constructed. Certainly an awareness of 'Englishness' and of nationhood as one of collective belonging had existed long before the turn of the eighteenth century, and indeed beliefs about the superiority of the constitution and, to an extent, those surrounding divine election, were nation-specific. However, in tandem with a national process of evolution and development, the ideology of Britishness was constructed and promoted akin to an invented tradition.[29] Using longstanding beliefs about the pivotal role of events in 1066 and 1688, for example, in fusing them with new vocabularies such as the 'Norman Yoke', or new significances, and by introducing entirely new materials and symbols such as a national anthem and a national flag, served to enhance a sense of national distinction.[30] The ambition of the ruling elites to foster a national identification in the mould of popular support for the regime was not new in the eighteenth century, however, improved communications and a wider print circulation

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[28] David Cressy in J. Gillis, *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 70-71; Colin Kidd, 'Protestantism, constitutionalism and British identity under the later Stuarts', in B. Bradshaw, and P. Roberts, *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain 1533 – 1707*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 322.

[29] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 1-14.

[30] H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, St Martin's Press, 1995, p. 257; Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution: studies in interpretation of the English revolution of the seventeenth century*, London, Serif, 1995, pp. 57-58; Katherine Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe, 1750 – 1800: authorship, gender and national identity*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, p. 38; E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 7.

meant that these messages reached a wider audience than ever before and thus the process was accelerated

J. C. D. Clark has, however, taken issue with the notion of an invented tradition of nationality claiming that such an interpretation implies both deceit on the part of the elites delivering the message and credulity on the part of the audience and, in so doing, produces a 'false consciousness' of identification.[31] However, these charges are misleading. To understand nationality as a 'false consciousness' implies that the people who held it were not in control of their own beliefs, opinions or identities, or that national identity attained less emotional depth than other forms of identification. And yet for Britishness to gain significant purchase there had to be active appropriation on the part of the population. Britishness as an aspect of identity was a two-way process and not just superimposed upon a neutral or ambivalent society.[32] Furthermore, as this thesis will demonstrate, the response to the French and to the idea of 'nation' was by no means uniform among the population but instead responses were considered and strategically appropriated. Similarly, to label the conscious provision or promotion of a national ideology as deceit is too strong as it implies duplicity and lies.

The purpose of presenting the nation in this way was to encompass the variety of peoples and cultures within the state into a symbolic one-ness of nation by recruiting popular will and identification with the national community and, as such, it was manipulation rather than deceit. Hobsbawm and Ranger have called it a socialising mechanism as it sought to inculcate common beliefs or a common value system into the majority of the population and indeed, as Kathleen Wilson has demonstrated, it was a dual process which worked from below and provincially as well as centrally and from

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[31] J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 262-263.

[32] Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715 – 1785*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 21. For theories on cultural appropriation see the discussion in the Introduction.

the elites.[33] An invented history of the sort which offered singular and simplified interpretations served both to produce a consensus about that past and, in so doing, gave credence to the present construct of 'nation'. By implication this included the existing social and political status quo and therefore the consensus was taken to demonstrate as acceptance of that regime also. What mattered about this process of creating Britishness, however, was not the historical accuracy of the claims but that such traditions and beliefs were seen by the people as immutable and therefore represented a habitus to social action and political thought.[34] It was also engrained because Britishness appealed to the people's sense of superiority. The wording of the Act to naturalize foreign Protestants in America spoke of, '[And whereas] many Foreigners and Strangers from the Levity of our Government, the Purity of our Religion, the Benefit of our Laws, the Advantages of our Trade, and the Security of our Property, might be induced to come and settle'.[35] It was an ideology of national being reflecting an arrogance bordering on xenophobia.

Essentially, the ideas of what it meant to be British were based upon the discernment of political freedoms and rights whose perceived roots were enshrined in Common Law. This amalgamation of historic traditions and customs, and the sum of juridical decisions over the centuries of operation of the English legal system, was seen to be the guardian of certain liberties, in theory for the whole population.[36] In the eighteenth century these were widely understood to constitute a freedom from domination or absolutist government, the freedom to travel and to sell one's labour, the

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[33] E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 9. K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, pp. 137-205.
[34] Craig Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity', *Annual Review of Sociology*, p. 222.
[35] HLRO HL/PO/PU/4/9.
[36] In terms of practical benefits 'Britishness' remained the preserve of white men of property, see J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, p. 275. P. J. Marshall, 'Presidential Address: Britain and the World in the Eighteenth Century: IV the Turning Outwards of Britain', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, VII, 2000, pp. 1-15, considers the extent to which Britishness could be transposed onto the subject peoples of an ever increasing empire in the eighteenth century.

freedom from arbitrary arrest and the right to trial by jury, liberties of conscience and expression, and more generally a security of life and of property.[37]

These ideas were cultivated within a broader discourse of Protestant election which, though not synonymous with national identification, provided an ideology which united the vast majority of the population.[38] Linked to this were notions of French opposition, notably as a Catholic adversary, but more generally also in political, commercial, imperial, military and cultural terms. The absolutism of the French monarchy and the despotism of her sizeable army could be readily contrasted with the benevolence of the British navy and the liberty of her constitution. Likewise the immorality, frivolity and instability of the French character could be used, by a process of contrast, to highlight the honesty, industriousness and independence of the British national character.[39]

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[37] A number of historians have considered the nature of Britishness in the eighteenth century. These include Jack Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution', in P.J. Marshall, (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol.2 The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998; Raphael Samuel, *Patriotism: the Making and Unmaking of British Identity, Vol. 3 National Fictions*, London, Routledge, 1989, p. 60; Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650 – 1850*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 268; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, pp. 5, 162-169; C. Kidd, 'Protestantism, constitutionalism and British identity', in B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity*, p. 336-338.

[38] Historians have considered at length the role of Protestantism as a cohering collective identity. Religious identification of this kind provided the bedrock of Linda Colley's argument for a developing national consciousness at this time, see *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 – 1837*, London, Pimlico, 1992, pp. 1-11. A similar argument has been put forward by Norman Davies, *The Isles: A History*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999, pp. 720-727. Colin Kidd, 'Protestantism, constitutionalism and British identity', in B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity*, p. 338 has argued that Protestantism provided a focal point for popular loyalty which later evolved into national awareness alongside notions of political and civil liberty. Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, pp. 12-25, have pointed out that the vocabulary of religious election to Protestants was understood to include those of true faith abroad and specifically excluded dissenting Protestants at home, highlighting its misuse as a national discourse. In a similar way J. C. D. Clark has pointed out the limitations of a Protestant based national identity by highlighting the doctrinal divisions between the established Church and dissenting sects at home and the international scope of a belief in providential election and suggests that 'Anglicanism' is a more appropriate terminology see, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, pp. 271-274. Murray Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1997, p. 18, has noted the extent to which English Catholics were integrated into local society demonstrating the contingency of a Protestant identity.

[39] A number of historical works have highlighted these notional oppositions. Once again the basis of Colley's argument for the formation of a British nationality rested on the perception of a French 'other', L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 5-6. See also, Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer (eds.), *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History*, London, Routledge, 1995, p. 223; R. Romani,

Throughout the course of the eighteenth century theses ideas naturally changed and evolved, with the outcome of the Seven Years War being a notable turning point.[40] The cohering effect of a Protestant religious identification increasingly gave way to notions of commercial vitality and imperial superiority, whilst the political and legal aspects of Britishness were superseded by cultural ideals of manners and improvement.[41] Notions of national difference intensified and became increasingly xenophobic.[42] However, despite a concession to change, it is important to realise the limitations of an invented tradition of Britishness, both for the purposes of this chapter in terms of the forms of British nationality demonstrated by the French, but also because the basis of this thesis rests on an understanding of a more differentiated and idiosyncratic response to 'nation'. The presumptive basis of Britishness as a cultural model of nation is highly problematic as it firstly assumes a credulous population, and secondly it over-homogenises cultures and experiences.[43] National character, for example, is a highly elusive concept. To define or describe it one may consider, among others, the nation's political life, its economic vitality or its military proficiency, but such wide reference points can produce diverse conclusions.[44] Indeed, historians have debated the extent to which national character in the eighteenth century represented a

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National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France, 1750 – 1914, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 161-164; R. Samuel, *Patriotism, Vol. 3*, pp. 266-269.

[40] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 171; Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 11; P. Langford, *Englishness Identified*, p. 6; M. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain*, pp. 128-129; P.J. Marshall, *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. 2, p. 7.*

[41] Paul Langford, 'British Politeness and the Progress of Western Manners: An Eighteenth Century Enigma', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, VII, 1997, pp. 53-72, pp. 54-55; Alexander Murdoch, *British History, 1660 – 1832: National Identity and Local Culture*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998, pp. 62-65; Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 75; P. Langford, *Englishness Identified*, p. 5; A. Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, p. 65; H. T. Dickinson, *Politics of the People*, p. 257.

[42] D. Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen*, pp. 167, 191; H. T. Dickinson, *Politics of the People*, p. 267; R. Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit*, p. 4.

[43] M. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain*, pp. 172-174; J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity', in B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity*, p. 262.

[44] R. Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit* p. 2; P. Langford, *Englishness Identified* p. 8.

new Britishness or was merely an English character writ large.[45] At any rate only certain sections of the population claimed truly to epitomise Britishness, as it was a discourse increasingly appropriated in the second half of the century by the middle ranks of society in their stand against the supposed degeneracy of the lower orders and the cosmopolitanism and corruption of the elites.[46]

Undoubtedly there existed unifying factors which not only helped circulate ideas of Britishness among a large proportion of the population, they also helped in standardizing their reception. Linda Colley, for example, has highlighted the cohering effect of improved communications, the wider circulation of printed material and the relative geographical mobility of the population.[47] The very discursive framework within which Britishness was constructed, that of Protestantism and Anglo-French rivalry, to an extent limited the range of meanings that could be applied to it. However, these factors were by no means so powerful or restrictive as to produce a homogenous response among those who were subject to the national message. The forms of Britishness may have been held in common, but there was sufficient space for different meanings to be applied by an audience and it was understood in different ways by different groups of people.[48] Indeed, anthropological studies on the creation of symbolic boundaries have shown differences in meaning applied to collective identification to be

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[45] For example Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Id entity,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003 pp. 41-42; P. Langford, *Englishness Identified* p. 14 have argued that Britishness never gained ascendancy and that British characteristics merely coincided with English ones. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 1-11, has argued for a fully fledged British consciousness developing by the nineteenth century. The matter is given further consideration in the Introduction.

[46] K. Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe, 1750 – 1800*, p. 17; A. Murdoch, *British History, 1660 – 1832,* p. 88. This development is considered in greater detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis which looks at the rise of sensibility, manners and philanthropy as 'national' characteristics and attributes.

[47] Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 1992, pp. 309-329.

[48] Dana Rabin's study on the debate surrounding the Jewish Naturalization Bill in 1753 highlights how elements of Britishness were contested and appropriated to give force to different, and opposing, arguments. Dana Rabin, 'The Jew Bill of 1753: Masculinity, Virility and the Nation', *Eighteenth Century Studies,* Vol. 39, No. 2, 2006, pp. 157-171. Sean Connolly has demonstrated the different forms of Britishness adopted by those in Britain outside of England, Sean Connolly, 'Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian State', in A. Grant and K. Stringer (eds.), *Uniting the Kingdom?*

the norm; most usually however, these were masked by the appearance of convergence.[49] The notion of Britishness was therefore fluid in terms of its reception, but it was this very fluidity which made it accessible to outsiders such as the French who sought citizenship.

The Applications for Naturalization and Denization and National Identity

Essentially the arguments formulated in the French petitions for citizenship aimed to show a degree of social and cultural integration in order to acquire judicial assimilation. The construction of those arguments was similar across the social spectrum of applicants and changed little in their basic format throughout the eighteenth century, changes in emphasis reflecting evolving notions of British nationality. To an extent therefore they mirrored the constraints of legal discourse on the whole procedure, that certain proofs were deemed essential or more effective than others in gaining British citizenship. But the recurrence of specific evidence also provides an insight into French understandings of what constituted a good or valuable British subject and the ways in which they viewed integration to have taken place.

Inevitably, the life narratives offered in these petitions and documents conceal to an extent the true motives and intentions of the claimant in wanting to acquire citizenship. A small number of petitioners openly admitted the prospect of personal, economic or financial gain. Renatus Jordain and Peter Breton admitted the need to become naturalized to be able to find employment.[50] The petition of Louise Laroche stated, 'That your petitioner's Husband is possessed of considerable Freehold Property and your Petitioner is desirous to be enabled to inherit the same in case she shall survive

[49] Anthony Cohen, *Symbolising Boundaries: Identity and Diversity in British Cultures*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986, pp. 2-12.
[50] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 342.

him'.[51] Francis de Berckem similarly stated, 'I am desirous not only for the advantage of Commerce, But from a wish to Purchase Landed Property'.[52] More usually, however, the desire for personal or material gain was cloaked in the rhetoric of service or loyalty, and to a degree, therefore, the narratives must be seen as formulaic or strategic constructs, designed best to ensure the success of the application. Notwithstanding this grey area between motive and statement, it should not affect an interpretation of the evidence. First because the petitions contained statements of fact such as marriage to a British native and length of residence, both of which demonstrate a degree of social integration. Secondly, although the documents may have contained stock narratives, they provide an indication as to the perceived norms of Britishness. A careful examination of the content of the cases put forward by the French, and of the testimonials of support offered by British subjects, can therefore reflect on personal understandings of British nationality.

The arguments framed by the petitioners fell into three basic rhetorical themes. These were not to be found exclusively in separate applications but occurred to varying degrees in each case. Firstly, applicants sought to prove existing social and cultural integration. This was done by statements of marriage to a British national or by familial connections, through evidence of extended residence in the country, or through the ownership of property as evidence of investment. Secondly, they sought to demonstrate their Britishness through the application of moral or emotional interpretations of what characterized the ideal citizen, such as political loyalty or religious purity. Lastly, the petitioners attempted to show that they had contributed to the public good, or would do so through acquiring citizenship. This was achieved by proof of military service, either

[51] NA HO 44/43 ff.137 – 138.
[52] NA HO 44/45 ff.7 – 19.

for France or Britain, or the ownership of business interests. Assurances of financial solvency or of education were also offered.

By far the majority of applications emphasized measures of existing integration and assimilation and, of these, most cited marriage or longevity of residence. In October 1796, the basis of the application made by Augusta Maria Louisa Bryant of Lorraine was her marriage to George Bryant of Berkeley Square in London.[53] In January 1799 Louise Laroche, residing in Tiverton in Devon, stated that she, 'was born out of Your Majesty's allegiance but she hath been married to your Majesty's faithful subject John Laroche...and hath resided with him in Your Majesty's Dominions for upwards of Forty Years last past'.[54] Francis de Berckem, in a letter to Lord Pelham, declared his marriage 'to an English woman By whom I have five Children, and having been Settled upwards of Eleven years in this Country as a Merchant'.[55]

Applications such as de Berckem's may be found from across the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars as French nationals either sought refuge from the new regime or realised that a return was impossible or impractical. They therefore emphasized a longevity of residence in addition to other ties to their adopted country. In 1807 Louis Henry de Rosiolin sought naturalization having fled to Britain thirteen years previously. He subsequently 'married Sarah Maze of the Parish of Saint Ann, Soho Westminster by whom he has one child, and that he has been settled in the City of Winchester upwards of three years, where he has purchased a Freehold House and Garden'.[56] François Ménétrier's petition stated:

> That your memorialist was born at Dijon in Burgundy and came to this country with the Marquis of Bute in the capacity of valet de Chambre in the year 1782 and lived with him 27 years by which he had acquired a property, but which as

[53] NA HO 44/43.
[54] NA HO 44/43 ff. 137-138.
[55] NA HO 44/45.
[56] NA HO 1/6/50.

> an Alien he has not the power to appropriate as a British Subject. That your Memorialist is a Married Man and has one child.[57]

In May 1810, a Monsieur Fauvre requested naturalization, 'in consequence of a residence of 27 years'.[58] A year later, John Leonard Dutreuil was granted denization. He had fled to London in 1794 and had subsequently married and his wife was expecting their first child.[59]

Other applicants sought to demonstrate wider familial connections with Britain. In June 1807 Louis Charles Bonnaventure, Comte de Mesnard, stated, 'Le Supplicant a quittéson pays au commencement, et en raison de la révolution, n'y est plus rentré depuis, et ne peut y retourner, n'ayant pas voulu profiter de l'ammistie offerte aux émigrés'. He continued, 'Le Comte de Mesnard ajoute comme circonstances qui peuvent être favourable à sa demande...qu'il depend de la même famille que Lord Maynard, et qu'il a épousé une Angloise'.[60] In July 1811, Louis Joseph Fabre, a language teacher from Marseilles, explained that he had lived in England for eleven years and observed its laws, that all his surviving relatives were resident in England and that his brother was born in England.[61]

The high incidence of narratives such as these reflects the fact that they were provable and therefore added an empirical aspect to the case for citizenship, strengthening it still further. Marriage to a British national could be verified in parish records and longevity of residence, or indeed property ownership which featured in a number of applications, could potentially be checked against lease and purchase

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[57] NA HO 1/6/53.
[58] NA HO 5/36. There are a number of applications which cite marriage and/or long residence as reason for naturalization. These may be found in NA HO 1/6/24; HO 1/6/27; HO 1/6/30; HO 1/6/47; HO 1/6/55; HO 44/45; HO 44/46.
[59] NA HO 1/6/36.
[60] NA HO 1/6/55.
[61] NA HO 1/6/9.

documents.[62] Both could also be confirmed through the word of associates and friends. Moreover, the evidence suggests that 'provable' narratives such as marriage presented a strong case in itself for citizenship, even for less than desirable persons. Certainly in the case of Henri de Bourbel his marriage to Mary Ann Spence, and thus into her wealthy and influential family, not only helped ensure his receipt of Letters Patent of Denization in 1797, but also ensured he did not suffer the humiliation of losing his status after a number of large debts accrued due to de Bourbel's poor business administration.[63]

Importantly, the narratives also presented a case for existing integration by action as opposed to rhetoric, in effect that the petitioner had presumed attachment to the host nation already through the choices they had made to stay and build a life. Legal acceptance was therefore a final step in the process of an adopted cultural and social nationality that had already taken place and, if this could be demonstrated, it made for a good application. The more esoteric aspects of British character were used less often to frame arguments, either because they were difficult to prove and therefore did little to strengthen an application, or else the cultural traits of natural character were not assimilated. As Chaussinand-Nogaret has pointed out, marriage to a native national did not necessarily impose a new identity on the non-national partner. They could equally have retained a sympathy or identification with the land of their birth.[64]

However, qualitative statements of character, loyalty or other form of emotional attachment to Britain did appear in the petitions demonstrating the application of moral or cultural interpretations of British nationality. The application of Peter Auriol and David Pratviel, originally of Languedoc, but currently employed as merchants in London, stated:

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[62] For example, NA HO 1/6/52; HO 1/6/53; HO 1/6/9; HO 44/43; HO 44/46.
[63] ESRO AMS 5271 and Elizabeth de Bourbel, *A Candle to Henry*, Lewes, East Sussex Records Office Publications, 1975, p.158.
[64] G. Chaussinand-Nogaret, 'Une élite insulaire au service de l'Europe. Les Jacobites au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales*, ESC (28), 1973, pp. 1097 – 1121.

> That your Petitioners have constantly professed the True Protestant Religion and given the Testimony of their Loyalty and Fidelity to His Majesty and the Good of the Kingdom of Great Britain...and shall be adjudged and taken to all intents and purposes to be naturalized and as free born Subjects of this Kingdom of Great Britain...as if they had been born natural Subjects within this Kingdom of Great Britain.[65]

Auriol and Pratviel emphasized their background as co-religionists in an attempt to demonstrate similarity. They also stressed their political fidelity, a theme common to other applications. In September 1793 Jean Louis Castera of Bayonne, recently settled in London, applied for naturalization declaring himself, 'well affected to Your Majesty's Person and Government'.[66] In a similar vein, Laurent Louis Deconchy, trading in Britain as a bookseller since 1793, stated, 'That your Petitioner is most loyally attached to his Majesty's Royal Person & Family & well affected to the Government and Country'.[67] In April 1811 Theophilus Perceval was granted Letters Patent of Denization. His documentation explained that his conduct was 'rigidly democratic'.[68]

What these examples demonstrate is a level of familiarity expressed as an identity of belonging in political or religious terms and, as such, represented a further, emotional dimension of integration. What is notable however is the absence of reference to 'liberties' in these respects. The construct of Britishness was founded upon the belief that the people enjoyed unique freedoms as a result of the country's balanced and ancient constitution and further, inalienable, natural rights ordained by God. 'Liberty' was a cornerstone of the ideology, albeit something which in practice eluded the vast

[65] HLRO HL/PO/JO/10/7/22.
[66] NA HO 44/41 ff. 209-210.
[67] NA HO 1/6/30.
[68] NA HO 1/6/58.

majority of the population beyond what was deemed necessary for the 'preservation of order'.[69]

Historians such as E. P. Thompson and H. T. Dickinson have examined in detail the variety of ways in which liberty was understood in the eighteenth century and the different interpretations placed on those freedoms rightfully or naturally due to the subject.[70] Indeed, both have noted the increasing debate on these matters which took place in the public sphere as the century progressed, reaching a zenith in the years of revolutionary ferment in France and beyond into the nineteenth century. They have also shown how this debate was progressively widened across a greater proportion of the population. It is noteworthy therefore that applications for citizenship, especially from those French nationals who had resided in Britain for a number of years and would have been exposed to such debate, were not adopting the rhetoric of liberty in greater numbers. Indeed, apart from one description of Britain's 'mild and Happy Government' in 1792 few elaborations on the nature of the polity may be found.[71]

As with any historical evidence being noteworthy by its absence, one can only surmise as to the reasons for this in an attempt to gain further insight. Those in Britain who saw promise and hope in the French revolutionary steps towards liberty, by 1793 had seen the situation degenerate into the bloodshed of the Terror. And although this further strengthened British beliefs in the liberties of her own system of government and the virtues of balance, at home the debate about liberties intensified, becoming ever more split between radical and reactionary viewpoints. In such an atmosphere, and with numerous and conflicting opinions of what 'liberty' actually meant and offered, it was perhaps unwise to present such ideas in a petition. Alternatively the belief may have

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[69] H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, p. 162.
[70] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Middlesex, Victor Gollancz, 1982, pp. 111-203; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, Methuen, 1977, pp. 195-318; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, pp. 161-189.
[71] NA HO 1/6/41.

prevailed that empirical evidence, such as marriage and residence, presented a far stronger case for naturalization than did any argument resting on concepts and ideologies and, as a result, these did not appear nearly so often.

The final theme to be found commonly in the French petitions was that of proven contribution towards the public good, either established as a fact or potentially on the grant of citizenship. Several men offered proof of military service as evidence of attachment to the wider national cause. Indeed, the petition of Captain Clark, mentioned at the opening of the chapter, gave details of how he had quit France on account of the revolutionary upheavals and following the disbanding of the regiment in service to the duc de Bourbon. Once in England, in 1796, he was appointed a lieutenant in the Regiment of Loewenstein Fusiliers serving in Britain, and a year later he was drafted into the Royal Dutch Army to serve in the West Indies. In 1803 he returned to serve in the Royal Foreign Artillery where, in 1811, he continued to serve as second captain. Clarke's detailed account was supported by the testimonials of two justices of the peace, a minister of Lymington, two gentlemen and a Lieutenant Colonel of the South East Hampshire local militia, who collectively signed a confirmation that Clarke had been 'ever zealous and active in His Majesty's Service'.[72]

Further petitions offered similar accounts of loyalty and military service, albeit mostly in less detail. The undated petition of Joseph la Nougarede noted how he had quit France in 1793 and had since served in the regiment of the Comte d'Hervilly. His application received the support of testimonials from the captains, lieutenants and sub-lieutenants of the Regiment of Royal Louis, adding, 'qu'il sent toujours conduit avec honneur et distinction'.[73] In June of 1807 a number of petitions were considered. That of Louis Charles Bonnaventure, Comte de Mesnard stated he had arrived in England in

[72] NA HO 44/43.
[73] NA HO 1/6/15.

1792 and subsequently served in the armed forces until the regiment to which he was attached disbanded.[74] Anne Joachim Montagnede de Bouzolz had been a 'general officer in the service of the King of France' and, since the year 1787, commander of the Order of St. Louis, whilst the petition of Louis Durand noted how he had served eight years as a private in the Regiment of Loyal Emigrants.[75] The undated petition of Joseph Cato explained how he had first arrived in Britain aged twenty two as a valet de Chambre to William Tennant and had subsequently 'served twelve years in the Staffordshire Yeomanry Cavalry'. Similarly, the Comte de Polignac also emphasized his eight years 'commission in His Majesty's Service'.[76]

In addition to the dedication expressed through military service, others testified to their financial solvency or wealth basis. The petition of Henri Polier noted how he 'enjoys a character of the highest respectability…and possesses considerable patrimonial property in Wiltshire and Kent'.[77] Those of Romain Petit and Nicholas Louis Gross pointed out the fact that they were successful businessmen, Petit having established a profitable trade as a wine merchant in Grosvenor Square, London, and Gross a lace merchant owning his own property.[78] Testaments addended to the application of Francis de Berckem in 1802 stated, '[he] possesses a good fortune, most of which is invested in our public funds'.[79] The petition of Louis Durand, of June 1807, however is interesting for it comes attached with a note of the official response. Durand's petition had emphasized his military service, but also the fact that he now worked for a London merchant. The British authorities noted, 'He appears to have carried on his Commercial concerns hitherto without this Indulgence – and the granting

[74] NA HO 1/6/55.
[75] NA HO 1/6/50; HO 1/6/47.
[76] NA HO 1/6/1; HO 1/6/27.
[77] NA HO 1/6/20.
[78] NA HO 1/6/38; HO 1/6/24.
[79] NA HO 44/45.

it cannot be matter of necessity to him'. It continued, however, that should he furnish proper military certificates as proof of service, 'there will be no objection to his making another application in which any Claims arising out of such services will have their full weight'.[80]

What can be made of such arguments? Inevitably, any petition which cited business or property interests held in Britain would have been driven in part by the desire for material gain of some sort, if only to preserve an investment or inheritance. Certainly, without legal citizenship of some kind, Polier could not have inherited his 'considerable' property and both Gross and Petit would have continued to pay higher rate taxes as alien businessmen in London. The remark of the British authorities to the petition of Louis Durand shows a tacit understanding of this motivation in that the application would bring about no material benefit to his position in a merchant's company and, it seems on this basis, he was refused citizenship. However, the inclusion of statements of personal wealth or business interests can equally demonstrate an attachment to the adopted nation, that people had taken time and money to build a successful business or were settled enough to own property. De Berckem's wealth secured in public funds meant that his petition could be read in the light of a threat to his investment, but, in the same way, his financial strategy can be understood as contributing to the public good.

The notion of service therefore was an important one, and recognised on both sides. However, the notion of benefit to the community was interpreted in slightly different ways by French and British. Whereas the French applicants chose to emphasize their existing integration as the mark of a valuable member of the collective, the emphasis of British referees was more on the value of personal characteristics and

[80] NA HO 1/6/47.

how they suited the British model of social being. Charles Bevan, for example, writing in support of Louis Joseph Fabre noted the 'uniform propriety of his conduct', whilst, in testimonial to Nicholas Gross, a Mr Ingram Beresford wrote, 'I have no difficulty in expressing my belief that Mr Le Gross is a deserving and well conducted man'.[81] In one instance, a Mr Andrew Drummond was prepared to accept the favourable views of others as to the conduct of the petitioner despite never having before met him.[82]

Supporting testimonials attached to the applications therefore reflected a view of ideal citizenship from the British perspective. Frequent reference was made to a man's honour, respectability or general reputation. The letters of support attached to Fabre's application variously described him as having 'always envinced (sic) the most undeviating loyalty...as a faithfull and zealous subject of His Majesty', and his, 'most perfect zeal and loyalty to his Majesty's Government and to the Laws and constitutional Usages of this Country'.[83] Francis de Berckem was described in 1802 as a 'most honourable character particularly attached to the Government and Country'.[84] Joseph la Nougarede was said to be 'a gentleman of honour...his principles both moral and political are unexceptionable'. By a second referee he was described as 'a worthy, honest and industrious man'.[85] Similarly, in 1811, John Leonard Dutreuil was considered to be, 'a Peaceable Honourable Man'.[86] The 'good character' of both Joseph Cato and Captain Clarke was highlighted, whilst a further testimonial for Clark noted, 'everyone in and about Lymington, would most readily have borne honourable Testimony to the character of Captain Clarke, who has established as fair a reputation as

[81] NA HO 1/6/9; HO 1/6/24.
[82] NA HO 44/45 ff. 7-10.
[83] NA HO 1/6/9.
[84] NA HO 44/45. The word is underlined in the original.
[85] NA HO 1/6/15.
[86] NA HO 1/6/36.

falls to the lot of Most Men'.[87] Correspondence exchanged between Stratford Canning, British plenipotentiary to Switzerland, and Viscount Castlereagh concerning the naturalization of Henry Polier, noted that he, 'enjoys a character of the highest respectability'.[88]

Indeed respectability, both in terms of character and of social status, was considered highly important, not only as a personal attribute of the applicant but also of those providing the support. For Jean Pierre Marreaud respectability was even suggested by association. Marreaud himself explained in his petition. 'That [he] hath always conducted himself as a loyal and good subject and is well known to many persons of great Respectability...who would readily furnish any Testimonials'.[89] Similarly, the testimonial for Captain Clarke explained, 'his conduct in our Service, and his Behaviour in this Neighbourhood, has very justly gained the goodwill and friendship, of a very respectable...Gentry'.[90] More commonly, however, the applications pointed out the respectable status of the British testimonialists.[91]

Notions of respectability of character, of refinement, of manners and the cult of sensibility had gained greater prominence in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Indeed, as has already been noted, such ideas came to influence and change the construct of Britishness at that time.[92] Moreover references to the 'respectable' status of the referee shows just how much store was set upon the 'right' person providing a testimonial in the belief that it strengthened the application. Hence the petition of John Leonard Dutreuil was signed by nine magistrates of the county of Surrey, a curate, a

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[87] NA HO 1/6/1; NA HO 44/43.
[88] NA HO 1/6/20.
[89] NA HO 1/6/23.
[90] NA HO 44/46 f. 143.
[91] For example, NA HO 44/45 ff. 7-19; HO 44/43.
[92] C. Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism*, p. 75. Ideas of respectability and sensibility are discussed at length in Chapter 3 of this thesis when a class-based response to the French is examined.

warden and a High Constable.[93] Indeed, the standing of the referee was considered so significant that French nationals were used where necessary. Nicholas Louis Gross received testimonial from the duc de Castries and Joseph la Nougarede was supported by the chevalier de Cinseau.[94] Moreover, it would appear that status begat status as Laurent Louis Deconchy, a bookseller, was supported by two men of his own trade from New Bond Street, while the Comte de Polignac meanwhile received support from the Earl of Manners and Sir William Aboly-Bart.[95]

This notion of Britishness as one of good character, honesty and respectability was therefore representative of the middling and upper ranks of British society for no one of lowly status would have been considered useful or acceptable enough to have provided a testimonial. Those of so-called 'respectable' status, with all its connotations of honesty, uprightness, worthiness and industriousness, would have identified and valued those qualities in others. Their frequent use in testimonials provided by British nationals demonstrates just how highly cultural and character aspects of nationality were viewed. To be sure, a prime function of the testimonial was to provide a form of character reference, but their purpose was in the wider support of a suitable candidacy for citizenship. With this in mind they present a heavy emphasis on personal and character qualities and much less attention paid to existing integration through marriage, entrepreneurship or long residence.

From the French point of view, however, assertions of marriage to a British national and long residence in the country gave real evidence of attachment and serious intention. However, the fact that these arguments appeared so frequently in petitions suggests that those who implemented the law took a more pragmatic view towards its

[93] NA HO 1/6/36.
[94] NA HO 1/6/24; HO 1/6/15.
[95] NA HO 1/6/36; HO 1/6/27. Further examples of this are to be found in HO 1/6/20; HO 1/6/52; HO 1/6/53.

exercise and indeed they were successfully persuasive. For although service and loyalty were highly regarded, economic advantage to the nation, in the form of marketable skills or commercial acumen, was also recognised as desirable. Indeed the commercial and economic advantages to be had from naturalizing alien residents had been enshrined in legal discourse. As early as 1681 French Huguenot refugees, fleeing religious persecution at home, were afforded an official welcome in England. An Order in Council issued on behalf of Charles II stated:

> His Majesty was pleased further to declare, that he will grant unto every such distressed Protestant who shall come hither for refuge and reside here, His Letters of Denization under greate seale without any charge whatsoever, and likewise, such further priviledges (sic) and immunitys, as are consistent with the Laws, for the liberty and free exercise of their trades and handicrafts. [96]

It was a wily political move on the part of the king as not only was he seen to be acting in defence of the Protestant religion, the French refugees were noted for their industriousness and skills in the textiles industry.[97] They would therefore bring valuable wealth and knowledge into the country. By the middle of the eighteenth century attention was shifted away from the wealth and income generation to be had by encouraging foreign nationals to settle and instead concern was expressed at the potential draining of specie from the country by aliens applying for naturalization or denization merely to siphon greater wealth back to their country of birth. A 1764 statutory amendment noted that many petitioners had sought to:

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[96] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 124.

[97] An excellent study of the reception and lives of the Huguenots in England has been written by Bernard Cottret, *The Huguenots in England*: *Immigration and Settlement 1550 – 1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 185-262. William Cunningham, *Alien Immigrants to England*, London, Cass, 1969 is a very useful, but early study being originally written in 1897, pp. 223-248. See also Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners*, London, Little Brown, 2004, pp. 60-78; John Hintermaier, 'The First Modern Refugees? Charity, Entitlement, and Persuasion in the Huguenot Immigration of the 1680s', *Albion*, Vol. 32, No. 3, 2000, pp. 429-449. Daniel Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen*, p. 57 and W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 43 both consider contemporary commentaries of the Huguenot refugees by the likes of Daniel Defoe and Samuel Fortrey.

> Obtain bills of naturalization for the purpose of availing themselves in foreign countries of the immunitys and indulgences belonging to His Majesty's trading subjects by treaties, and in order to apply such immunitys to promote the trade of the Country to which such naturalized persons originally belonged and not with any design of fixing their residence in Great Britain or of becoming useful subjects thereof.

The amendment went on to stipulate a clause to be included in every subsequent naturalization that any such immunities or perquisites be withheld unless the applicant had already resided up to seven years in Britain.[98] The measure was, nevertheless, an explicit recognition of the economic implications of awarding citizenship to foreign nationals.

The law of naturalization and denization therefore played an important part in promoting and shaping concepts of Britishness to outsiders and in furthering certain interests among the alien community.[99] The considerable costs of the process alone mitigated against the less well-off and favoured those of higher social standing. A foreign national may seek to change their legal status as a citizen for a number of reasons, perhaps to formalise their relationship with their host country, or to achieve inclusion in a trade or craft organisation, to gain religious toleration, or perhaps directly to acquire financial or economic benefits, but in reality the choice was only open to a few. If one is to consider the social standing and occupational background of those who applied during the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars it is clear that legal British citizenship was open only to those of artisan rank and above (Figure 1.).[100]

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[98] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. vii.
[99] Austin Sarat, and Thomas Kearns (eds.), *Cultural Pluralism, Identity Politics and the Law*, Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1999, provides a useful anthropological perspective on the law and identity politics.
[100] NA C97 Series; HO 1/6 Series; HO 42/33; HO 44/46; HLRO HL/PO/JO/10/7/22.

Figure 1. Occupational and Social Status of French Applicants for Naturalization or Denization during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic War Period – Records of the National Archives, London.

Occupation	Number
Adviser to Louis XV	1
Apothecary	1
Bookseller	4
Builder*	1
Chemist/Druggist	2
Clerk	3
Confectioner	2
Duc/Nobility	15
Esquire	2
Gentleman	24
Lace Merchant	1
Merchant (unspecified)	16
Military	6
Musician	1
Peruke Maker	1
Riding Master	1
Sugar Refiner (artisan)	19
Sugar Refiner (manufacturer)	7
Surgeon	1
Victualler	3
Wine Dealer/Merchant	6

*No further indication given as to status.

If the law was not neutral in terms of the provision of access, neither were the criteria for citizenship and because of this, the law or government policy itself can be said to have determined aspects of identity.[101] By definition, the laws covering naturalization and denization actively sought to exclude certain persons or narratives and encourage others. The obligatory swearing of Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and the requirement to prove receipt of the Sacrament in a Protestant church excluded Catholics and Jews. Naturalized foreigners were specifically made to renounce any

[101] John Torpey has argued that too many studies of identity discuss the phenomenon in purely subjective terms and, in so doing, overlook the extent to which legal discourse influences identification. John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 13.

belief in the Virgin Mary, the saints, or the act of transubstantiation.[102] However, access to citizenship was not entirely restrictive in terms of religious belief for the French, as Calvinists, were still accepted. By the end of the eighteenth century, moreover, Roman Catholics were even found to apply with men such as John Leonard Dutreuil providing evidence of his Catholic beliefs in the wording of his petition.[103]

Indeed, as the eighteenth century progressed, the theme of religious belief was included less and less frequently in applications with increasing emphasis placed on the political loyalty of the individual to the person of the monarch and his government; a reflection of the evolving discourse of Britishness and changing perceptions of religious difference. Petitioners Thomas Guenault and Jean Remy de Montigny stated in 1700:

> [The petitioners] who are French Protestants, were forced out of their native country by the severe persecution of the Protestants in France. They came to this Kingdom for refuge, where they have lived for eleven years, behaving themselves with zeal for the good of the Protestant interest and Kingdom of England.[104]

In 1753 the petition of David Pratviel and Peter Auriol declared, 'That your Petitioners have constantly professed the True Protestant Religion and given the Testimony of their Loyalty and Fidelity to his Majesty and the Good of the Kingdom of Great Britain'.[105] By the end of the eighteenth century themes of Protestant faith were much less in evidence. Peter Didier, applying for naturalization in 1792, wrote:

> That your petitioner is most loyally attached to His Majesty's Royal Person and Family and well affected to the Government and Country. That your petitioner having determined to end his days under the mild and Happy Government [and for the better security of carrying on the business of a bookseller] humbly prays...[106]

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[102] NA E 169/86. Also W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 79.
[103] NA HO 1/6/24.
[104] W. A. Shaw, *Acts of Naturalization*, p. 343.
[105] HLRO HL/PO/JO/10/7/22.
[106] NA HO 1/6/41.

Indeed, the petition of Jean Louis Castera in 1793 stressed his affection 'to Your Majesty's Person and Government' whilst openly stating his Catholic beliefs.[107]

This change in emphasis from religious towards political loyalty and assimilation was also to be found in legal discourse. An Oath Roll for Naturalization dating from the reign of Queen Anne required the individual to swear against Catholic beliefs in transubstantiation and the Virgin Mary, and also to testify that they had received no special Papal absolution to do so. Additionally, they were required to declare as abhorrent and heretical 'that Damnable Doctrine' of Papal dispensation to murder or depose excommunicated monarchs.[108] Grants of Letters Patent of Denization made almost a century later omitted any specific references to religion and encapsulated loyalty to the state within the phrase, 'to obey the laws, statutes and proclamations of the Kingdom.'[109] Other stipulations included the right to acquire and hold land, to sell and bequeath property, to pay 'Scot and Lot' and customs duties and to ensure they abided by any merchant regulations in the event they become the master of a trading vessel. The emphasis now was very much political and economic and the focus of loyalty transferred to the person of the king and his institution of government, the outcome of a wider process of apotheosis of the British monarchy traced in detail by Linda Colley.[110]

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The fact of a shifting and evolving idea of nationality is, at one and the same time, a strength for the approach of this thesis and also a source of difficulty. What it was to be British or English in the eighteenth century was informed by such a wide and

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[107] NA HO 44/41 ff. 209-210.
[108] NA E 169/86.
[109] NA C/97/1; C/97/2.
[110] Linda Colley, 'The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation, 1760 – 1820', *Past and Present*, No.102, February 1984, pp. 94 – 129; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 195-236.

multi-dimensional discourse incorporating legal, political, social and cultural perspectives whose emphases changed over time that the space exists for a study of differentiated responses by the population. An examination of nationality through the realm of contact and encounter is therefore a valid and fruitful approach towards one aspect of this response. However, the sheer breadth of the concept is problematic in that, in appropriation, people could apply their own meanings. Nationality and national identification therefore became fragmented and individualised with the result that arguments for or against a burgeoning popular national awareness became redundant.

For this reason the thesis ties together more closely form with meaning in order to provide achievable ends. One abiding form of Britishness delivered to the population in the eighteenth century was that of opposition to and competition with the French. This informed the wider discursive fields of political, social, commercial, military and cultural nationality. As a form it was received in common by its audience; people saw, heard and read the same messages with respect to France and the French. The following chapters therefore explore the meanings applied to these messages by various groups of English people and examine the extent to which real, as opposed to virtual, encounter altered their reception and thus differentiated notions of national identification.

Chapter 2: Nationality and the Sea: Anglo-French Co-operation and Conflict

At their closest point, the land masses of England and France are only twenty two miles distant and this relatively close proximity meant that contact and encounter, principally between the communities of south east England and north west France, was both frequent and regular. But beyond the clearly defined territorial borders of these coastlines the sea separating them represented a neutral space, owned and ruled by neither state, and therefore within which national identities were more fluid and open to negotiation or manipulation. This chapter considers the development of a national identification among those English people whose interaction with their French counterparts took place at sea. Two specific groups of people have been chosen to provide its focus, namely fishermen and smugglers. This is partly because the archival sources exist to enable a reflection on their developing nationality, but also because of the nature of their interaction with the French provides a useful contrast and comparison tool for the chapter. The two activities were by no means mutually exclusive. Fishermen were frequently also identified as smugglers in the records, their extensive sea-faring knowledge eminently suited to the clandestine import of illegal commodities.[1] However, fishing and smuggling may also be understood as 'opposites'. Fishing was a legal activity, in theory enjoying the protection of the state, and which pitted the proponents against their French counterparts in a competition for resources. Smuggling, on the other hand, stood wholly outside official sanction or protection, indeed the British authorities sought to eradicate it completely, but, because of this, smugglers often found themselves working in co-operation with the French and against their own state's law enforcement agents.

[1] NA CUST 143/18. See also Gavin Daly, 'English Smugglers, the Channel and the Napoleonic Wars, 1800 – 1814,' *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2007, pp. 30-46, p. 40; Gavin Daly, 'Napoleon and the City of Smugglers,' *Historical Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 2007, pp. 333-352, p. 342.

Comparing the one activity with the other, in terms of the nature of the interaction, there are a number of similarities also of particular interest here. Both smugglers and fishermen in England experienced direct encounter with their French counterparts. The former in the purchase and exchange of contraband goods and the latter to sell their catches ashore or on occasions when vessels were boarded or catches seized. Furthermore, both activities were also conducted within a framework of 'semi-encounter' somewhere between actual contact and virtual interaction. The fishing fleets for the most part operated separately in waters they traditionally fished or which were nominally national territory, without the intrusion or interference of one another. The English or French fleets might know the other by sight and comprehend their fishing methods, but unless the vessels came so close as to enable conversation or interaction, the people on board remained largely an unknown 'other'. Similarly with smuggling there is evidence to show that English vessels were sometimes 'protected' on their way to France by French boats when being pursued by the customs authorities.[2] As a result therefore the respective groups also operated within an interesting grey area between contact and estrangement.

The social composition of each group was likewise very similar. Wealthier entrepreneurs were involved in the fishing industry at the higher commercialized business levels where the activity was more completely market orientated, such as that of the whale fisheries and the geographically distant fisheries of Newfoundland and Iceland. They provided the necessary finance for expeditions and owned the vessels. The fishermen themselves, however, came from among the lower orders and their

[2] ESRO Sayer Ms 3870; NA T1/530/97-110; IAG AQ 252/04-03.

involvement in the industry ranged from employee in a business structure to those who fished for subsistence, selling their surplus catch as and when possible.[3]

So too was smuggling an activity principally of the lower orders of society, albeit a practice which received active support or tacit approval from those of higher status. Cal Winslow has said that, 'No section of eighteenth century society was untouched by smuggling,'[4] and indeed even those taking no direct part in the process whatsoever were still partial to receiving smuggled goods. 'People detest the Smuggler,' claimed the anonymous author of a tract published in 1749, 'but have a very great liking to the cheapness of his contraband commodity'.[5] Even Horace Walpole was known to drink smuggled wines and brandies.[6] Whilst some in society offered their tacit approval by inaction, so others took a more active part in the practice. Many aristocratic landowners turned a blind eye to the exploits of smugglers or the running of contraband goods across their land. Bankers and wealthier merchants financed smuggling expeditions, innkeepers and shopkeepers provided local storage facilities and acted in running uncustomed goods or protecting those who did so.[7] Commenting in 1745 as part of the government enquiries, Mr Samuel Wilson, a grocer, remarked, 'the Generality of the People, on the Coasts, are better Friends to the Smugglers, than to the Custom House Officers,'[8] whilst an Excise Office report of March 1777 to Lord North stated that smuggling was 'practiced by almost all degrees of People; even many of the

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[3] E. Rich and C. Wilson, *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe: Volume 5, The Economic Organisation of Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp.140-142. They identify a dual economy in fishing in the early modern period as a commodity for personal consumption and for trade from subsistence level fishing and those whose aim was to sell rather than consume most of their catch, to fishing as an activity which required the involvement of merchants to trade beyond the immediate locality and finally to market oriented big business.
[4] C. Winslow 'Sussex Smugglers' in D. Hay et al, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, London, Pantheon, 1975, p. 147.
[5] Anon, *A Free Apology on Behalf of the Smugglers*, London, 1749, p. 22.
[6] J.H. Plumb, *Sir Robert Walpole: The Making of a Statesman*, London, Cressett, 1956, pp. 120-122.
[7] R. Platt, *Smuggling in the British Isles: A History*, Stroud, Tempus Publishing, 2007, pp. 27-34, 67-76.
[8] Stephen Theodore Janssen, *Smuggling laid open, in all its extensive and destructive branches; with proposals for the effectual remedy of that iniquitous practice*, London, 1763, p. 18.

Gentry, Clergy and Magistrates themselves'.[9] Men of such status however did not involve themselves in the activity of shipping and running illegal goods, their involvement in the practice was limited to financial provision, unspoken approval or merely convenient blindness.

Overwhelmingly therefore, it was the lower orders that actively engaged in smuggling and had direct encounter with those of other nationalities in the running of contraband goods. These people provide the focus for this chapter. An anonymous writer in 1749 noted the involvement of, 'the poorer and most ignorant sort,'[10] in smuggling, whilst George Lipscombe concluded in 1799, 'Smuggling seems to constitute a regular trade, among the lower orders of people, on this coast – and some hundreds gain their livelihood by it.'[11] The author of one letter spoke of the necessity of preventing foreign goods from being traded clandestinely for English wool. He lamented, 'But 'tis in vain to preach this Doctrine at the Custom House when so many of the Under Class at least have an Interest in supporting the Practice.'[12]

As with any focus on the lower orders of society, the historian is presented with the problem of a lack of truly representative archival source material. Plentiful though it is, invariably extant documentary evidence is government produced or manipulated and one is left therefore with an official view of what drove people to smuggle or that which threw fishing fleets into conflict. In very few cases are the voices of those directly involved heard at first hand. Smugglers such as Jack Rattenbury has left behind a record of his life and exploits, but unfortunately for the purposes of this thesis, Rattenbury's

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[9] NA T1/530/88-96 6th March 1777.
[10] Anon, *A Free Apology*, p. 21.
[11] George Lipscombe, *A journey into Cornwall, through the counties of Southampton, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset and Devon…,* Warwick, 1799, p. 228.
[12] NA T1/328/50 letter dated 29th August 1747 signed by JB.

memoirs fall partly outside the period under study.[13] However, his account is a useful source of information about the ease with which smuggling contacts were made and enterprises established and, at times, of the attitudes held by the smugglers towards their government and their foreign contacts. In certain cases, ministers or diplomats involved in the resolution of fishing disputes saw fit to make reference to, or even include copies of, petitions and statements by the fishermen themselves providing us with an idea of their lived experience on a day-to-day basis.

Despite the fact however that fishermen often addressed their grievances to the authorities, it is important to acknowledge that we are still left with a highly mediated view of the situation on their behalf. Attitudes and opinions have been filtered through official perception, where indeed they have survived the process at all. What remains is that which those in charge deemed apt for attention or priority. Moreover, this evidence is heavily weighted towards representations of conflict, perhaps understandable given that a sense of injustice or acts of hostility would be more likely to compel the victim to address the authorities, but also because of the nature of the encounter experienced by the fishing fleets. Given that fishing was a commercial endeavour for limited resources and with livelihoods at stake, it is not surprising that conflict and violence were features of encounter. Whilst at best recognising that it is not totally representative of the situation day-to-day, such evidence is still interesting as it sheds light on attitudes held towards one another by the men of the respective fleets. It also provides a valuable insight into the men's perception of nationality and into how and when this might have been changed. The principal sources consulted on the experiences of the fishermen have been contained in the relevant State Papers series held at the National Archives in London for these almost exclusively provide the evidence of Anglo-French encounter as

[13] John Rattenbury, *Memoirs of a Smuggler, compiled from his diary and journal*, London, J. Harvey, 1873.

they often deal with the wider political and diplomatic repercussions of the same. Other sources of domestic Anglo-French interaction may be found in the disparate records of port authorities held in various records offices covering coastal stretches.

The English and French fishing fleets, however, did not come into direct contact exclusively in the waters of the English Channel[14] but also many thousands of miles distant in the waters of Newfoundland. The encounter between these men has been equally plentifully documented and their experiences provide a valuable comparison in the analysis of a developing nationality among those who operated closer to home. Again much of the evidence for this encounter is to be found in the State Papers: France series in the National Archives. Of especial interest is the correspondence of Thomas Robinson, Second Baron Grantham and British Foreign Secretary at the time of the American War. Robinson's letters are particularly helpful in providing an overview of the political manoeuvring taking place over Newfoundland and the rationale that informed government strategy and which provided both a formative and a reactive framework to the behaviour of the respective fishing fleets.

The evidence which remains of smuggling between England and France is similarly mediated by those of higher social or 'official' status. Because smuggling deprived the treasury of so much in terms of customs revenue, the chief sources that have informed this chapter have been the records of this government department as well as the correspondence to be found in state papers relating to France. Contained in the former there is much in the way of qualitative evidence in addition to statistics and numerical calculations on the effects of smuggling. Between 1764 and 1765 a comprehensive survey was undertaken by the Commissioners for the Customs on the extent and nature of smuggling within the nation. Detailed reports were supplied by the

[14] The nomenclature of the stretch of sea of sea separating Britain and France will be discussed later in the chapter in terms of its reflection of a national identification. Any particular reference in this thesis to the 'Channel' is not intended to be partisan.

various coastal excise offices which provide information not only on the types of goods and the amounts smuggled, but also give an indication on the extent of smuggling networks, the scale of local support, smuggling methods and the methods of distribution.[15] Other material includes correspondence from individual customs houses concerning specific incidents such as the seizure of contraband cargoes, or the tribulations faced by riding officers in attempting to seize the same.[16] Further information of this sort may be found in the voluminous customs records held for each port and the correspondence exchanged with the Commissioners of the Customs or the Board of the Admiralty in London. State papers held in the National Archives contain numerous references to specific incidents of smuggling and to the efforts of the riding officers to enforce the law invariably against a hostile community. Very often letters made reference to numbers of those directly involved, or of the size of local assistance given to the ventures, as well as the sentiments directed against government officials. The correspondence includes details on Anglo-French smuggling networks and the activities of French smugglers operating to and from these shores. In doing so, it provides an insight into the nature and extent of contact and encounter between both English and French smuggling communities.

One important source that has further informed this study is the report produced in 1745 by commissioners appointed by the British government to investigate the causes of smuggling in the country and to make proposals to remedy the situation.[17] Again, it is a document which invariably presents and upholds a government view of the situation; it also however contains pertinent material in the form of interviews with legitimate traders and former smugglers on the extent of the trade with France and, more importantly, on the nature of French support afforded to British smuggling

[15] See NA T1/429 and T1/437 series of papers.
[16] NA T1/499/192-239.
[17] S. Janssen, *Smuggling laid open*.

activities. Taken together, the evidence may be used to describe a picture of Anglo-French smuggling encounters, their nature and their regularity. From this we are able to draw conclusions about attitudes towards the French and towards the British system of law enforcement.

As a focus for historical study, the practice of smuggling in Britain in the eighteenth century has received much attention. Local historians and enthusiasts have largely attempted to provide a detailed picture of smuggling as it was carried out in a single locality or community.[18] From a national perspective, one of the most recent publications by Richard Platt is an attempt at a comprehensive survey which draws together archival and anecdotal evidence to provide an account of smuggling 'from the point of view of those who broke the law, not those who enforced it.'[19] In general, these studies provide excellent factual or statistical information on the practice. And yet despite this huge popularity as an area for historical research, the phenomenon of smuggling has been the subject of relatively few interpretations which relate it to wider economic, social and political developments taking place in Britain at that time.

Perhaps the best known is that of Cal Winslow whose work concentrated on Sussex and Kent smugglers in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Winslow's understanding of the practice was that of a social crime, an action by the politically and economically dispossessed against the customs of rank and deference that held society in supposedly rigid order, and against the punitive system of taxation, notably the excise tax, which was so efficiently administered and in part required to fund the repeated wars against France. For Winslow, smuggling was part of the larger tradition of resistance to

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[18] For example, *www.burtonbradstock.org.uk/History/Smuggling/Smuggling.htm*; Paul Muskett, 'Deal Smugglers in the Eighteenth Century', *Southern History*, 8, 1986, pp. 46-72; Mary Waugh, *Smuggling in Kent and Sussex, 1700 – 1840*, Newbury, Countryside Books, 1985; Jeremy Rowett Johns, *Polperro's Smuggling Story*, Worcester, Toby Press, 1994.
[19] Richard Platt, *Smuggling*, p. 7.

political and economic innovation and in defence of customary privileges.[20] Whilst not entirely at odds with this view, Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna Mui have concluded that the scale of the activity in Britain during the eighteenth century contributed towards the national commercial expansion. In effect, smuggling was a motor force in developing a consumer society by bringing foreign luxury goods to a much larger proportion of British society.[21]

Whereas Winslow's study was socially driven, the Mui's was primarily an economic focus. One study that succeeded in pulling these threads together is that of Paul Monod on smuggling in the south eastern counties of England between 1690 and 1760. Monod has examined how Jacobite sympathisers in England collaborated with smugglers initially to carry personnel and correspondence to their brethren in France. However, after 1714 this collaboration found sharper focus against the German Hanoverian regime and smuggling was more generally encouraged or facilitated as a political act of opposition as well as a lucrative source of income. As a result of this support and co-operation, smuggling networks grew in size and efficiency making the practice an economic force in its own right by the middle of the eighteenth century.[22] Yet although these conclusions have relevance to the process of state-building and nation-building centrally or from above, the matter of national awareness from below or at the peripheries is not included.

Similarly, academic studies of fishing in the early modern period have tended to concentrate on the commercial and economic considerations surrounding the activity. *The Cambridge Economic History of Early Modern Europe* provides an excellent

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[20] Cal Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, pp. 120, 149.
[21] Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna Mui, 'Smuggling and the British Tea Trade before 1784', *American Historical Review*, 84, No. 1, 1968, pp. 44-73; Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna Mui, 'Trends in Eighteenth Century Smuggling – Reconsidered', *Economic History Review*, 28, No. 1, 1975, pp. 28-43.
[22] Paul Monod, 'Dangerous Merchandise: Smuggling, Jacobitism and Commercial Culture in South East England, 1690 – 1760', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 1991, pp. 150-182.

statistical analysis in this regard highlighting the competition among western European countries for access to, and control of, the herring, cod, mackerel and whale fisheries of the North Sea and the Atlantic, whilst other studies have focussed both on periods earlier than the eighteenth century and on specific geographical locations.[23] With an approach relevant to the process of nation-building, Bob Harris has looked at the founding of the Free British Fishery Society in 1749 and the nine year period of its existence. Established primarily to challenge the Dutch supremacy in the deep-sea herring fishery of the North Sea, Harris explained how the society perceived its role as safeguarding national wealth and bolstering national security by offering proposals and schemes to improve the 'British' fishing industry.[24] However, of greatest relevance and value to the approach of this thesis is the work of Renaud Morieux whose research examined the informal and direct negotiation by English and French local authorities and fishing business owners of fishing truces in the eighteenth century whilst the countries were officially at war. Morieux has highlighted specific instances of Anglo-French encounter in this regard, assessing the success or otherwise of such agreements and importantly tracing a 'discourse of belonging' used by those involved. His findings are of direct relevance and immense value to this study and will be discussed in greater detail in due course.[25]

Notwithstanding, Morieux has highlighted the Channel as a zone of 'strategic importance'.[26] The activities of both the fishermen and the smugglers, as has already been pointed out, took place largely beyond the clearly defined land borders of nation,

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[23] Robert Tittler, 'The English Fishing Industry of the Sixteenth Century: The Case of Great Yarmouth', *Albion*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1977, pp. 40-60; Peter Pope, *Fish Into Wine, The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century*, Chapel Hill North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 2004; E. Rich and C. Wilson, *The Cambridge Economic History of Early Modern Europe*, pp. 133-184.
[24] Bob Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National Revival: The Free British Fishery Society and Politics, c. 1749 – 1758', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 14, No. 456, 1999, pp. 285-313, p. 288.
[25] Renaud Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, No. 202, 2009, pp. 83-125.
[26] R. Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, p. 91

and Anglo-French encounter therefore was conducted in a space without national overlordship. Because of this, the sea was a unique arena for interaction, a frontier space whose neutrality and permeability meant not only that access and usage could be contested, and indeed frequently was disputed, but it was also a place where identities could be negotiated and nationality developed in novel ways. The following section firstly examines in more detail the issues raised by anthropological studies into the personal identities of people living adjacent to national borders and the relationship between constructions of nationality in such peripheral regions with the process of nation-building from the centre. Secondly it highlights more specifically the role of the sea in the development of identities by considering it as both a contested and a unifying space.

Borders, Frontiers and the Development of Identities

National borders and boundaries comprise different elements and definitions which lend themselves to different disciplines of study and methodological approach. Firstly there is the borderline itself, the notional and legal limit of national or state territory and a geographic point of reference.[27] Secondly the 'border' is an area that may comprise the physical structures of the state which are employed to demarcate or protect the borderline itself. By definition this is a space which straddles the borderline and extends beyond it. Finally a national border will comprise a frontier region, a territorially and temporally defined zone attached to the border and an extended space within which the different nationalities may interact outside of the structures of state

[27] Nation and state are not necessarily coterminous entities and therefore the borders of each do not always coincide, hence this differentiation in reference.

protection or supervision.[28] It is this element of national boundary which provides the focus for anthropological studies and those concerned with encapsulating the identity of a community of people, for, by definition, frontiers are liminal and contested spaces and therefore they are zones in which national behaviours, meanings and identities may be negotiated and adapted.[29]

The anthropological study of national borders and border regions therefore offers two benefits in any examination of the formative process of nations and states and the construction of a national identification among the people. First, it demonstrates the reciprocity of this process which takes place between centre and periphery. The traditional ways of approaching the study of nation- or state-building has been from the top down, in other words tracing a power flow and influence from the centre outwards. However this approach carries certain assumptions with respect to outcomes, namely that the form of nationality that is produced is homogenous across the population. Yet, as Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan have pointed out, we cannot simply view a national awareness as uniformly formed in the mould of central or media constructs of national belonging.[30] Such a viewpoint fails to acknowledge the influence of personal agency in the process of national identification and indeed studies have shown that the

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[28] Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan (eds.), *Border Approaches: Anthropological Perspectives on Frontiers*, Maryland, University Press of America, 1994, p.7; O. Martinez, *Border People: life and society in the US-Mexico Borderlands*, Tuscon, University of Arizona Press, 1994, pp. 5-10; Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan, *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 9.

[29] For general studies see J. Cole and E. Wolf, *The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley*, London, Academic Press, 1974 on the Tyrol; Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: the making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989; Martin Stokes, 'Local Arabesk: the Hatay and the Turkish-Syrian Border' in T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*. For studies on the creation of symbolic boundaries see Joyce Pettigrew, 'Reflections on the place of the border in contemporary Sikh affairs'; William Kavanagh, 'Symbolic boundaries and 'real' borders on the Portugal-Spain Frontier'; Amanda Shanks, 'Cultural divergence and durability: the border, symbolic boundaries and the Irish gentry', all in T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*; Michelle Lamont and Marcel Fournier, *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992; Michelle Lamont, 'National Identity and National Boundary Patterns in France and the United States', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1995, pp. 349-365.

[30] T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Identities*, p. 4.

adoption of national identities in border zones, as elsewhere, was dependent upon much wider contextual influences.[31]

Instead, anthropological studies have identified a dialectical process of national awareness and identification taking place between the central authorities and those people and communities sited in the border regions.[32] Sometimes the physical distance of these groups from the central seat of power means that they escape the full intensity of centrally generated ideas of nation or the controlling arms of the state apparatus to elicit conformity. Conversely state and national power may be intensified at its furthest points as the border marks the limits of national culture and polity and this may be most clearly defined in places where alternative cultures and polities exist alongside. Nevertheless it is through developments and processes occurring at the periphery that wider notions of nationality may be shaped and altered. Such communities, even if not viewed as the principal actors in nation-building, serve, whether consciously or unconsciously, as agents of the nation and this will have repercussions on the way in which 'nation' is constructed by those in power centrally.[33] The competition enacted between the French and English fishing fleets directly affected the tenor of international diplomacy between the two countries, especially concerning the waters around Newfoundland, whilst the behaviour of the smugglers was influential on national economic and trade policy in Britain.[34]

The second way in which a study of borders and frontiers may benefit an examination of national identification among the people is that it helps to give meaning to the boundaries which existed between adjacent but nationally different groups.

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[31] Peter Sahlins, 'State Formation and National Identity in the Catalan Borderlands during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in Wilson and Donnan, *Border Identities*, p. 31-55.
[32] T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*, p. 2; P. Sahlins, *Boundaries: the making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, p. 3, 8.
[33] T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*, p. 10.
[34] NA SP 78/261; NA SP 78/256. See also R. Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, p. 89.

Borders are never hermetically sealed but are rather 'membranes' through which goods, people and ideas may pass. Social relations exist across border spaces through, for example, marriage and through patterns of trade and consumption.[35] So too therefore are borders permeable to cultures and cultural influences, whilst at the same time symbolically representing a barrier, a limit or a defence which serves to distinguish that which is 'other' and 'foreign'. Anthropological and other studies sited at these national peripheries may therefore explore the extent of their permeability and the exact nature of nationality appropriated or evolved by the people living and operating there.

The sea, and especially that between Britain and France, is a very special type of border in this respect. Just like land borders it is eminently permeable for it is impossible to continually supervise and control. So too, lands and communities adjacent to this type of frontier may sustain common cultural ties, for example through trade or simply through daily use of the sea. And yet the exact nature of the sea as a boundary is vague, for it is unclear the extent to which the frontier reaches. As Febvre asked, could this be a given number of nautical miles, or could it be as far as can be protected by the state?[36] Beyond notional lines of national demarcation what does it then become? In literary study Dominic Rainsford has explained that it may also be a 'nothing', a space without nationality especially in the Channel at those points where neither land mass may be viewed.[37]

However, just because certain points or areas may be considered without nationality, they are not necessarily viewed as neutral spaces by those on either side. Indeed the very nomenclature given to the stretch of water separating southern England and northern France is indicative of perceptions. Whereas the French refer to it as 'La

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[35] T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*, p. 3.
[36] Peter Burke (ed.), *A New Kind of History. From the Writings of Febvre*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, p. 214.
[37] Dominic Rainsford, *Literature, Identity and the English Channel: Narrow Seas Expanded*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, p. 3.

Manche' or 'sleeve', a name which makes reference to the shape of the channel of water and contains no claims of nationality, the British name for the same stretch of water is the 'English Channel'. This is a very strong and definite assertion of ownership which stretches across to the French coasts, possibly arising from the fact that all the major English ports of the early modern period faced France whereas French ports faced the Atlantic Ocean.[38] Similarly, Renaud Morieux has pointed out that the Channel provided a military frontier and a zone of strategic importance, both notions which include the full width of the sea and not just to the extent of legal definitions of border.[39]

Neutrality would also have been a subjective status to those using and interacting with the sea on a regular or daily basis. As the records relating to the Newfoundland fisheries demonstrate, conflicts arose between the French and English fishing fleets attempting to follow migrating fish stocks beyond agreed national borders, yet still claiming rights of access.[40] Alternatively there is plentiful evidence of English smugglers being given assisted passage back to France by French vessels and crews in examples where nationality was overlooked. It is significant, however, that perceptions were so widely at variance among two groups whose activities were essentially in conflict and competition with their French counterparts and others respectively who worked in co-operation with them.

Anthropologists and historians of the sea have similarly highlighted the dual role which it may play in popular perceptions and national cultures. David Armitage and Michael Braddick have noted how the sea both fragments cultural networks and distances people, whilst Jacques Gury has referred to the Channel as a divider between

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[38] D. Rainsford, *Literature, Identity and the English Channel*, p. 5.
[39] R. Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, p. 91. See also Patricia Crimmin, 'The Channel's Strategic Significance: invasion threat, line of defence, prison wall, escape route', in J. Falvey and W. Brooks, *The Channel in the Eighteenth Century: bridge, barrier and gateway*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 75-78.
[40] NA SP 78/256 March 1763.

two 'universes'.[41] At the same time, however, it has been noted how the sea may serve to create networks of kinship. Personal, commercial and psychological ties may be formed across an expanse of water and between port or coastal communities on either side. Indeed, Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell have demonstrated a connectivity between interacting regions of productive opportunity spanning the Mediterranean, whilst Michael Pearson has identified the same process stretching across the Indian Ocean.[42] Moreover this was not limited to a connectivity of trade but included commonalities in the types of vessel used and appreciation of the sea-borne conditions which had to be encountered. Indeed, the sea itself may represent a danger or a struggle which serves to unite those using it, as evidenced by the assistance offered by French vessels to smugglers fleeing the British authorities.

In terms of the two focus groups chosen for this chapter, then, the sea and its perceived role presents difficulties with respect to certain assumptions or approaches. Renaud Morieux has questioned the extent to which the fishermen of England and France should be viewed as belonging to a community which transcended national divisions.[43] His study has looked at the unofficial truces agreed between the fishing fleets of the Channel in order to protect their livelihoods whilst their countries were at war and indeed this would suggest the existence of some sort of sea-faring or fishing 'community' which transcended national allegiances. However, outside of a situation of war, the conflicts enacted between the respective fleets, in the Channel as well as in Newfoundland waters, would suggest this was at best a contingent arrangement. Similarly, Armitage and Braddick have suggested we study the people living in coastal

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[41] David Armitage and Michael Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500 – 1800*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2009, p. 260; Jacques Gury, *Le Voyage outré-Manche: anthologie de voyageurs francais de Voltaire a Mac Orlan, du XVIIIe au XXe siècle*, Paris, Laffont, 1999, pp. 66-67.
[42] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2000, p. 123; Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, London, Routledge, 2003, pp. 5-7.
[43] R. Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, p. 87.

regions as part of a history of the seas as opposed to one of nation.[44] Again, such an approach may be suited to the practice of smuggling which was enacted in defiance of national authority, but is not necessarily appropriate for the examination of fishing disputes along national lines. The following section will consider Anglo-French interaction firstly between smugglers to be followed by a focus on fishermen in greater detail in order to reflect critically on the extent and nature of a developing nationality among both groups.

Illegal Encounters: the case of smuggling

It was along the southern and south eastern coasts of England that involvement in clandestine trading with France was most prevalent. For although profitable smuggling networks were established elsewhere in Britain and Ireland, it was principally by virtue of its proximity to the French coast and indeed the entrepôt facilities which developed in the Channel Islands, that southern England became a centre for smuggling.[45] The south eastern coastal counties of Kent, Sussex and Essex tended to operate direct smuggling lines with French ports along the north west coast such as Calais, Boulogne or Dunkirk. Clandestine trade between the more distant ports of Brittany or Normandy and Devon, Dorset and Cornwall tended to arrive through the Channel Islands. The importance of the these islands in smuggling networks in the eighteenth century cannot be underestimated. Their status as British territory, their close proximity to France, and their neutral status in cases of conflict between the two countries made the Channel Islands an ideal location as entrepôt facilities where English and French goods could be traded and stored. Moreover their distance from the British

[44] D. Armitage and M. Braddick, *The British Atlantic World*, p. 18.
[45] For examples of networks elsewhere in Britain see, NA T1/437/144-145; NA SP 54/42/6; NA SP 54/39/46A.

mainland meant that the strictures of customs and excise were much harder to enforce. This meant that ports such as St. Peter Port in Guernsey, or the ports of Alderney acquired the status of free ports *de facto* if not *de jure*.[46]

Whether as an individual enterprise or as an undeclared arm of trade for an otherwise legitimate business, these networks were extensive and complex. A single vessel could operate across a relatively wide geographical network. The 'Dragon', a French vessel seized on suspicion of smuggling in early 1733, was said to be, 'one of the most noted Smugling (sic) Vessels belonging to Calais, and has been several times found Running Brandy on that Coast and particularly that this was one of the French Shallops which were Smugling on the Coast off of Wells in May 1731.'[47] It was also noted that the boat had been caught smuggling off the coast of Yarmouth as well as being sighted operating near to Sunderland. The records of the Guernsey trading partnership of Le Marchant and Channan reveal how they had links with Alderney nearby, and also St. Malo, Cherbourg, Rostoff, Barcelona and Copenhagen.[48] Their company supplied the Devon and Cornwall smugglers with rum, tea and spirits. The eminent brandy merchant Pigault based in Calais also used the Channel Islands as a base from which brandy could be smuggled into England in exchange for contraband tea coming from the Port of London.[49]

In the main, much of the uncustomed goods passing through Jersey were run to France, and much of that shipped via Guernsey and Alderney was smuggled to England. In August 1764 the British government requested that customs officers from the south coast ports, as well as the Registers stationed on Jersey and Guernsey provide a report

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[46] G. Stevens Cox, *St. Peter Port 1680 – 1830: The History of an International Entrepôt*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1999, p. 33.
[47] NA SP 36/29 f.208.
[48] NA T1/489/118-142.
[49] P. Monod, 'Dangerous Merchandise: Smuggling, Jacobitism and Commercial Culture in South East England, 1690 – 1760', *Journal of British Studies*, p. 169.

on the prevalence of smuggling on the Channel Islands.[50] They wanted information on the kinds of goods that were being illegally imported and exported through these islands, and the levels of duties payable on the same. The customs officers at Weymouth advised, 'That Woollen and Spittal Fields Goods and some other English Manufactures are Imported into the Island of Jersey,' from where they were shipped to France. They continued, 'That great Quantities of Tea, Brandy, Geneva and also French, Spanish and Portugal Wines are Imported into the Island of Guernsey from Holland, France and Spain and some Spittal Fields and Woollen Goods from England.'[51] The tea, brandy and Geneva were run on the English coast, chiefly to Hampshire, Dorset and Devon. The Collector and Comptroller at Southampton noted how the scale of the illegal activity in Jersey was nothing compared to that taking place in Guernsey and Alderney. He remarked that the Guernsey men style themselves as merchants keeping warehouses full of foreign goods, which they supply in large quantities to the smugglers. Notably, 'the Wines, Brandy, Cottons and Linnen they mostly import in Vessels of their own from France.'[52]

In terms of contemporary views and estimates on the extent and regularity of the clandestine trade, it was universally acknowledged to be widespread. Captain Joseph Cockburn, questioned in the course of a government enquiry into the extent of smuggling in March 1745, commented how he was personally aware of five cutters 'constantly employed in Running of Tea and Brandy from Boloin (sic) into the Counties of Kent and Sussex.'[53] He estimated that each week these vessels run six tons of tea and 2 000 half anchors of brandy between England and France. Admiral Vernon, in the same year, noted that, 'it is conjectured, that from the town of Folkestone only, a

[50] Orders were sent to customs offices at Poole, Portsmouth, Southampton, Exeter, Lyme, Cowes and Weymouth. See NA series T1/431 and T1/433.
[51] NA T1/433/102.
[52] NA T1/431/59.
[53] S. Janssen, *Smuggling laid open*, p. 60.

thousand pounds a week is run over to Boulogne in the smuggling way.'[54] Eight years earlier Philemon Phillips, employed on revenue duties on the Kent coast, noted that from St. Margaret's Bay, 'upwards of 200 open boats carrying from 4 to 5 hands each employed in bringing the brandy and other goods from France, Flanders etc.'[55] He added that a further one hundred decked ships of between fifteen and thirty five tons operated out of Folkestone.

Likewise, tea was a commodity that found its way illegally onto the coasts of England either direct from France or from French dominions.[56] The parliamentary enquiry of 1745 concluded that over three million pounds of tea was smuggled annually into Britain from Calais, Boulogne and Dunkirk, as well as from Dutch, Danish and Swedish ports. Janssen estimated specifically with respect to France that 1.5 million pounds of tea was brought into France from the French Indies and subsequently smuggled across the English Channel, whilst Mr Richard Sclater, a legal dealer in tea, remarked, 'he thinks the French do not consume above One Tenth of their own Tea…he apprehends that the greatest Part of the Dutch and French Teas must be sold to Persons who run them into this Kingdom.'[57] The problem was understood in terms of a damaging draining of specie from Britain into the hands of the French. In 1779 a petition to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury by several tea dealers warned, 'The Cargoes being landed, are paid for in Specie, or bartered for Wool (which they carry to our natural Enemies to the great Detriment of our Manufactories).'[58] For Guernsey alone the value of illicit trade was established at £300 000 per annum, 'of which

[54] NA CUST 143/18 13th November 1745.
[55] P. Muskett, 'Deal Smugglers in the Eighteenth Century', *Southern History*, p. 51.
[56] Most commonly coarse teas, such as Black Bohea tea.
[57] S. Janssen, *Smuggling laid open*, preface, p. 11.
[58] NA T1/552/308-317 30th January 1779.

£100 000 is said to be clean Profit to the Guernsey Traders, the remaining £200 000 is paid to France for Teas, Brandy, India Goods &c.'[59]

Historical studies into the practice at this time have confirmed this picture. In terms of volume, as Lewis Cullen pointed out, by 1789 the declared exports of brandy and gin from the ports of Dunkirk and Boulogne alone virtually equated to the declared level of legal imports into Britain.[60] Yet brandy was also being exported across the Channel direct from ports such as Bordeaux, Nantes and La Rochelle, as well as indirectly through Holland, Hamburg and the Isle of Man. In 1770 alone it is estimated that approximately 470 000 gallons of brandy, as well as 350 000 pounds of tea were smuggled into Cornwall at a cost to the Exchequer of about £150 000 in lost customs revenue.[61] Stevens Cox calculated that around 6 150 000 gallons of alcoholic spirits were imported from Guernsey into England in the eighteenth century, most of it illegally and most of it originating from France.[62]

Evidently then, the practice was a highly lucrative one for those involved. For those who acted as batmen and carriers, they stood to make between 5s and 7s 6d for one night's work. An agricultural labourer of that period could expect to receive between 7s and 8s per week in lawful employment.[63] *The Trials of the Smugglers*, published anonymously in 1749, explained that those who assisted smugglers would be paid about half a guinea for each run, plus approximately thirteen pounds of tea which could be sold for between 24s and 25s.[64]

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[59] NA T1/499/192-239 26th February 1773. A report by the Commissioners for the Customs on the effectiveness of strict enforcement of anti-smuggling laws.
[60] Lewis Cullen, *The Brandy Trade Under the Ancien Régime*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 37.
[61] J. Rowett Johns, *Polperro*, p. 1.
[62] G. Stevens Cox, *St. Peter Port, 1680 – 1830*, p. 30.
[63] R. Platt, *Smuggling*, p. 23.
[64] Anon. *The Trials of the Smugglers and the other Prisoners, at the Assizes held at East Grinstead*, London, 1749, p. 19.

The profits of smuggling therefore were simply too tempting to abstain from taking part either because of fear of the legal consequences or because of animosity towards the French. However, the rich rewards to those who took part in the practice makes it problematic for the historian to gauge any motivation to act beyond the desire for financial profit. By the middle decades of the eighteenth century customs duties on legally imported goods were so onerous that a healthy profit could be made on contraband whilst still selling at a reduced price to duty-paid produce. For example, just before the Commutation Act of 1784 import duties on tea stood at 119%. There is indeed abundant evidence that both English and French were prepared to set aside any notional national rivalries in order to mutually benefit from financially successful business ventures.

This assumption can be ascertained from the manner of their co-operation. A testimony provided by the mayor and Jurats of Rye in July 1712 on the examination of three local men stated they, 'went on Board a French Shallopp of Calais whereupon they were brought before me and upon their Examination confessed they went on Board in order to Buy Brandy.'[65] In July 1760 a Mr Turner reported to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on the scale of smuggling activity in Scarborough in Yorkshire. He explained that, 'To this Place (Robin Hood's Bay) and Fyloe bay (sic) the Countrey people from all round resorts, with Horses and Panniers under the notion of buing (sic) Fish, but returns loaded with what they find turns more to their advantage.' Turner added that people from as far away as Leicester, in excess of 100 miles distant, would also come to buy goods.[66] Such transactions must have involved an element of prior organisation to ensure that a ready market existed among the local population and that they would provide a favourable reception to the French men. Moreover, the

[65] NA SP 34/19/15.
[66] NA T1/400/226-229.

contraband goods landed at Robin Hood's Bay bringing in buyers from Leicester prove that many would have had prior knowledge of such events indicating some nature of publicisation.

Furthermore, in the practicalities of running illicit goods and the establishment of successful smuggling networks there is evidence of extensive Anglo-French co-operation. In November 1725, Horace Walpole, in correspondence with Delafaye, discussed the seizure of two Calais sloops off the north coast of England by a British man-of-war. The letter displays some confusion over the names of the respective captains. One, a Monsieur Mounier, is also referred to as Mr Bird, and the other captained by a Mr Kemp. Walpole writes,

> And as their names denote them to be Englishmen, it would be worthwhile to know if they be really so, which would be another very corroborating circumstance in providing the probability of their being employed, as the most proper Persons, for carrying on a clandestine and illegal Trade.[67]

In January 1733 Edward Carteret wrote to the Duke of Newcastle on the scale of smuggling that occurred on the packet boats running between Dover and Calais. He explained,

> I am well informed that there are several Boats at Dover, which belong to private Persons, and that the Owners of them are part English and part French men; who carry on a Traffick between the two Ports, under the colour of being Pacquet Boats.[68]

The French minister Choiseul, writing to Lord Rochford in February 1767 acknowledged receipt of a memorial concerning the detention of a British vessel at Le Havre for smuggling tobacco. It appears that, although the crew of the boat were English, the captain was a French man.[69] In June 1780 customs officers at Yarmouth wrote to the Commissioners of the Customs in London regarding the seizure on

[67] NA SP 78/182 f.138.
[68] NA SP 36/29.
[69] NA T1/557/10-27.

suspicion of smuggling of two vessels, the 'Three Brothers' of Sandgate, and the 'Deception' from Folkestone. They noted, 'It appears by the papers on board these Vessels that the Deception has carried on Smuggling largely in this Neighbourhood for some time past and by sundry recruitings from France.'[70] The use of the word 'recruitings' would indeed suggest a reference to personnel.

But the fact that English and French smugglers were prepared to co-operate despite their national difference, and despite the weight of negatively stereotypical propaganda so frequently cited against the 'other' means that considerations of nationality had to be negotiated or re-defined by both parties. If therefore the financial imperative may be evident in most cases as the primary motive to enter into smuggling, people's nationality or national identification must also have entered into consideration. Whether consciously or otherwise, those who smuggled positioned themselves very deliberately in relation to the legal or moral stipulations of the state and the ongoing construct of 'nation'.

Moreover there are a number of examples in the records where Anglo-French co-operation in smuggling activities was clearly driven by alternative motives, perhaps in addition to the desire to gain financial reward, but significant in themselves nevertheless. For example, John Collier, Surveyor General for the Riding Officers in Kent between 1733 and 1756, reported to Customs House in London of an examination he had directed of an Englishman and four Frenchmen sentenced and imprisoned for smuggling pending payment of a fine. As they were unable to accumulate the necessary funds they continued to languish in gaol in a very poor condition with little food. Collier was writing to recommend compassion towards the men. The information on their condition he was, 'assur'd of us by ye gaoler and ye Townes People of Horsham, whose

[70] NA T1/557/10-27.

Charity has hitherto kept them alive.'[71] This brief reference to five men, possibly having worked in some sort of partnership as the implication is that they were sentenced at the same time, is given added interest by the fact that the local population had concern enough for their welfare to keep them alive. John Rattenbury in his memoirs also recorded the kindness and humanity with which he and his comrades were treated by the French people after they had been taken prisoner. This evidence is indicative at best of the forms of nationality being developed among this group of people. Indeed, on such occasions it is clear that national differences were readily set aside in order to assist fellow human beings.[72] But in order to do so, people must first have adopted a position, either individually or as a group, in relation to the discourse of national loyalty and that of enmity with the French. By examining the evidence of smuggling from this perspective it may be possible to reach conclusions as to the nature of the smuggler's nationality.

Perhaps the strongest evidence to suggest that smugglers did not generally subscribe to a national loyalty and did not therefore appropriate the form of national identification conceived by the ruling elites is in the fact that the practice persisted despite the two countries being at war. Opinions differ on how war affected levels of smuggling. A.G. Jamieson, and P. Muskett agree that during the War of the Spanish Succession levels fell partly due to the problems of supply, only to revive vigorously in the later years of war and after the peace in 1713.[73] E. Keble Chatterton and Jeremy Rowett Johns have argued for an increase in smuggling levels owing to the inability of central government to mobilise effective preventative forces, whilst Gavin Daly has noted the continuance of illegal trading through neutral vessels. He has argued for the

[71] ESRO Sayer Ms 3870, n.d.
[72] The following chapter of this thesis examines more closely the rise of a sentiment of humanitarianism in Britain in the eighteenth century and its relationship with national identification.
[73] A. G. Jamieson, *A People of the Sea: The Maritime History of the Channel Islands*, London, Methuen, 1986, p. 200; P. Muskett, 'Deal Smugglers in the Eighteenth Century', *Southern History*, p. 48.

period of the Napoleonic Wars that smuggling had to continue at this time either through economic practicality in the middle of a recession, or out of necessity after the low yields of bad harvests.[74] Helene Giroire meanwhile has asserted that war did nothing to stem the flow of correspondence and contraband traffic between Nicholas Dobrée in Guernsey and his brother in Nantes.[75] Contemporary accounts tend to point to an increase in smuggling activity during war. Henry Baker, writing in 1707, articulated the frequency with which the French were landing contraband goods 'especially since the War'.[76] Similarly James Coles, Register of Certificates for Guernsey, noted how large quantities of wool were being run between Alderney and Cherbourg 'especially since the war with France'.[77] Similarly, a Mr. W. Smith at Portchester Castle wrote in 1796 that the level of smuggling there has reached a peak in the previous eight years.[78]

Overall levels of smuggling between Britain and France therefore remained high during periods of conflict precisely because of the prohibitions on trade that were put in place. Evidence of wartime trade in contraband goods shows not only the extent to which it occurred but the potential for considerable financial reward. In September 1712, John Sherwood reported to the Excise Office that French merchants remained in St. Peter Port, Guernsey, in great numbers trading wine, brandy, linen, cloth and salt in return for wool, coal, soap, roisin, tobacco and East India goods.[79] During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic War period, French wine was traded in considerable quantities, and in 1794 Richard Roylston wrote to the Duke of Richmond informing him

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[74] E. Keble Chatterton, *King's Cutters and Smugglers,* London, 1912, p. 24; J. Rowett Johns, *Polperro*, p. 9;
G. Daly, 'Napoleon and the City of Smugglers', *Historical Journal*, p. 138.
[75] H. Giroire, *Pierre-Frederic Dobrée: La Vie d'un Negociant Nantais au Dix-Huitieme Siècle*, privately published, no date, p. 141.
[76] NA PC 1/3/50.
[77] NA T1/332/41-42.
[78] NA WO1/906.
[79] G. Stevens-Cox, *St. Peter Port, 1680 - 1830*, p. 20.

that British East India Company vessels were exporting saltpetre to the French under the label 'British Salts'.[80]

Certainly the British authorities construed the actions of smugglers during periods of war as traitorous. As outlaws, their apparently close links with the French led them to be seen by those in government as especially susceptible to French corruption. This perceived alliance of mutual benefit between British smugglers and the French was therefore a theme of government and official records in the 1740s. Janssen's report of 1745 reiterated this point several times. He wrote of the smugglers as 'Banditti (who) carried the earliest Intelligence into France, into whose Ports they were freely admitted, although in the time of open War, and an open Rebellion.' And again during questioning by government commissioners he said, 'That, besides the aforesaid Evil, another pernicious Consequence arises from this Practice. For, the Smugglers, being at this time admitted into the French Ports to carry on their illicit Trade, give our Enemy's Information of the Situation of public Affairs.'[81] He used as evidence the example of the French fleet's knowledge of Admiral Martin's movements so soon after he had left Plymouth. It was supposed that a smuggling vessel had sailed soon afterwards to St. Malo or Brest with the intelligence. Admiral Vernon, writing in November 1745 to the Lords of the Admiralty, stated his belief in the English smugglers as an insidious internal threat. He claimed, 'This smuggling has converted those employed in it, first from honest industrious fishermen, to lazy, drunken and profligate smugglers, and now to dangerous spies on all our proceedings for the enemy's daily information.'[82] He later reiterated, 'these vipers shall have carried on their fatal intercourse with His Majesty's enemies, to the enabling them to attack us where we may be weakest; and have assisted

[80] NA PC 1/3797.
[81] S. Janssen, *Smuggling Laid Open*, preface and p. 5.
[82] NA CUST 143/18.

them in the execution of it.'[83] The Duke of Newcastle went further to claim such political sympathy for the French among the smugglers of Sussex that they would contemplate assistance of French forces in the event of an invasion there.[84]

It was a fear echoed among the general population. Among the 'Transports' or 'Hastings Outlaws', an organisation which dominated smuggling routes between Boulogne and the south coast of England between Pevensey and Folkestone, it was reported in May 1744, 'The Hastings Outlaws have taken an Oath of Allegiance to the King of France, and that they frequently bring People from France.'[85] Examined in 1745 as part of the government enquiry into smuggling, Mr Simon Smith said of the richer smugglers, who treated with the French,

> (They) are Patrons and Protectors of the poorer Sort, and their Interest is so interwoven with France, that it is natural for them to give the French the best Intelligence they can, and in Return the French give their Smuggling Vessels Passes to enter into any Port of France, to secure them from French Privateers.[86]

One Robert Bonell noted not only how the practice of smuggling served to increase French trade, but also that,

> There is such an Evil in the Smuggling Business, that a private Correspondence may be carried on between the French and the Papists of Ireland, and the French and Disaffected in England, as may extreamly (sic) hazard in an unfortunate Conjuncture, the Security of the Protestant Interest of these Kingdoms.[87]

In the same year an anonymous writer from Dartmouth commented to Andrew Stone esq., 'I am sensible of the mischief that has been done since the commencement of the

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[83] NA CUST 143.18 16th December 1745.
[84] Timothy McCann (ed.), *The Correspondence of the Dukes of Richmond and Newcastle 1724 – 1750*, Lewes, Sussex Records Society, 1984.
[85] P. Monod, 'Dangerous Merchandise: Smuggling, Jacobitism and Commercial Culture in South East England, 1690 – 1760', *Journal of British Studies*, p. 161, 167.
[86] S. Janssen, *Smuggling laid Open*, p. 138.
[87] S. Janssen, *Smuggling laid Open*, p. 208.

war and much greater might further be done by the smugglers.'[88] And again to Andrew Stone, an anonymous writer claimed,

> That they were to be made the instruments of their intended invasion, is now evident to me past all gain saying: be sure pardon them for it (smuggling), and then they will be ready att (sic) hand to serve France upon all and every occasion when they want their help and assistance and services; for you see France pays them amply for their trouble, some of them have already purchased estates of three hundred per annum with their bounty money.[89]

Stone himself claimed, 'I have a suspicion that upon the smugglers humiliation and contrition an act of Indemnification will be passed and this act will certainly raise an hideous laughter att (sic) the court of Versailles under whose direction this villainy is managed.'[90] As late as 1754 the anonymous author of a letter wrote from Brussels, 'Il paroit jusqu'a que le Prétendant n'aura de secours de la france que par les corsairs ou des contrabandiers qui lui portent des armes, des munitions, et peut être de l'argent'[91]

Genuine support among the smugglers for the Franco-Stuart cause cannot be entirely discounted and indeed Paul Monod has demonstrated how the advent of the Hanoverian monarchy served further to politicize the smugglers. He also demonstrated how areas in Sussex, Kent and Hampshire owned by recusant landowners were the areas where the highest levels of smuggling took place. Landowners holding Jacobite political sympathies may have turned a blind eye to smuggling activities on their land, whilst recusant merchants helped fund smuggling ventures. This resulted in the development of a more organised commercial arrangement within smuggling from what was once, as Monod describes, 'loosely structured local pursuits'.[92] In spite of this, a clearly patriotic identity may be found in the records. In October of 1745 a J. Nicholl wrote, 'I was

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[88] NA SP 36/72 f.126 25th October 1745.
[89] NA SP 36/72 30th October 1745.
[90] NA SP 36/72 f.312 28th October 1745.
[91] NA SP 87/18/204.
[92] P. Monod, 'Dangerous Merchandise: Smuggling, Jacobitism and Commercial Culture in South East England, 1690 – 1760', *Journal of British Studies*, p. 155, 165, 168.

Yesterday with Several of the Smuglers (sic) and near a Thousand have signed an association to oppose the French in Case of an Invasion.'[93] A thousand signatures from among those engaged in a practice carried out in defiance of a state which found itself under threat is a significant number and therefore a national identification cannot be entirely discounted as those records originating with the central authorities would have people believe.

Indeed, even seemingly politically suspect actions of English smugglers during war with France need not necessarily reflect the existence of a subversive group of 'anti-nationals' so feared by the authorities. Instead, such actions may be once more understood in the light purely of financial greed. The smuggler known as 'Saucy Jack' commented whilst in prison,

> Since the French War, smugglers carry intelligence to many parts of France, what was doing in these Kingdoms, and what shipping was fitting out; *for which the French amply rewarded them*, and they always had free liberty to land in any port they had a mind to, for carrying on their wicked purposes.[94]

The Salisbury Journal printed information on a George Culliford,

> A notorious smuggler, (who) has been committed to Ilchester jail, for conveying from Wincanton several of the French prisoners of war from that depot. Culliford is said to be one of the gang that for some time past has infested the neighbourhood, and been aiding the escape of the prisoners from Wincanton to the Dorsetshire coast, whence they have been conveyed to Cherbourg.[95]

It would seem that in several cases escaping French prisoners of war were assisted in their efforts to get back to France by both French and English smugglers.[96] However such risks paid well for the boat's captain and crew.

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[93] NA SP 36/70 f.38.
[94] R. Platt, *Smuggling*, p. 134 my italics.
[95] SARS George Sweetman, *The French in Wincanton*, 1897, p. 24.
[96] For further examples of financial reward for the smuggling of escapee prisoners of war see Wallace Harvey, *Whitstable and the French Prisoners of War*, Whitstable, Empress, 1971, pp. 10-45. This phenomenon is further discussed in the following chapter.

Clearly then, the action cannot always be read at face value in order to hold up a mirror to individual or group motivations. Smuggling was primarily a commercial venture as opposed to a political statement and a large number of sources testify to the fact that those who undertook to smuggle did so in order to reap the financial rewards first and foremost. However, as Paul Monod has demonstrated by an examination of not only what was done but also of what was said, political opinions were instrumental in allowing such an activity to thrive.[97] Using a similar approach, Cal Winslow has shown that smugglers often acted in defence of perceived traditional 'rights' as well as in pursuit of monetary profit.[98] This is an approach of particular value therefore in reconciling the action as one of overtly anti-nation and the problem of personal or group national identification.[99] Of particular interest are those smugglers who ended up living in France for an extended length of time or indeed on a permanent basis.

An English merchant, having lived several years in Boulogne, sent an anonymous report to Robert Walpole of how he frequently saw about the town harbour between ten and eighteen smugglers chiefly from Kent and Sussex.[100] He understood from the houses where they lodged that the men could bring over up to 3 000 guineas a week. In July 1731, Waldegrave advised Delafaye that he had delivered a formal complaint to the French administration of the insults offered to customs officers at Wells by French smuggling vessels. He added,

> The g.s. (Garde de Seaux) observed that the Persons complained of have English names (Cheyne and Peters) and wanted to know whether they were settled at Calais, this was more than I could answer, but in my memorial I was forced to make them both belong to Calais.[101]

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[97] P. Monod, 'Dangerous Merchandise: Smuggling, Jacobitism and Commercial Culture in South East England, 1690 – 1760', *Journal of British Studies*, pp. 159-168.
[98] C. Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, pp 150-152.
[99] See also H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, Methuen, 1977, pp. 1-2 for support of this approach.
[100] C. Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, p. 125.
[101] NA SP 78/199 f.209.

Writing in March 1744, Bryan Prybus wrote to Andrew Stone esq. about such a situation involving two Folkestone smugglers. He noted,

> On their return from Dunkirk to Boulogne where they now live with their Famillys (sic), and have done for some time; these poor men with a great many more now at Boulogne are under Prosecution for having been found Guilty of Running of Goods contrary to Law, and dare not Return back to England.[102]

In November 1778, a memorial of Jonas Brown, a merchant of Whitby in Yorkshire, gave details that the majority of smuggling vessels which operated between France and the Netherlands and the east coast of England and Scotland, 'are fitted out from Dunkerque, Ostend, Middleburg, Flushing and Camfevere chiefly manned with British Seamen who reside at those Places.'[103]

Perhaps the most interesting case is that of Thomas Holman, a Sussex man jailed for smuggling and subsequently reprieved from the death penalty through the efforts of John Collier, Surveyor General of the Riding Officers in Kent, and who left for France after receiving the King's pardon. Holman's relief that he was able now to travel to France (as opposed to being transported) was evident. He said he would settle his affairs, 'and after I may go with my Famely (sic) to Boulogne and not be fost (forced) to go to foren (sic) parts which is great Comfort to me…I am in hops I shall git in some Besness (business) when I come there but what I know not.' His intention was to set up a business with a French brewer and advise on the construction of a malt house 'in the English way'. One William Colliot, writing from Boulogne to Collier, later said of Holman's presence in the town, 'I cannot mention you how much he is wanted in his business by all the owners.'[104]

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[102] NA SP 36/63 f.354.
[103] NA T1/546/138-139. Although beyond the scope of the present study, as an aspect of future research it would be of great interest to examine the records of British nationals living abroad for further indications of attitudes and identities.
[104] ESRO Sayer Ms 2268.

Holman's case is of especial interest as its detail affords us insight into one particular view of France and the French, and a highly favourable one at that. For Holman France was a place of business opportunity and perhaps betterment. What is more, this opinion seems fully justified by his reception in Boulogne as an integral part of the business community. However it is in reference to his situation that Holman's sense of belonging is revealed. Evidently greatly relieved at the pardon and its consequences, he distinguishes between a future in France and one spent in 'foren' parts. For Holman, France did not represent 'foreignness' as other countries did. This may have been because of what it represented in terms of his punishment and that he was not being taken thousands of miles away from his homeland against his will in order to serve sentence. Certainly this aspect of exercising choice over the course of his own future life may partly explain Holman's relief, but also his enthusiasm at going to Boulogne and his aspirations once there demonstrate a level of familiarity with the place and its people which belies the stereotypical view of them as 'alien' and antithetical. Indeed, Holman's apparent enthusiasm at the prospect of life in France would suggest either that his national identification differed markedly from the government sponsored view, or that his nationality could be changed and appropriated with circumstance.

Others meanwhile, forced by various circumstances, who ended up living in France, appear to have retained a distinct sense of their nationality and in some instances earnestly wished to return to their homeland. Writing in February 1779, Joseph Ewbank advised Lord Gordon that,

> Some of them (smugglers) have been obliged through want to go to Dunkirk and enter on Board French Privateers…the number now Serving on Board those Privateers is upwards of 50, many of these men have Expressed a wish there was some Offer of Pardon made here that they might come and serve their own Country.[105]

[105] NA T1/548/329-335.

This fact was acknowledged in 1782 by the government in legislation which enabled men to volunteer for military service thus receiving a full pardon for smuggling crimes.[106] It would appear therefore that, despite extensive contact between English and French smugglers, an awareness of national affiliation remained intact and that even traditional Anglo-French hostilities remained alive and well. Emperor Napoleon, after his final defeat in 1815, spoke of the English smugglers who had continued their trade with France. He noted,

> They did great mischief to your Government; they took from France annually forty or fifty millions (francs-worth) of silks and brandy. During the war they had a part of Dunkirk allotted to them, to which they were restricted; but as they latterly went out of their limits, committed riots, and insulted everybody, I ordered Gravelines to be prepared for their reception, where they had a little camp for their accommodation.[107]

The French, it seems, were happy to encourage the activities of the smugglers but this was an act of subversion against an enemy power not only to garner intelligence from the men, but also to drain valuable specie and resources from Britain thus, it was hoped, fatally damaging her war effort.[108] Conveniently also, through encouraging the continuance of smuggling between Britain and France, the gulf was widened between the state and a group of its own people which not only caused problems for national cohesion, it also meant that naval resources were concentrated away from France and the French thus weakening the British military capacity.[109] Notwithstanding, the smugglers themselves were not seen in any sense as 'allies' of the French and indeed were still treated as enemy citizens. English smugglers were confined to the port of

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[106] Indemnity Act, 1782.
[107] D. Phillipson, *Smuggling: A History 1700 - 1970*, London, David and Charles, 1973, p. 88.
[108] G. Daly, 'Napoleon and the City of Smugglers', *Historical Journal*, p. 336.
[109] G. Daly, 'English Smugglers, the Channel and the Napoleonic Wars, 1800 - 1814', *Journal of British Studies*, pp. 30-46 provides a thorough appraisal of the rationale of French policy and its effects.

Gravelines where they were subject to high levels of surveillance and thorough inspection and kept isolated as far as possible from the local population.[110]

Such examples appear more commonly in the records and one may conclude that the experiences and opinions of men such as Thomas Holman represented a minority discourse. It is certainly possible that some, through their actions and their consequent positioning as enemies of the state and national welfare, saw themselves as 'not-English'. They may even have identified themselves as more French given the more favourable reception they received. But, for the majority, smugglers perceived themselves as working against the law enforcement arm of the state and the excessive economic burdens imposed by and through that state. They did not necessarily see themselves however as standing in opposition to 'nation', for their nationality, their 'Britishness' or 'Englishness', was an inherent part of them. They understood that they had been forced to quit their homeland and live amongst people who were not only oftentimes actual enemies in war, but, through the message of propaganda, notional opposites in many other respects. The anthropologist Robert Textor identified such cultural positioning as a form of 'cultural withdrawal' by those within the alien environment. It was a discourse which resulted from a decision not to confront cultural difference but neither to fully accept or integrate into it.[111] The nature of this national identification is evidenced not only by their desire to receive pardon in order to return to England, but also their behaviour whilst in France.

For the smugglers therefore, it was the British authorities, both centrally in the shape of the law makers and locally at customs inspection and law enforcement level, who provided the focus of 'other'. Indeed, because of the nature of the activity, smuggling frequently brought English and French together in a relationship in which

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[110] G. Daly, 'Napoleon and the City of Smugglers', *Historical Journal*, p. 348.
[111] Robert Textor, *Cultural Frontiers of the Peace Corps*, London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1966, pp. 53-54.

they were often pitted against the bodies of law enforcement. As early as 1713, a legal brief for the crown supplied information concerning two Frenchmen, one named 'Maison' who, along with an unidentified English man, assaulted Customs House officers at Fairlight in Kent.[112] Evidently this type of co-operation did not abate into the latter half of the eighteenth century. In March 1777 Peter Kelley, Assistant Surveyor to the Excise Office, wrote from gaol in Boulogne where he and six of his men had been confined. He recounted how he had spotted two smuggling boats off Folkestone and had chased them to France. He continued, 'we accordingly row'd betwixt them, close to the shore, when immediately they used us very Ill and a number of Frenchmen, with two Englishmen, hauled our Boat on shore…we begged of them to let us have our Boat, and they refused us, they afterwards carried us all to Boulogne and put us in a Dungeon.' Correspondence from the Excise Officer at Dover confirmed these events and remarked on 'a great number' of people giving help to the smugglers. The petition for relief for the jailed men stated, 'as the Smugglers (sic) motive for making the Frenchmen confine us was their hoping your Honours would break us.'[113] At the turn of the nineteenth century, at the height of the Napoleonic War, Anthony Morris of the 'Townsend' recounted how a smuggling brig from Guernsey he was chasing had been guarded by a cutter. 'The Cutter,' he said, 'was a French Privateer, before I could Board the Brig the Cutter was again along side of me, when the Brig encouraged by the Cutter joined in a running fight to the Westward.'[114]

Ostensibly this self-positioning by smugglers against their own governments was brought about by the onerous financial and taxation burdens imposed by the state on foreign goods and the restrictive legislation passed to protect this income. An anonymous work published in 1749 and entitled *A Free Apology in Behalf of the*

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[112] ESRO Sayer Ms 3870.
[113] NA T1/530/97-110 Kelley to Thomas Richardson, Collector of the Excise at Canterbury.
[114] IAG AQ 252/04-03 23rd June 1808.

Smugglers perhaps helps to show why this was thought to be the case. The polemical piece contained a fictional speech in which a smuggler condemned to die addressed his hanging day audience. He went on,

> Good people I pray you to take Warning of my untimely End, to which I am legally brought for having purchased Dutch and French Commodities with my own ready Money, and selling them again; in the defending of which, my Property, I have frequently hazarded my own Life.

The condemned man continued,

> Pray, good People, is not the nation groaning under the heaviest of Pressures? Has she not been most cruelly used for several Years last past? Is she not stab'd to the very Vitals?...Yet, have we not seen the Authors of her Miseries reaping Honours instead of Punishment?[115]

This presents a picture of the state in conflict with its own people. It was a situation where the widespread participation in smuggling had been brought about by punitive financial pressures put in place to raise money to fight repeated wars primarily against the French.[116]

This necessity for revenue has been explained by John Brewer as the evolution of a 'fiscal-military' state throughout the eighteenth century in Britain. Brewer argued that the only way in which the country could successfully engage in financially burdensome military ventures was through a radical increase in taxation and the associated growth of public administration to organize state activities such as revenue collection.[117] Popular discontent manifested not only through the activities of smugglers, but may also be seen in the far wider public support the act itself received. The local community frequently assisted in running the goods ashore, defending both cargoes and smugglers against customs officers, hiding goods and transferring goods

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[115] Anon., *A Free Apology*, p. 10.
[116] M. Waugh, *Smuggling in Kent and Sussex*, p. 14.
[117] John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688 – 1783*, Unwin Hyman, 1989, p. xvii.

onwards for sale.[118] There is also substantial evidence of wider community involvement in the protection of smugglers. In August 1764 customs man Philip Steven reported to the Admiralty Office, 'that in seizing a Smuggling Boat…the Smugglers defended themselves some time with Fire Arms, and were assisted by a Mob on shore who greatly annoyed the Cutters People, and assisted the Smugglers in making their escape.'[119] In December 1765 a Lieutenant Atkinson of the customs cutter 'Winchelsea' reported an incident in which he and his men had attempted to stop and board a vessel carrying contraband brandy within the limits of Deal port. They met with resistance from the crew of the boat, but also a further five men who had rowed out under the pretence of assisting the customs men and helping convey the seized goods to shore. The following day, he continued, two of his men were apprehended by a mob, 'and were beat and abused in a shameful manner.' In a separate incident, Atkinson told of how two men had come to his rescue after being knocked unconscious whilst attempting to seize a cargo of brandy, but that the three of them were then pelted with stones by a mob of people on shore.[120]

For its own part the government reinforced this view of otherness in its portrayal of smugglers as traitorous enemies of the state, further distancing the two groups. Perhaps it suited the government, and the maintenance of its burdensome financial policies, to portray the outlaw smugglers as a Jacobite fifth-column and thus instil fear in order to garner wider popular support for the regime. But any genuine sentiment

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[118] A number of examples may be found in NA T1/319/5. For example, a Dover customs vessel had reported how it had been fired on, 'by at least Forty Smuglers' as it attempted to investigate the landing of a cargo of tea, whilst a customs sloop under the command of a Captain Martin, through insufficient manpower, was forced to observe the unloading of uncustomed goods at Dungeness, 'where Upwards of One hundred and Fifty Horsemen came down, and carried off their Cargoes in the day time, there being Upwards of Two hundred employed in Running these Cargoes.' The report recounted further details from the Collector and Comptroller at Arundel in Sussex of the seizure of 300 half anchors of confiscated brandy by a group of sixty armed men. Kent and Sussex officers, moreover, spoke of how smugglers would assemble, 'in Bodies of One, Two or Three Hundred at a time well-armed, and chiefly Horsemen, and Employ at least fourteen Vessels well mann'd and Armed in order to Run their Goods.'

[119] NA T1/436/59.

[120] NA T1/441/425-434.

which might have informed the authorities' argument should not entirely be discounted either. That ideology and action are intractably linked is without argument. Both are mutually reinforcing and one cannot be understood in isolation of the other, but the problem of how exactly the two relate has been the subject of extensive debate by historians. The Namierite view that political ideas and argument were employed by a political elite to provide an acceptable front for base and selfish power has been subsequently challenged on two fronts.[121] Firstly, and most fundamentally, by J. G. A. Pocock who has argued that political rhetoric is not entirely hollow but instead represents the articulation, at least in part, of genuinely held political beliefs.[122] A second criticism of Namier's interpretation was to question the nature of the link between ideology and action. In conceding to the Namierite scepticism it has been argued that, despite this, ideas and actions are not directly causally linked. In other words the ideology in itself does not provide the sole motivation to act. However, the ideas articulated and the framing of the argument are still of great value to the historian. They represent a conscious choice by the proponent and, as such, are an indication of the possibilities invested in the argument. They also offer a valuable reflection on the society in which the argument was formed.[123] That the government chose to portray the smugglers in this way therefore tells as much about political strategy as it does about genuine belief and trepidation.

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[121] Louis Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1965, pp. ix, 2, whilst p. 5 acknowledges the exceptions to this theory.

[122] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 75. For further critiques of Namier's view see John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 29-31; J. P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party, 1689 – 1720*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp, 4, 204; Miles Taylor, 'The Beginnings of Modern British Social History?', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 43, 1997, pp. 155-176. pp. 157-159; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, pp. 1-2.

[123] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History*, pp. 8, 12; Quentin Skinner, 'Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thoughts and Actions', *Political Theory*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1974, pp. 277-303; John Gunn, *Beyond Liberty and Property: The Process of Self-Recognition in Eighteenth Century Political Thought*, Ontario, McGill-Queen's Unversity Press, 1983, p. 2; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, p. 2.

The efforts of the state to stamp out smuggling may therefore be seen in the light of its own relative weakness, both in its ability to command the widespread support of the populace, and in the structural and bureaucratic aspects of law enforcement. The fact that the government sought to present its case against smuggling and its practitioners so forcefully may be understood as a reflection of the concern it held at the level of popular support to be found for the practice. Also, by its very nature, smuggling fundamentally challenged the state in its ability to legislate effectively, to collect taxation and to protect its borders. The permeability of those borders, both at sea and on land, effectively facilitated the act of smuggling and in turn highlighted the inadequacy of the machinery of law enforcement and control.

The picture of an expanding and rationalising state machinery in conflict with a people opposed to innovation and overburdened with the pressures of taxation is in accord with the interpretation put forward by Cal Winslow. Indeed, Winslow has shown how, in Sussex alone, the regional economy suffered serious setbacks in the eighteenth century with a decline in the total output of smelted iron and a reduction in the scale of the Weald clothing industry. The ports of Rye and Winchelsea became increasingly silted up restricting the size of vessel that could obtain access to trade, and the fishing industry off these coastal areas went into decline.[124] These developments occurred at the same time as levels of customs duties were increased and so smuggling became viewed as an acceptable means of earning a living.

Although smuggling in Britain was not confined to the south east of England, for people living in these areas the practice represented, according to Winslow, 'a legitimate part of the local economy'.[125] Indeed, they often referred to themselves as

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[124] C. Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, p. 150; M. Waugh, *Smuggling in Kent and Sussex*, p. 13.
[125] C. Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree*, p. 149. William Kavanagh also noted the same sentiment in his study on the contemporary borderland area between Spain and Portugal. See, W. Kavanagh, 'Symbolic

'free traders'.[126] It was a notion shaped by the porosity of national borders, especially at their closest point, with only twenty two miles of sea separating the land masses of England and France. The communities of the Essex, Kent and Sussex coastal districts may have considered those of France and the Low Countries to be naturally a part of their economic region with whom trading links had been enjoyed for a number of centuries. Smuggling therefore represented the continuation of economic ties that many were reluctant to concede. The King and his government had rights of claim over political loyalty, but those rights were contested when they tried to enforce laws and economic restrictions that threatened livelihoods or longstanding practice.

This is a view of smugglers' motivations in accord with the ideas of E. P. Thompson's 'moral economy' which fuelled crowd action and which, although developed specifically with respect to food riots, is of relevance for the interpretation of any form of protest which is economically based.[127] The notion of a 'moral economy' encompassed ideas of common well-being and paternalism, and action was characterised both by a belief in the defence of traditional rights or customs, coupled with a sense of injustice at the economic disadvantage. In general, such actions were also supported by the wider community.[128] However, there are a number of caveats to

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boundaries and 'real' borders on the Portugal-Spain frontier', in T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*, p. 82.

[126] F. Nicholls, *Honest Thieves. The Violent Heyday of English Smuggling*, London, Heinemann, 1973, p. 15; M. Waugh, *Smuggling in Kent and Sussex*, p. 7.

[127] E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, London, Penguin, 1991, pp. 185-188. The concept is also explained in John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700 – 1832*, Harlow, Longman, 1992, pp. 76-78; Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth (eds.), *Markets, Market Culture and Popular Protest in Eighteenth Century Britain and Ireland*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1996, pp. 17-23; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, p. 133 with respect to crowd protest generally. Thompson later revised his argument, *Customs in Common*, pp. 292-339 in response to critiques of his theory. The notion of a moral economy has been used and extended both geographically and chronologically by Andrew Charlesworth and Lynne Taylor. Andrew Charlesworth, 'From the Moral Economy of Devon to the Political Economy of Manchester, 1790 – 1812', *Social History*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1993, pp. 205-217; Lynne Taylor, 'Food Riots Revisited', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 1996, pp. 483-496.

[128] E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, pp. 185-188. Simon Renton has demonstrated the existence of an ideology of 'moral economy' among the middling ranks of Norwich society, S. Renton, 'The Moral Economy of the English Middling Sort in the Eighteenth Century: the case of Norwich in 1766 and 1767', in A. Randall and A. Charlesworth, *Markets, Market Culture and Popular Protest*, pp. 115-136.

this idea which must be acknowledged with respect to the practice of smuggling. Firstly, Thompson wrote primarily with reference to Yorkshire and not the south eastern region of England. Secondly, in his revised assessment, he acknowledged the existence of both horizontal and vertical networks within the discourse of protest. Instances such as food riots often saw the elites in alliance with the protestors in their refusal to carry through prosecutions where action was deemed to be against the 'greedy' merchant or farmer.[129] However, as a general model for understanding the practice of smuggling, a 'moral economy' ideology or a 'legitimising notion' of the defence of traditional rights helps us in part to understand the participants' motivations. The notion also provides a basis for explanations of smuggling as a social crime whereby one section of the population viewed as legitimate or justified an action prohibited by law.[130]

Unlike the other encounters which provide the foci for this thesis, the case of smuggling offers a level of co-operation between English and French not reproduced elsewhere. The success of a smuggling enterprise, or the continuance of illegal trading networks, relied to a large extent on communication and occasionally mutual support. However, the relationship between English and French smugglers was primarily one of mutual convenience and instances of co-operation tended to be those brought about by

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[129] E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, p. 292. The caveats and limitations of Thompson's theory have been addressed or acknowledged also. See John Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales, 1790 – 1810*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1983, p.11; Robert Shoemaker, 'The London 'Mob' in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1987, pp. 273-304; John Bohstedt, 'The Moral Economy and the Discipline of Historical Context', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 1992, pp. 265-284; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, St Martin's Press, 1995, pp. 138-139; Peter King, 'Edward Thompson's Contribution to Eighteenth Century Studies. The Patrician: Plebeian Model Re-examined', *Social History*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1996, pp. 215-228; John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances*, p. 317. A. Charlesworth, 'From the Moral Economy of Devon to the Political Economy of Manchester, 1790 – 1812', *Social History* is a further critique of Bohstedt and a defence of Thompson.

[130] For general discussions on the definitions and scope of social crimes as a tool for historical understanding see, James Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550 – 1750*, London, Longman, 1984, pp. 121-142; J. M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England 1660 – 1800*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986, p. 7; John Rule, *Albion's People: English Society, 1714 – 1815*, London, Longman, 1992, pp. 226-231; Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750 – 1900*, Harlow, Pearson Education Limited, 1996, pp. 56-91, 143-172. Joanna Innes and John Styles, 'The Crime Wave: Recent Writing on Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century England', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 1986, pp. 380-435 provide a critique of the concept, pp. 395-402.

necessity, usually in the face of the preventative forces. The balance of archival evidence suggests a general separation of activities, with contact only made at the point of exchange and relatively rarely developing into further co-operation. French smugglers in England would usually only meet the people to trade, and dealt themselves with the British customs men.[131] English smugglers likewise generally encountered law enforcers without French assistance. What is also evident is that the smugglers retained a distinct national identification. If the form of this awareness did not entirely match the form of patriotic loyalty that was desired by their political rulers, it was not necessarily one of 'anti-nation' but rather one which positioned themselves and their actions against the state and the law enforcement structures. The following section examines the particular national identification of English fishermen whose encounter with the French more often manifested in conflict and whose practice often sought the support of the state out of necessity.

Fishing and the Channel as a Neutral Space

As a legitimate means of earning a living, fishing received greater support from the state to ensure the welfare of the industry as a whole and the livelihoods of those involved. Unlike the situation with English smugglers therefore, the domestic authorities did not provide the principal focus of 'other' to these groups. Instead, English fishermen found themselves ranged against those who competed directly for

[131] A few examples may suffice as it is not within the scope of this chapter to consider in detail the French actions. In December 1716 the Commissioner of the Customs reported an incident which occurred fourteen years previously, 'when a Party of French landed near Dungeness in the night and made great Firing upon the Officers then on their Duty.' (NA PC 1/3/50). Pontchartrain likewise presented a complaint to the French minister De Torcy of how the Calais smugglers, '(ont) usé de Violence pour les y introduire.' He continued, 'et qu'un Officier des Douannes d'Angleterre avoit été Volé et maltraité par l'Equipage de ce Bateau deux des Matelots…ayant été arrestez.' (NA SP 78/158 f.8 17th January 1714). The French vessel 'Dragon', seized smuggling a cargo of tea and brandy was noted to have been involved in the practice for several years and in May 1731, 'committed a very extraordinary Insult upon the Mate of the Customhouse Sloop at Wells by firing on him and the Sloop's Crew and abusing him in a violent manner.' (NA SP 36/29 f.208).

access to the fish stocks as a source of livelihood and, because of the proximity of the two countries to one another across the Channel and to the resources, this invariably meant the French fleets.[132] As a result, Anglo-French encounter through fishing was characterised overwhelmingly by conflict and dispute.

Given the regularity of interaction and the numbers involved, there was indeed ample opportunity for bad relations to fester and, on occasion, ignite into open violence. Some sources provide an approximation as to those numbers. A petition of 1699 presented by the fishermen of Dover and Folkestone claimed around 200 vessels from those port towns alone regularly fished the stretch of water between Beachy Head and North Foreland for herring and mackerel.[133] Seventy years later, a petition from fishermen to the Committee of the Cinque Ports stated that 'in excess of 1000 French men' regularly fished off the coasts there.[134] These were considerable numbers of men competing for the same resource and, given the seasonal availability of fish stocks around the British and French coasts, the fleets were restricted to working at the same time of year and in the same fishing grounds and, as a result, encountered one another on a regular basis as the records show.[135] In June 1737 a letter from the Mayor and Jurats of Hastings to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty explained how 'almost daily' upwards of thirty French vessels from Dieppe and Polet came to fish in the Bay of Hastings thus preventing local crews from fishing there by virtue of the larger French boats and nets.[136] Similarly, in September 1771, the Mayor and Jurats of the Cinque

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[132] In my research I was unable to find any evidence in the records of English fleets competing with English fleets for resources in the Channel, and only one instance of Anglo-French co-operation when crews from both sides agreed to advertise in their respective countries for the recovery of lost French nets. NA T1/502/328-331.
[133] EKA CP/23/19.
[134] EKA Sa/CPb/2 (1771).
[135] For information on the seasonality of fish stocks in the Channel see E. Rich and C. Wilson, *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, pp. 139, 147-171.
[136] NA SP 36/41 f. 180.

Ports protested at the 'daily sufferings' from interruption and violence at the hands of French fishermen.[137]

Given this frequency, and the nature of encounter as one of competition, it is not surprising that any grievances or resentments held by the fishermen became like an open sore that was continually aggravated and exacerbated. A French memorial, primarily written to make complaint that English vessels had fired on ones from Boulogne, noted the tenor of regular interaction with English behaviour towards the French, 'leur font souvent des insultés qu'ils tirent meme sur eux, et qu'ils coupent leurs filets don't ils retirent le Poisson'.[138] The situation across the Atlantic was no different however. In Newfoundland also diplomats on both sides remarked on the continuing antagonisms between the respective fleets as a result of regular encounter. Alleyn Fitzherbert, British plenipotentiary in Paris, remarked on the French view that, 'La Concurrence entre les Pêcheurs Francois et Anglois ayant été une Source intarissable de Discussions et de Querelles', whilst Thomas Robinson, the Foreign Secretary, spoke of 'les Disenssions et le Querelles qui de tems en tems se sont inévitablement élevés entr' eux'.[139] Such was the severity of these antagonisms, both governments agreed that the best solution was to separate the fleets altogether.

A closer examination of the dispute between English and French fishermen however, reveals that regularity of encounter and competition for resources provided the atmosphere within which grievances could exist. The circumstances which prompted the fishermen to commit acts of violence against one another, or to air their complaints to higher authorities, were more specific. The majority of documented causes of Anglo-French conflict or complaint were fuelled by a perception that the one had encroached territorially upon the other in order to fish. The problem was perhaps unavoidable as

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[137] NA SP 78/283 f. 99.
[138] NA SP 78/213.
[139] BLARS L29/568/30/2 dated 6th October 1782; L29/627.

fish stocks had to be followed wherever they shoaled and indeed large oyster beds lay adjacent to the French coastline.[140] But whereas the Newfoundland fishing grounds provided a more straightforward example of territorial ownership, for reasons to be discussed at greater length later in the chapter, there was no clear or agreed national boundary as understood by those fishermen working in the Channel. Relationships were therefore further complicated by the nature of the sea as a neutral space and supposedly free for all to use coupled with a perception that rival fleets could operate 'too close' to the coastline. Naturally there was no agreement on the limits of this perception nor indeed how far out to sea might national boundaries have extended.[141]

An examination of the vocabulary of protest demonstrates just how vague notions of national limits at sea actually were, and also how longstanding was the problem of perceived encroachment. As early as 1662 a Hastings man, Thomas Audrey, complained that 'the French being very numerous alwaes (sic) fishing...uppone (sic) these coasts with their illegal travellers [trawlers]'.[142] The same vocabulary is echoed later towards the middle of the eighteenth century and beyond. In 1736 the Duke of Newcastle, in a letter to the Earl of Waldegrave, wrote of how 'our Fishermen very often complain of the French Fishermen coming upon our Coast and disturbing their Fishery by cutting their nets etc'.[143] Three years later, in correspondence once again between Newcastle and Waldegrave, the latter noted ''the extraordinary Resort of the French Fishing Vessels or almost all our Coasts, and the Complaints of our People who suffered greatly by their Practices'.[144] In June 1764 Lord Halifax noted how the Mayor of Folkestone had protested at the 'great number of French fishermen just off the coast

[140] Shown on a contemporary plan of Dieppe and its environs in Normandy, NA MPH 1/82/17.
[141] P. Burke, *A New Kind of History*, pp. 210-214.
[142] ESRO FRE 4282.
[143] NA SP 78/213 f. 62.
[144] NA SP 78/221.

who fish with anchored lines', a practice, he continued, very prejudicial to the local fishermen there as it catches their nets.[145]

More specific references also demonstrate how the understanding of national borders at sea was unclear. Captain Mercer, commander of a customs house sloop patrolling off the coast of Ireland, referred to the French fishing in the 'heads of the bays',[146] whilst a French memorandum to Waldegrave complained of the seizure of a fishing boat ten leagues off the Irish coast.[147] In July 1737 the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty noted how, in the previous month, two Hastings boats each carrying three men, were approached by a Dieppe fishing vessel whilst fishing two miles from the coast and had their catch and equipment confiscated.[148] A petition of 1739 from the fishermen of Looe and a number of other port towns in Cornwall noted how the French have 'frequently taken fish within a mile of the shore',[149] whilst a memorial of later that year expressed concerns at the Dieppe fleet fishing 'often half a league and sometimes even a quarter of a league' from the Cornwall and Devon coastlines.[150]

Evidently then, the fishermen had an inconsistent understanding of what constituted a reasonable distance from shore at which to fish. What is clear however is that, for the fishermen, the sea was not an entirely neutral space, but one to which were attached unclear definitions of the extent of national dominion and therefore of rights of access. This inevitably created problems and differences of perception both of the sea as a source of livelihoods and as a contested space. Not surprisingly, that interpretation usually suited the discourse of the group as aggressor or aggrieved. A French report told of how three Rochester boats had stolen nets and ropes belonging to a Boulogne vessel,

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[145] NA SP 78/261 f. 294.
[146] NA SP 78/218.
[147] NA SP 78/220 f. 192.
[148] NA SP 36/41.
[149] NA SP 78/220; NA SP 36/47 f. 96.
[150] NA SP 78/220 f. 194.

the master of one of the English boats supposedly commenting that 'French boats have no Liberty to Catch Fish on the English Coast'. This was met with the retort by the French Commissioner of Seamen at Boulogne that 'the Sea is free for all Nations'.[151]

In the absence of any clearly demarcated national boundary at sea, perception was a crucial factor in determining responses to the activities of the other country's fishing fleets. This perception, as articulated in the rhetoric of protest, in turn reflected the manner in which the Channel was viewed as either a frontier space or as a source of livelihoods by the fishermen on either side. These were by no means mutually exclusive discourses and were frequently combined in order to present as strong an argument as possible. A distinction is to be found, however, in that arguments presented in terms of maintaining national security or economic integrity reflect a view of the Channel as a border frontier space both separating and protecting Britain from France. Complaints articulated in terms of threat to the local economy or to longstanding and traditional usage reflect an understanding of coastal and port towns intrinsically tied to the sea, effectively extending land borders outwards.

A common argument for the preservation of national security related directly to the integrity of land borders and the potential threat to be had if the other fleet were to gain a familiarity of the same. Joseph Debell of Looe in Cornwall presented the complaints of the fishermen there against their French counterparts operating too close to the shore. In doing so, he highlighted the dangers of this in the event of a war between the two countries in that 'they are all well acquainted with our Coasts and where our Harbours Lye'.[152] The fishermen of the south east coastal towns within the jurisdiction of the Cinque Ports similarly framed their complaint by pointing out that, in allowing the French to fish so close to the shore, they would acquire a good knowledge

[151] NA SP 36/45.
[152] NA SP 36/47.

of the soundings of that stretch of coastline.[153] The French were evidently equally protective of their coastline. In a letter to the Duke of Newcastle, Waldegrave advised,

> I cannot yet send your Grace any particular Account of the State of the French Shipping in their Several Ports. Their extreme jealousy of everything that relates to their Navigation, and the Risk any Stranger would expose himself, who should appear more than ordinarily inquisitive to get anybody to go there on purpose.[154]

The reasoning behind this argument was clear. In allowing the other fishermen regular access to coastal waters they would acquire knowledge that could be used by an invading fleet. Moreover, such an argument would have been neither empty rhetoric nor ineffectual given the regularity of wars and conflicts between Britain and France throughout the eighteenth century.[155]

The threat posed by smuggling was similarly employed both rhetorically in order to protect the integrity of the economy, but also as justification for taking action against French vessels. As early as 1699 a petition from the fishermen of Dover and Folkestone, ostensibly making complaint against the large numbers of Dieppe and Boulogne vessels competing for catches close to the shore, argued that the French smuggled wool into England. Such actions, they added, were of great damage to the native trade.[156] These arguments found a sympathetic ear at official level. Daniel Pulteney, writing in 1720 on the matter of a French Arrêt prohibiting the import of pilchard from Britain, remarked, 'as they do other sorts of Fish upon our Coasts, by which means they have the Further advantage of carrying on their Smuggling Trade'.[157] The suspicion of smuggling was also frequently cited as a reason for taking action

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[153] EKA Sa/CPb//2.
[154] NA SP 78/221.
[155] 1689 – 1697 Nine Years War; 1702 – 1713 War of the Spanish Succession; 1739 – 1748 War of Jenkins' Ear and War of the Austrian Succession; 1756 – 1763 Seven Years War; 1775 – 1783 War of American Independence; 1793 – 1815 Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.
[156] EKO CP/Z3/19.
[157] NA SP 78/166 f. 446.

against French vessels, usually the confiscation of equipment or catches. In July 1765, complaint was received from the master of a Dunkirk vessel, 'qui a essayé des traitements tres rigoureux de toute espece de la part de l'equipage d'un batiment anglois ainsi qu'a Harwich ou on les a fais debarquer'.[158] The brutality of the English crew was explained by the fact that they had suspected the French vessel of smuggling. The following year a complaint was received from the *St Felix* of Calais that her nets had been cut and her catch confiscated by an English cutter claiming the French boat was smuggling contraband goods.[159] These arguments reflect an understanding of the Channel as a protective barrier serving to preserve national interests and the integrity of land borders. And whilst the sea was not here seen as a completely neutral space, for the rationale behind the argument was one of encroachment, such an understanding does not implicitly extend national boundaries out beyond the land mass. Viewing this stretch of water as a source of livelihoods does just this through the vocabulary of rights and through the rhetoric of reliance by coastal communities, and hence local economies, on the resources of the sea directly adjacent.

Not surprisingly, the principal concern of the fishermen who complained against the actions of French fleets was the protection of their own livelihoods. The damage inflicted on the local economy as a result of French incursions was a common feature of petitions and protests and accordingly a number talk of the 'prejudice' to the local fishing fleets, or, in the case of correspondence dated July 1737 from the Mayor and Jurats of Hastings to the Admiralty, the 'Loss and Disappointment' of local

[158] NA SP 78/267 f. 90.
[159] NA SP 78/271. For further examples see NA SP 78/155; NA SP 34/21/31; DRO D1355M/C4543. Similarly, a petition by Dieppe fishermen operating just off the English coast and complaining that their nets and catch had been taken was explained away by the British authorities as the work of smugglers, NA SPP 78/215. For further examples of this see NA SP 36/41.

fishermen.[160] The complaint of the men operating out of the Cinque Ports went further to explain why. It noted how the French,

> Not only take and carry away great Quantitties of Fish but also destroy the Brood and Spawn of Fish with Trammel and Trail Nets whereby a great Scarcity of Fish hath happened the Price thereof much Increased and many Families whose sole Support arises from the said Fishery are greatly Injured and in Danger of being Ruined.[161]

It would appear that the superior size of the French vessels was a particular concern in this respect. Correspondence between Newcastle and Waldegrave noted how French herring boats operating off the English coast were usually between seventy and one hundred 'tonneaux de Port'' and manned by up to twenty four men. This was compared to the English vessels which ranged from twenty to forty eight tons and manned by up to only fourteen men. The Cornwall fishermen similarly pointed out the superior burden and crew size of the French vessels. Each ship, they said, carried over one hundred nets for fishing the local turbot and lobster.[162] Indeed, it was this fact that the larger French boats could trawl with much longer nets that was of particular concern to English fishermen. Those of Gorran and Mevagissey in Cornwall noted how the French fleets had 'a string of nets that will stretch 4 miles' whilst a further complaint by Cornish fishermen, this time in tandem with their Devon counterparts, explained that French nets were up to two leagues long.[163] The particular problem was twofold; either that the French nets completely prevented English crews from fishing an area, or that the nets could get tangled necessitating one set to be cut and therefore premanenetly lost.[164]

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[160] ESRO FRE 4282; NA SP 78/220 f. 194; NA SP 78/261 f. 294.
[161] EKA Sa/CPb/2.
[162] NA SP 36/47 f. 69. See also f. 96 which states that the French vessels operate up to 80 tons.
[163] NA SP 36/47 f. 96; NA SP 78/220.
[164] There are a number of petitions which complain at lost or cut nets or problems with access because of nets. See NA SP 78/213 (1736); NA SP 36/47(1739); NA SP 78/220 f. 192 (1739); EKA Sa/CPb/2 (1771); NA T1/502/328-331 (1773).

If practical and material concerns of economic well-being prompted grievances to be aired, further weight was added to the complaint by asserting a traditional right of access and usage of coastal waters in order to fish. Appeals to historic rights of carried the implication that these areas were a legitimate part of national territory which could be legislated over to establish exclusive access for domestic fleets. As a strategy of argument, it looked backwards to a time when the French were granted specific licence to fish by the English monarch, effectively securing coastal waters for the home fleets to operate uninterrupted. As such, it represented a form of legitimisation based on somewhat vague historic precedent and customary practice. A petition of Dover and Folkestone fishermen against French incursions on the south east coast stated that it was 'in contravention of ancient and old rights and immunities of the ports and fishermen.'[165] However, such an argument was further problematised by the fact that no such licenses still existed and the investigations into the same brought about mixed findings.

As early as 1670 the Rye Corporation wrote in defence of their fishing fleet following a French compliant against molestation and abuse in English coastal waters. Having investigated their own records in the matter of access, they claimed to have found that 'Anciently there were but 5 French Boats licenced (sic) to fish at all seasons & those onely for the French King's owne use & service'. All other French vessels, they continued, were to be restrained and inhibited from fishing near the coast at unseasonable times and with unlawful nets 'on pain of forfeiting their boats, tackle and all their equipment and the men to be imprisoned and fined for any such offence'. The Corporation had also found records of directions given by James I for the licensing of fishing vessels which had stipulated that no more than twelve French boats could

[165] EKA CP/Z3/19.

operate there at any one time.[166] A similar argument was offered by J. Collier of Hastings that since the times of Elizabeth I and James I the French were forbidden from fishing off the English coasts and indeed were not allowed to venture further than mid-Channel.[167]

Collier was presenting his argument in 1744 in direct response to proposals for the establishing of a free fishery between England and France and was one of a number of objections delivered by coastal communities to the policy.[168] However, some five years earlier Waldegrave had commented upon further complaints at French encroachments that he,'had always looked upon it that Usage and Practice had given to the subjects of both Nations a kind of mutual Right to fish anywhere upon each other's Coasts and quoted our People's fishing constantly without any molestation for Oysters in the Bay of Boulogne'.[169]

Evidently then, the rights of access acquired by historic usage were not so clear cut, and the fact that such an argument was not employed since the late seventeenth century until a complete free fishery was proposed in 1744 indicates that the fishermen were aware of this. Indeed, a particularly interesting case dating from 1766 avoided the subject of traditional rights and access completely and instead focussed on the behaviour of the French fishermen. A complaint was brought by Messrs. William Renaud, Thomas Kyte, John Allen and Thomas Moore, but supposedly on behalf of the whole of the Rye fishing fleet against the French. The men noted that the Bay of Rye north to Dover and south to Beachy Head 'swarm[ed] with French Fishing Boats which Cary (sic) 10 or 12 Hands each, who come and fish within even a quarter of a Mile to

[166] ESRO RYE 47/182/6. See also ESRO RYE 47/164/38 for a similar investigation carried out in 1661, however the document and subsequent records for the Corporation provide no indication of findings.
[167] NA SP 36/64; NA SP 87/14/123 f. 224.
[168] NA SP 36/47; NA SP 36/64; NA SP 87/14/1234; NA SP 87/15/3.
[169] NA SP 78/221.

the Shore'. However the language of their complaint suggested that the French fleets often fished there and were allowed to do so. They continued,

> The Men in these French fishing Boats are not Content with the Unmolested Liberty of fishing in manner aforesaid, but are become so Insolent that were these deponents attempt to Fish near them, they would either Cut these deponents Netts or run down their Boats, so that these deponents are thereby also Rendered incapable of following their Occupations as Usual.[170]

What is particularly interesting in this case is the implication that the French were afforded 'Unmolested Liberty' to carry out their work and that the grievance came not from their presence but their insolence and aggression in preventing the English crews from successfully working alongside them.

Far from notionally extending national borders out into coastal waters, both the responses of Waldegrave and the Rye fishermen suggest a liberty of access and, in so doing, present the Channel as a neutral resource to be exploited. And whereas some men sought protection for their livelihoods by making claim to historic zones of exclusion or limited access, the problem was that exact lines of demarcation were unclear if they existed at all in this stretch of water beyond a perception that one fleet was unreasonably encroaching upon the domain of the other. A valuable comparison with this situation may be made with the situation in Newfoundland waters where zones of operation for the respective fleets were clearly demarcated by treaty agreement.

English and French Fishing Fleets in Newfoundland: Establishing and Enforcing Borders

The pattern of territorial control in Newfoundland had come about as a result of historic settlement and colonization on the part of both British and French nationals from the sixteenth century and specific treaty provisions as a result of eighteenth

[170] EKA NR/CPc/303.

century conflicts between the two countries. Territorial ownership and commercial fishing rivalries there may therefore be understood partly within the context of the legal framework imposed by the peace treaties of Utrecht (1713) and Paris (1763) agreed between the two countries. Under the Treaty of Utrecht Britain exchanged Cape Breton for French owned Placentia in the belief that it provided the richest area for fishing.[171] Meanwhile Britain retained ownership of Acadia as it dominated the sea approaches to Newfoundland and the St. Lawrence Basin.[172] Article 12 of the Treaty of Utrecht firstly confirmed that the islands of Canceau belonged entirely to Acadia and secondly that these now fell within an exclusion zone to French fishing. Prior to this restriction Canceau had been a profitable fishing ground for the French and also, her ministers had hoped, a gateway to the plentiful waters off the American coast.[173] Article 13 of the treaty stated that the island of Newfoundland belonged wholly to Great Britain whilst acknowledging that the French were permitted to catch and dry fish within the limits of Cape Bonavista and Point Riche. These provisions were confirmed and amended under Article 5 of the Treaty of Paris which stipulated the liberty of Frenchmen to fish the Gulf of St Lawrence at a distance of at least three leagues from the shore, and also the waters around Cape Breton at least fifteen leagues from land.[174]

These fixed boundaries and limits, however, appear frequently to have been breached by the fishermen. Writing towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the London merchant who discussed the state of the Newfoundland fisheries noted how the French fleets had strayed beyond their nominal fishing waters bounded by Cape Bonavista and Pointe Riche and, 'have greatly encroach'd on that liberty by extending

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[171] John Reeves, *A History of the Government of the Island of Newfoundland*, London, 1793, p. 53.
[172] In 1784 Acadia became New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.
[173] NA SP 78/168. Letter dated 8th September 1720 Sir Robert Sutton, ambassador and plenipotentiary in Paris to Mr Secretary James Craggs, diplomat.
[174] NA SP 78/285 f.199.

their fishery down on that side of the land to Cape Ray.'[175] They achieved this by altering their maps of the area to show Pointe Riche to be only sixteen leagues from Cape Breton.[176] And in August 1771, Captain Bennet of HMS Eolus confirmed that his inspection of French fishing craft revealed that one was covered, '(in) a great deal of Bird's Dung, which is a certain proof of their robbing our Islands of the Birds which would be of Service to our Fishermen.'[177] Under the Treaty of Utrecht, the French fleets were to remain at least three leagues distant from British shores. In a letter dated July 1772 Governor Shuldham of Newfoundland wrote to the Earl of Hillsborough in England questioning the rights of the French to fish at Port Bonavista under his territorial jurisdiction. The bay lay two leagues to the south of Cape Bonavista which itself was marked as the limit of the territory within which the French had a right to fish. Concern had arisen following a recent report made by Captain James Hawker of HMS Aldborough that the French were building landing stages and facilities for curing fish at Port Bonavista. James went on to observe that the English people there 'obliged them to go away with all their Boats etc which was attended with a great deal of Altercation on both sides, and I am afraid, not without some blows.' One Mr. Benjamin Lester, a principle trader of the port operating sixteen merchant vessels between there and England and a leading figure of the community, had received orders 'strictly forbidding him giving them (the French) any assistance, or suffering them to Harbour there.'[178] The British succeeded in throwing part of the catch into the sea as well as loosening off the landing stage and tearing down all of the French buildings there. The forced removal of the French was as much to prevent them establishing a successful commercial fishing

[175] Anon., *Considerations on the State of the British Fisheries in America, and their consequence to Great Britain*, London, 1744, p. 5.
[176] NA SP 78/283 f.245.
[177] NA SP 78/283 f.245.
[178] NA SP 78/285 f.316.

base that could rival the one already in existence as to maintain territorial control, or a manifestation of traditional enmities.

The British fleets were evidently equally guilty of ignoring territorial limits. In March 1763 Egremont noted how the English fleets were fishing much farther north than was customary, following British victories in America. It was an act however, directly in contravention of the Treaty of Utrecht which had allotted those waters for French usage. Egremont, 'apprehended some disagreeable Altercations might arise between the Subjects of the Two Nations in case the French should find (the) best fishing stations pre occupied by the English.'[179] It was expected that the English would aim to get to these places first, being nearer than the French, and exploit the understanding of 'first come, first served', thus effectively excluding the French fleets and occupying the most fertile fishing grounds. Two years later, de Guerchy presented a memorial of complaints to his counterpart, the British ambassador in Paris, concerning the conduct of the English fishermen. The document noted, 'Les Pêcheurs François se plaignent que les Anglois les ont prévenus Presque dans tous les havres, une partie de ceux-ci s'y étant rendus des Colonies Angloises, ce qui leur a donné la facilité d'arriver beaucoup plus tôt que les Navires d'Europe.'[180] In occupying the best harbours in the region, the English fleets prevented the French from successfully processing their catches. Indeed, it was suggested that the English frequently sought to exclude the French even from places where there was sufficient berthing room available.

Indeed, such was the animosity between the respective fishing fleets and their potential to engage in actual conflict, that the response of both the British and French authorities during negotiations towards the Treaty of Utrecht was to suggest their enforced separation. A document which made reference to the French presence at

[179] NA SP 78/256.
[180] NA SP 78/266 11th May 1765.

Canceau, and therefore dating from early in the eighteenth century, stated, 'L'Experience ayant fait voir la necessité de distinguer et de separer les lieux de la Pêche des Anglois d'avec ceux des François sur les Côtes d'Amerique.'[181] This was evidently an enduring problem throughout the century. Writing in October 1782, Alleyn Fitzherbert in Paris explained the French position and their suggestions regarding its solution. He noted the ongoing animosity and quarrels between the English and French fleets there adding, 'Le Roi pense que le Moyen le plus sûr de les prévenir est de séparer les Pêcheries respectives'.[182] The British authorities did not disagree with such a suggestion. The correspondence of Thomas Robinson stated, 'Une separation des Pecheries respectives que les Sujets de la Grande Bretagne et de la France exercent sur les Cotes de l'Isle de Terre Neuve previendroit les Disenssions et le Querelles qui de tems en tems se sont inévitablement élevés entr' eux.'[183] It would appear then that the clauses set out in the Treaties of Utrecht and Paris readily created the space for rivalries to intensify as geographical boundaries were liable to be disputed at notional level and transgressed in practice.

However, if the fishermen in this far removed branch of empire were conversant with the details of national treaties, the extent to which they conceived of a national identification is less clear.[184] One petition presented by English fishermen in 1763 noted

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[181] NA SP 78/168 f.362.
[182] BLARS L29/568/30/2 dated 6th October 1782.
[183] BLARS L29/627.
[184] A number of historians have examined this aspect of empire-building and the impact of national identification. Kathleen Wilson has looked at the consolidation of a British empire in the eighteenth century and its impact on national identity and has argued that, through the very existence of commercial and administrative contacts and networks in imperial territories overseas, the British people were confronted with 'difference' which helped to galvanise the sense of national belonging and being. (Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 4). Similarly, David Armitage pointed out that differences of language, of appearance and of socio-cultural practice among others that were experienced as a result of imperial expansion, helped define what it meant to be British by intensifying the process of labelling and classifying along national or ethnic lines, and the identification of a commonality of interest. (David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 11). These studies, along with those of historians such as D.K. Fieldhouse and Jack Greene, have also highlighted the significance to national identity of the competition enacted between

that if the French were allowed to dominate in Newfoundland it would lead to the decline of the area as a British fishery and consequently the decline of imports to America and a concomitant loss of revenue.[185] Their argument implied detriment to the national economy as a whole. Notwithstanding, this was the only example of an argument formulated on the basis of 'nation' by the fishermen that could be found in extensive archival research. All other examples were presented by merchants, occasionally nominally on the fishermen's behalf, but otherwise as an expression of their own concerns. Such an association between Newfoundland and the national interest was forcefully made by trading men in a memorial to the Duke of Bedford in 1763. This addressed their concerns at the state of negotiations taking place on the peace settlement. They understood that the French were to have confirmed rights to fish in the waters between Cape Bonavista and Pointe Riche, an area plentifully stocked with fish. They remarked, 'Without the reestablishment of the Subjects of this Kingdom in this Part of the Fishery, the whole British Fishery of Newfoundland (that immense Source of Naval Power, and no less fruitfully Source of American Exports) must be virtually and inevitably lost.' The remedy, as they perceived it, was to move the French fishing waters further north, presumably to less abundantly stocked grounds, or to get rid of them altogether from Newfoundland. To do so, they claimed, would ultimately serve the national interest by protecting the British fishery there. They stated,

> To relieve them (the merchants) from this Distress, and to preserve this most beneficial Branch of National Commerce to this Kingdom, Your Memorialists humbly propose, that some Method may be fallen upon of giving to the Subjects of this Country, the infinite Advantages of Residence and Protection upon the North Eastern Part of Newfoundland.[186]

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core European nations in establishing territorial and commercial hegemony in the various regions of empire across the globe. (D.K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1965. Jack Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution', in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol.2 The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998).

[185] NA SP 78/256 1st March 1763.

[186] NA SP 78/256 1st March 1763.

Later, during the American War the British merchant community expressed alarm at the then critical political state of the region on the grounds that it was threatening livelihoods and the employment of fishermen.[187] In 1782, and again in 1785, Thomas Robinson noted the concerns of Poole and Dartmouth merchants at the threat posed to British commercial interests in the region.[188]

Such concern is to be expected given that these were businessmen with investment at stake in the successful continuance of the trade in Newfoundland fish. Their outlook extended beyond the geographical remit of their suppliers, the fishermen, and to that of their customers in Britain and elsewhere.[189] For the fishermen the link between the daily pursuit of livelihoods and the national interest is less evident. Indeed, a useful explanation for their reasoning was offered to the Duke of Bedford. A memorial of 1763 stated,

> That by the Course of the Fish and the manner in which of late, from Causes not unusual in Fisheries, they have changed to the North eastern Coast of that Island. The district communicated to the French by the Treaty of Utrecht is now become the fertile and far preferable Part of the Whole Fishery; That the Beach off that Coast is also naturally so formed as to serve more conveniently and expeditiously for the Process of drying the Fish.[190]

This suggests a wholly pragmatic approach to national borders at sea, that they may be transgressed in order to earn a living where necessary. In the waters of Newfoundland the sea was not neutral. It had been apportioned by treaty and represented an extended arm of nation thousands of miles from the centres of power and also the fishermen's home. Despite this it was seen by the fishermen as a resource and, therefore, as a legitimate source of livelihoods. As long as fish stocks could sustain mutual or separate access by English and French then the situation was acceptable. As fish stocks migrated

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[187] DRO D/LEG/X12.
[188] BLARS L30/14/308/4; L29/598C/15.
[189] 'Baccalaos' or salt-fish was exported to Catholic countries of the Mediterranean where proper religious observance entailed the consumption of only fish on certain days.
[190] NA SP 78/256.

or became scarce or inaccessible for other reasons, grievances came to the fore. This situation was mirrored by that in the Channel; only when problems of access or supply arose did the understanding of the sea as having national belonging came to the fore.

Given the nature of Anglo-French interaction as one of prolonged competition there is, however, evidence that between the respective sets of fishermen antagonisms were viewed generally in national terms. As the master of the French vessel 'L'Amiable Rose' testified in December 1780 after it had been confiscated, 'but under what Pretence or for what Reason she was taken the Deponent knoweth not, save that the said vessel being a French vessel and the Crew Frenchmen'.[191] A similar point was made by a Mons. Frebert, master of the 'Le St. Martin', likewise confiscated by the British, 'that she was taken...as French property, and because the French had before taken English vessels'.[192] And indeed an Englishman, George Milner also asserted, after the equipment of two fishing boats and nine hundredweight of mussels was taken by the French, 'C'est la coûtume des François de voler les habitans Anglois.'[193] What is interesting, however, is that the vocabulary reflects none of the stereotypical portrayals of crude national characterization but instead is borne out of the rivalry experienced in their working life, either in competing for resources or in the conflictual encounter of the appropriation or confiscation of equipment. Indeed, on occasion the aggrieved crews whose vessels had been boarded and possessions taken chose to address their complaints directly to the authorities in charge of the aggressor crew. A French memorial of 1768 noted how, following the confiscation of their catch, the crew of a French vessel was prevented from reaching Dover to obtain redress.[194] Similarly, a Sieur Renaudeau, owner of two fishing boats, was refused help by the English

[191] NA HCA 32/265/12/1-10.
[192] NA HCA 32/400/10/1-14.
[193] NA SP 78/262 f.55.
[194] NA SP 78/275.

authorities when he complained directly to them requesting compensation for lost revenue.[195]

Moreover, the French were not the sole focus of English complaints, and grievances could equally be directed against one's own compatriots.[196] What this suggests is the primacy of financial or economic concerns aimed at the protection of livelihoods above those of national enmity. This confirms the view of the strategic adoption of a 'discourse of belonging' to suit personal advantage.[197] The English fishermen periodically called upon the state to represent their interests as members of 'nation', but also they could act independently to enforce national boundaries or hegemony above and beyond that stipulated by government. This was eminently possible in the contested frontier space that was the sea where territorial boundaries were not clearly demarcated and where a valuable resource could not be confined by them anyway.

The fishermen retained a form of national identification forged largely within the framework of continual economic competition, but enduring hatred of the other was only a partial view of reality. Rivalries periodically ignited into confrontation or physical conflict, but for the most part the fleets operated side-by-side without resort to violent encounter. Therefore positing the French as a competitive 'other' against which a national identification could be galvanised and sustained needs to be tempered with the recognition that the men would have recognised a number of commonalities between one another, shared aspects in the maintenance of livelihoods and the conduct of business, of the centrality of the sea in their existence. These commonalities formed

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[195] NA SP 78/301 f. 73.
[196] John Reeves, *A History of the Government of the Island of Newfoundland*, pp. 34, 47, 93.
[197] R. Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, pp. 109-110. See also Peter Sahlins, 'State Formation and National Identity in the Catalan Borderlands during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Identities*, pp. 31 – 55; R. Grillo (ed.), *'Nation' and 'State' in Europe: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Academic Press, 1980, p. 12 who similarly highlight the strategic nature of a discourse of belonging.

aspects of individual and group identity that may well have transcended national divisions only to be articulated and asserted at times of perceived threat.

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The Channel, therefore, represented a special kind of frontier space that served both to unify and separate those on either shore. Border communities, such as the groups of fishermen or smugglers, are invariably culturally formed by influences on either side of that border, through communication, but also through a common mode of pursuing a livelihood and, in this instance, by a similar relationship with the sea.[198] But equally a cross-border community of identity was not necessarily formed in this situation. A border of any kind still represents a barrier and one such as the Channel even more so, being a physical obstacle in addition to a notional line. In their relationship with the Channel and with the French on the other side, the smugglers and fishermen were set apart by the legality of their activity and hence their position relative to the state. And whereas the fishermen could periodically call on state protection, the smugglers could never do so. Hence for them the Channel represented a frontier space that was neutral, save for the threats of patrolling customs officers. For the fishermen it could be constructed as an extension of nation as a barrier against French incursion and competition. For both, the French represented a form of other but this did not necessarily entail a relationship of continual opposition and so national identification was similarly changing, to be called upon in certain circumstances. In terms of will, then, and the way in which groups achieved unity or defined themselves with respect to the nation, their response may be read as occurring variably along a spectrum, from voluntary adherence, solidarity and loyalty at one extreme, through necessity, and to fear and compulsion at the other.[199] The national identification of the smugglers and the

[198] T. Wilson and H. Donnan, *Border Approaches*, p. 3.
[199] E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983, pp. 53-54.

fishermen on the south east coast of England was never static but shifted along this spectrum according to circumstance and context.

Chapter 3: French Prisoners of War in England

This chapter is the first of two which consider the impact of war upon national identification in order to contrast situations of non-encounter and interpersonal contact. It focuses on the second half of the eighteenth century in order to examine community responses towards the French prisoners of war detained in England during various periods of conflict between the two nations. It uses evidence to reflect critically upon English attitudes towards war and the enmity of the French, and on their own national character and solidarity. In doing so it offers the historian yet more clues to individual and group identities at that time and the role played in their formation by the French. The approach is also useful in extending our vision of encounter, for the nature of that interaction between the English host communities and the French prisoners can be both usefully compared and contrasted with other groups in this study. Just as interaction between the respective fishing fleets represented a form of 'quasi-encounter' somewhere between the virtual encounter provided by the press and that of face-to-face contact, so interaction with the French men detained in English gaols was conducted at a distance. These men could be encountered from afar in the form of work parties or whilst being marched under guard, and yet others were observed within their prison surroundings. In a further respect the nature of the encounter differs from that experienced by other interest groups in this study, for unlike the fishermen and the smugglers, contact with French prisoners at parole was not only regular but also prolonged, sometimes for periods of several years living side-by-side within a community. For this reason moreover, the level of encounter between the two was largely mundane in the sense of everyday and generalised contact. This again distinguishes it in form from other studied groups whose encounter was negotiated

within the framework of a specific purpose such as commercial endeavour and was generally restricted to that purpose.

Anthropological studies have shown this type of quotidian and prolonged interaction to be significant in that it facilitates a process of assimilation in the formation of identities which takes place across an extended period of time.[1] Therefore, in terms of the formation of national identities, it offers an alternative model to that based on 'otherness' and opposition between English and French. As Edward Schieffelin and Robert Crittenden have pointed out, the 'otherness' that may be perceived through initial contact becomes conditioned by the structure of the encounter itself.[2] The nature of the encounter is therefore important as, being both continuous and durable, it served fundamentally to alter preconceptions of otherness. In some cases to be explored later in the chapter notions of opposition and difference were reinforced or intensified, but in the majority of cases these notions were challenged and discarded. The result was an identification marked by borrowed and appropriated features as the French officers at parole were increasingly absorbed into the daily life of local society. A useful way in which this development might be viewed is the production of what Engin Isin and Patricia Wood have referred to as 'hybridity' of identity whereby a subaltern identity exists or is created between two competing identities and this is of significance to the nature of national identification adopted.[3]

The focus of the chapter is also unique within the body of this thesis in a number of other respects. Firstly, it looks at British attitudes and identities across a community rather than within a single occupational or social grouping. This not only provides the

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[1] Vince Crapanzano, *Tuhami, Portrait of a Moroccan*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980; Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1985; Edward Schieffelin and Robert Crittenden, *Like People You See in a Dream: First Contact in Six Papuan Societies*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991.

[2] E. Schieffelin and R. Crittenden, *Like People You See in a Dream*, pp. 4–6.

[3] Engin Isin, and Patricia Wood, *Citizenship and Identity*, London, Sage, 1999, p. 17.

thesis with a broader social basis of evidence upon which to base conclusions, it also enables an examination of social patterns of response to the French in a given situation. Secondly, the focus is unique in that the French were forced into encounter by the circumstance of war; they had not exercised a choice to engage with the British people in this way. This is of particular value in demonstrating the extent to which encounter mediated responses, especially when, in a situation of war, it may be expected that attitudes were predominantly hostile.

A war between nations can necessarily exaggerate national stereotypical oppositions, a time when such stereotypes may be fruitfully employed and more widely and readily accepted among the target audience. As we have seen, in Britain throughout the eighteenth century such perceived oppositions between themselves and the French, antitheses of religion, government and socio-cultural practice, were sufficiently established for ready exploitation. One may expect, then, that in a situation of encounter during war there would have been almost universal hatred of the French and that their presence in English towns and villages would have precipitated open conflict with the host community. However, this was far from the case, thereby demonstrating not only the complexity of the situation, as war was found both to exacerbate internal disunities and to engender cohesion among the population, but also the significance of encounter and contact. Many perceived the French prisoners as hostile enemy aliens, but others viewed them as fellow gentlemen, potential suitors and even brother freemasons. Yet the conditions of their imprisonment and the length of time they were held as prisoners of war meant that many British people came to see them as, above all, fellow human beings with strengths and vulnerabilities not wholly unlike themselves. The sheer numbers of French fighting men captured and held in Britain meant that a greater proportion of the home population experienced direct encounter of some kind with a

French national than in any previous century, and this proportion increased with the ever widening scale of Anglo-French conflict throughout the eighteenth century. During the Seven Years War the annual average number of prisoners of war in England was 18 000, with a peak of 26 137 in the year 1762. Between 1793 and 1815 the total number of prisoners of war brought to Britain was 122 440, with the highest annual number of 72 000 in 1814, just before the end of hostilities.[4]

If numbers alone provided greater opportunity for encounter between the two nationalities, the manner of their detention brought many into regular and sustained contact and this provides a useful focal point from which English attitudes and identities may be examined. Incarceration in a prison of some sort was the fate awaiting all those men captured in war and who did not qualify for consideration of parole at honour. Whether a serviceman was imprisoned or paroled was a matter of rank, in practice all those below the rank of captain were imprisoned for the duration of their detention in Britain, except for brief periods of transfer, work or repatriation.[5] The parole system for prisoners of war was primarily established to cater for captured officers. These could be commissioned officers in the army, naval officers above and including the rank of midshipman, officers of privateers or those officers of merchant ships whose vessel exceeded fifty tonnes.[6] The men were released on parole 'on their honour' after swearing an oath to remain within defined limits, usually up to one mile outside the limits of the town, and to, '…behave decently and with due regard to the laws of the Kingdom.'[7] In turn they were to be protected from any malice offered by the local population. The men were subject to curfew times, generally determined by daylight

[4] Francis Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain, 1756 – 1815*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1914, p. 449, 450. See also Gavin Daly, 'Napoleon's Lost Legions. French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803 – 1814', *History*, Vol. 89, No. 295, 2004, pp. 361-380 who gives the following figures for highest annual totals: 13 666 French prisoners in 1795, 43 683 in 1810 and around 70 000 in 1814.
[5] NA WO 1/906 5th April 1797.
[6] Gavin Daly, 'Napoleon's Lost Legions: French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803 - 1814', *History*, p. 364.
[7] SA F27.9 v.f.

hours, therefore evening curfew was generally set at 5pm between November and January, 7pm in March, April, September and October, 8pm in August and 9pm from May to July.[8] The men were also to receive a daily allowance, in 1809 for example set at 1s 6d per day for commissioned officers and 1s per day for all other ranks from which they had to meet general living expenses. Those rates were increased by 1s 6d and 9d per day respectively for those who had fallen sick. Women prisoners and children under twelve years received no allowance as they were not considered to be prisoners of war. Payments were made every Tuesday and Saturday to the men, who were mustered together, partly for the convenience of distributing money, but also to ensure no one had escaped or absconded.[9] Officers on parole lived with host families as lodgers and for which the families received payment. Initially, during the War of the Spanish Succession, provision was made for these lodgings to be guarded. Lord Nottingham in July 1702 referred to the necessity of affording French captured officers private lodgings once removed from Portsmouth but that they be guarded by sentinels to prevent escape. No such provision was made during subsequent conflicts and the men lived with greater freedom in the community, all the while in obedience to strict conditions of parole.[10]

Without doubt their presence among the host communities added a new dimension to local life and local society and the evidence that exists of these encounters is fascinating and demonstrates that English and French came together in a variety of positive as well as negative episodes. Hastings parish burial records dating from August 1809, for example, list the burial of George Simson, master of a local transport, who

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[8] NA ADM 105/61.
[9] G. Daly, 'Napoleon's Lost Legions: French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803 - 1814', *History*, p. 369 notes that, between 1803 and 1811, 590 French officers successfully absconded whilst, in the following three years, 299 army officers escaped from their parole.
[10] NA ADM 97/98.

had been shot and killed by a French prisoner.[11] In October 1808 Justices of the Peace at Wincanton examined Mary Berry of that town who confirmed that Pierre Ladoues, a French prisoner on parole, was the father of her bastard child.[12] Archive sources show that insults were frequently hurled at the French prisoners, along with sticks and stones on occasion, but they also show that members of the community actively intervened to protect the men against such attacks. Indeed, helping French prisoners to escape back to their homeland could prove a lucrative business. Similarly, among the reasons listed for consideration for parole or repatriation by French prisoners in the Admiralty Minute Books for 1811 are aiding the escape of British prisoners of war from France, as well as marriage to an English woman, previous service in the British armed forces and saving the lives of British servicemen.[13] These brief but telling voices from the men themselves testify to the fact that relations were not wholly marked by hostility or violence.[14]

A wide variety of source material has necessarily been employed to arrive at so very nuanced a picture of English responses and attitudes. Official records on the welfare and governance of French prisoners exist in abundance, from state papers exchanged between ministers and those plenipotentiaries and diplomatic representatives stationed in France, to the records contained in Admiralty Papers detailing the exchange terms of English and French prisoners of war. Quasi-official reports filed by government appointed inspectors such as those offered by Ambrose Serle and James Johnston at the turn of the nineteenth century provide invaluable evidence on the conditions in which prisoners were detained, and give an indication as to the nature of central government response to accusations of inhumane treatment of the men.

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[11] ESRO PAR 361/1/1/5.
[12] SARS DD\SAS\C/795/SW/1.
[13] NA ADM 105/52-54.
[14] Further instances of economic and cultural interaction between French prisoners of war and English communities at this time may be found in F. Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, pp. 299 –308; G. Daly, 'Napoleon's Lost Legions: French Prisoners of War in Britain, 1803 - 1814', *History*, pp. 377- 378.

Similarly, prison records and correspondence with central bodies such as the Commissioners for the Sick and Hurt Board[15] provide an important 'local' perspective to the regime and conditions in which the French were incarcerated. All such documentation is necessarily mediated by its form and function as official and government records; however they often contain references to attitudes or enclose private correspondences which afford the local population or the prisoners themselves a voice. The Admiralty Papers, for example, contain a number of petitions and applications from French men requesting special consideration for exchange, sometimes even special dispensation to remain in England, and documentation such as depositions and examinations arising out of instances of law-breaking are often to be found among official papers. These all provide useful and enlightening details of the lived experiences of the men held captive and their host community. Other valuable pictures of attitudes and daily life may be found in material such as bills of expenditure submitted by those hosts of prisoners on parole, and in private correspondence. The letter from Mary Robinson to her brother Fritz explained how she would make an especial journey to watch the 1 200 French prisoners being marched to Exeter, an indication of the abiding curiosity directed at the men on the part of the British public.[16] Finally, I have consulted the records of private welfare bodies, such as those produced by a group of like-minded philanthropists who met at the Crown and Anchor tavern in the Strand, London in December 1759 to raise funds to clothe the French prisoners in Britain. Taken together, this material provides evidence that not only were many among the English public prepared to look beyond official enmities, but also that this sentiment

[15] 'The Commissioners for Taking Care of Sick and Wounded Seamen and for the Exchanging of Prisoners of War' known colloquially as the 'Sick and Hurt Board'. In 1799 this body was replaced by the 'Transport Service for Taking Care of Sick and Wounded Seamen, and for the Care and Custody of Prisoners of War', colloquially known as the 'Transport Board'. In 1806 it became responsible for the care of sick prisoners of war.
[16] PWDA 1259/1/28 22nd August 1779.

was sufficiently widespread and entrenched to bring groups together in the organisation of welfare.

Such a diversity of evidence demonstrates the wealth of opportunities for cultural and social exchange between British and French and the importance of encounter in determining attitudes towards the other. Given that the French people were the subject of predominantly negative portrayals in the British media throughout the eighteenth century, reactions towards the men held as prisoner within local communities were far more diverse than is perhaps to be expected. Whereas one may anticipate a greater degree of hostility, borne of such negative stereotypical imagery and of the natural enmity in war, instead one finds that the men operated within the parameters of local community life. Such a wide range of responses towards the French, from violently hostile to warmly welcoming, and cultivated in a glasshouse of sustained interpersonal encounter, is at odds with the historical understanding which posits an increasingly belligerent and nationalistic identity on the part of the British – an identity directed largely against the French as a result of the regular and periodic episodes of war between the two countries. Indeed, as the eighteenth century progressed, far from revealing growing animosity, the evidence relating to the French prisoners of war demonstrates a widening appropriation of the discourse of humanity by certain sections of English society and its greater identification as a national characteristic.

This chapter will firstly examine the increasing association of 'humanity' as a typically British characteristic through the evidence of public concerns at the conditions in which the French prisoners were incarcerated. Despite the relative scarcity of material dating from the War of the Spanish Succession compared to later periods of conflict, it is clear that such concerns had been expressed since the turn of the eighteenth century. This section will therefore examine these sources for evidence of

xenophobic or francophobic sentiment and contrast this with the changing rhetoric of 'humanity' regarding the treatment of prisoners of war throughout the eighteenth century. Far from finding a discourse of xenophobic nationalism by the time of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, here we find one of humanitarianism notably among the middle orders of society. However this process was not unrelated to the development of a national awareness. Humanity was increasingly ascribed as a British characteristic, being therefore a reflection of growing national identity among the English population, albeit of a form which placed positive qualities of benevolence and humanity above official national animosities. This section will also consider the responses of the authorities to public concern as a measure of both ideological development and of the evolution of state machinery to deal more effectively with the issues and problems posed by the French prisoners. It will also argue that the official response to these complaints provides further evidence that ideas of humanity and Britishness were widely acknowledged to be linked and that this was an evolutionary process that took place throughout the eighteenth century.

The second section will focus on the reception of the French officers on parole in local communities. It will examine how reactions and attitudes were conditioned by a multiplicity of factors such as social class or financial gain and not simply national difference. Where attacks on the French were committed it will show that this was a response overwhelmingly from among the lower orders of British society and that the responses of the higher social ranks to the French men in their midst were far more benign. In doing so, it will demonstrate the diversity of responses brought about by direct contact and socio-cultural exchange between the two nationalities. Finally it will consider the incidence of popular violence against the prisoners from the time of the

mid-century wars to the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in order to provide a narrative of the relationship between popular francophobia and war.

Humanity, Nation and the French Prisoners of War

There is abundant documentary evidence from throughout the eighteenth century of public debate on the French prisoner's welfare whilst incarcerated in British gaols and of the concerns which were expressed at the paucity of rations or the squalour of living conditions. Writing in 1704, Secretary of State Pontchartrain[17] complained in the strongest terms at the poor treatment meted out to the French prisoners held in Britain,

> That they are allowed but one pound of bread a day, a little flesh three times a week, that they are kept so straight in the Prison that three men are crowded in a place sufficient but for one, that when they are sick they have no remedys applyed to them but treckle and Cordial Waters unless they pay for other things which they are not able to do, all which inconveniences have occasioned so great a mortality amongst them that 7 or 800 hundred (sic) of them are dead in a little time, and that many of the French prisoners are forced to serve on board the English Men o War.[18]

Such accusations were naturally strenuously denied by the British authorities, but this was by no means an isolated complaint. Two years earlier a French official Coshart wrote to Secretary Hodges concerning the poor treatment of the French men incarcerated at Southampton. He specifically noted the meat ration which was so small as to be comparable in size to an egg, and the bread and butter ration which was bad and gave the men stomach pains.[19] In June 1712 the prisoners held at Dover Castle similarly made complaint of small meat and bread rations to the Earl of Dartmouth, noting also that they were only permitted drinking water three times a week. They compared their treatment, 'comme Gens chargées de crimes les plus noirs.'[20] Indeed, several times it

[17] Louis Phélypeaux, comte de Pontchartrain, Secretary of State of the Maison du Roi from 1690.
[18] NA SP 78/153.
[19] NA SP 34/1/74.
[20] NA SP 34/18/76.

was suggested that such treatment was so harsh as to kill many of those held captive. Secretary of State Pontchartrain cited a figure of 700 dead in three months, 'par l'infection des prisons et la mauvaise qualité de la subsistence qu'on leur donne.'[21]

The evidence for such conditions of incarceration and the poor treatment of prisoners may be found throughout the eighteenth century. During the War of the Austrian Succession it was noted how French officers, 'now Prisoners at Hull, are put in the common Prison with the Men, and allowed only four pence a Day for subsistence. I am surprised that you use Officers, Prisoners of War in such a manner.'[22] Whilst the men themselves imprisoned at Hull made complaint about their treatment at the hands of the commander of the guards. They noted that whenever they objected to the poor quality of the bread and meat rations there they were put into solitary confinement on a diet of bread and water, just like common criminals. They also explained how he did not allow them water for washing their clothes and that their rooms were infested with vermin as a result of never being cleaned.[23] The petition of French men recuperating at Falmouth hospital c.1750 provides similarly squalid details of their environment. The petition stated that most of the beds were without curtains, and those that did exist were not changed or cleaned for upwards of six months. This meant that the sick had to lie in close proximity to the very sick or even dead. They also noted how there were only fifteen piss pots between 120 men. Common complaints about the paucity and inadequacy of the food and drink rations were also aired.[24]

By the period of the war against Revolutionary France once more the themes of squalid conditions and inadequate rations are still to be widely found. The petition of the French officers held aboard the 'Bristol' moored in the River Medway at Chatham

[21] NA SP 78/155.
[22] NA SP 54/29/19B.
[23] NA ADM 97/125.
[24] NA ADM 97/122.

complained of the dirty conditions and the likelihood of falling ill as a result,[25] whilst that of the men held at Portchester Castle spoke of, 'the State of Nakedness to which we are reduced; a State the more deplorable as our debilitated Bodies are more susceptible of the Severity of the Season, and the Want of Repose.'[26] Significantly however, this period also witnessed the much wider expression among the British public of concerns at the treatment of the French and the conditions in which they were held. A Mr. Blatherwick, surgeon to the prisoners at Portchester Castle, wrote in January 1798 of his concern at the rapidly increasing number of sick men, 'from want of Food and Clothing,'[27] whilst men such as Dr Currie in Liverpool and Messrs Batchelor and Andrews in Bristol precipitated government enquiries into conditions at the respective prisons after they had witnessed them at first hand.

Complaints such as these, however, were certainly not confined to the French prisoners' experiences. Throughout the eighteenth century the conditions to be found in gaols and houses of correction which held domestic criminals and prisoners were known to be generally squalid and overcrowded, notably for those prisoners who could not afford to rent better accommodation from the keeper. J. S. Cockburn has noted how Newgate Prison was synonymous to contemporaries with despair, misery and death.[28] Initial inspections of prisons were carried out by organisations such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and early Methodist groups, but their intention was less the amelioration of living conditions rather than the rescuing of lost souls. It was not until the widespread circulation of accounts of the infection of the Old Bailey with typhus by a group of Newgate prisoners on trial in 1750 that the problems of insanitary conditions were brought to a wider public. However, it was in the 1770s, and more

[25] NA WO 1/907.
[26] CKS U269/0199/1.
[27] NA WO 1/907.
[28] J. S. Cockburn (ed.), *Crime in England 1550 – 1800*, London, Methuen, 1977. p. 229.

especially with the publication of John Howard's *The State of the Prisons* in 1777, that the British public were presented with a systematical, statistical survey of the condition and the internal organisation of each gaol in England and Wales. Howard's critiques were not new, however his innovation was in the manner of his approach and his extensive list of suggestions for improvement, including the need for proper ventilation of cells and adequate nutrition for the inmates.[29]

Howard's recommendations provided a pragmatic model for action while the ideological framework of his debate was informed by notions of humanitarianism. By the latter part of the eighteenth century this came to be the defining paradigm for arguments concerning the proper treatment of prisoners, both domestic and foreign. In itself the vocabulary of humanity towards prisoners was not new, however earliest references lacked any association of the quality as a national characteristic. Specifically with respect to the prisoners of war the earliest documentary reference in the period under study to the 'humane' treatment of men may be found during the War of the Spanish Succession. Amidst claim and counter-claim at ministerial level of mistreatment of prisoners of war, the Earl of Sunderland wrote to Pontchartrain, 'Je vous envoye ici des Copies de Depositions aux quelles nos Prisonniers nouvellement revenues de Donquerque ont prêté souvent de la maniere inhumaine dont on traitte nos

[29] There are a number of works which focus on prison conditions in the eighteenth century and the debate surrounding prison reform at that time. These include, David Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660 – 1960*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1964; Robert Cooper, 'Ideas and their Execution: English Prison Reform', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1976, pp. 73–93; Michael Ignatieff, *A Just Measure of Pain. The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution 1750 – 1850*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1978; J. M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England 1660 – 1800*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986; Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1989; Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750 – 1900*, Harlow, Pearson Education Limited, 1996; Peter King, *Crime, Justice and Discretion in England, 1740 – 1820*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000; J. S. Cockburn (ed.), *Crime in England*, 1977. Maurice Quinlan, *Victorian Prelude. A History of English Manners, 1700 – 1830*, Connecticut, Archon Books, 1965 looks more specifically at the work of the S.P.C.K.

Prisonniers là comme des Forçats aux Galeres, et non pas comme des Prisonniers de Guerre.'[30]

Subsequent similar reference is to be found in private correspondence dating from the middle of the eighteenth century. In October 1747 a Mr. Collier of Hastings wrote to the Duke of Newcastle requesting the exchange of four French men taken prisoner from a privateer.[31] This was done at the request of a Boulogne merchant, Guillaume Collion who had himself interceded with the French Admiralty on behalf of some English prisoners there, that they be allowed the liberty of the town. Collier described Collion in glowing terms,

> The humanity, Compassion and goodness of this Gentleman to some of my Neighbours, Masters of Trading Sloops to London…that have had the misfortune to be taken and carried into Boulogne, has been so Handsome that it Commands me to do all that's possible for the Release of these Persons.[32]

In January of the following year an unknown French author wrote to a British acquaintance of the treatment which English prisoners of war held at Granville received at the hands of their captors, 'et surtout ils ont été bien nourisses et traittés avec toute l'humanité possible. J'espere Monsieur que vous en userez de la meme façon envers nos pauvres Prisonniers.'[33] The usage of terminology in each case suggests that both English and French authors understood such behaviour to be universal, a laudable human attribute with no explicit connection to nationality, although a quality that the other nation had failed to demonstrate. Not surprisingly, Sunderland's accusation in 1708 of the inhumane treatment of British prisoners of war in French hands was vehemently denied by Pontchartrain as were similar allegations by the French denied by the British authorities. The anonymous author of the 1748 correspondence evidently

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[30] NA SP 104/23 5th January 1708.
[31] NA ADM 97/102.
[32] NA ADM 97/102.
[33] NA ADM 97/117 11th January 1748.

believed the British just as capable of acting humanely as the French, whilst Collier had identified the quality of humanity in a French man whom he held in such high esteem and because of this he was inspired to act in a similar vein. The vocabulary of humanity was therefore being strategically employed in the debate over both British and French prisoners, however its usage implied an understanding of individual choice or character. At this time an ideology of humanitarian endeavour was insufficiently developed to sustain wider group or national association.

A consideration of the evidence of humanitarian action, as opposed to rhetoric, by English towards French reveals a number of individual cases of benevolence. For example, a certificate dated October 1747 on behalf of a Jacques Pannier, native of St. Malo, confirmed how he had been nursed through fits and illness by members of the local community where he was being detained when he otherwise would have died.[34] A statement by prisoners on parole in Guernsey testified to their good treatment by the local parole agent, Henry Budd who, 'nous a accordé la Liberte de rester dans la Ville…et nous a donne Permission de Choiser (sic) nos Logements ou nous trouvons apropos.' Evidence of such benevolent behaviour is perhaps to be expected given the regularity and scale of interpersonal contact and the numbers of men involved, however, from the records it appears to have been largely restricted to individuals and therefore the result of personal character or decision-making.

It was in the decades immediately after the century's midpoint that historians have identified such a mentality being employed to define group identities and turned outwards in the form of charitable and philanthropic action. Paul Slack, for example, has traced 'an elevation of the quality of mercy above that of justice within the broad spectrum of traditional charity' and which marked an attitudinal shift with respect to

[34] NA ADM 97/125.

poverty away from seeking to apportion blame and towards the relief of evident suffering.[35] To be sure, philanthropic endeavour was not new in the eighteenth century, however, the innovation which came about in the performance of such action at this time was both organisational in form and ideological in impetus.[36] Whereas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries charity was largely conducted on a one-to-one basis with financial assistance being offered to individuals deemed to be deserving by the giver, so increasingly in the eighteenth century philanthropic action assumed a collective scale and focussed against the alleviation of suffering without notions of blame attached. Diverse reasons have been offered for this organisational change, from the success seen to be enjoyed by the joint-stock companies of the 1690s and early eighteenth century as models of collective action, to the power of accumulated capital in securing greater benefits.[37] Nevertheless, it was because of this innovation in approach that the nature of philanthropic action could change, increasingly providing backing for organisations such as schools, hospitals and, later, prisons rather than support for the individual.

Charitable and philanthropic endeavour moreover existed within an ideological as well as an organisational framework, and concern for the suffering of one's fellow man was one feature of the practical expression of an ideology of 'politeness' which

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[35] Paul Slack, *From Reformation to Improvement: Public Welfare in Early Modern England,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, p. 139.

[36] W. K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480 – 1660: a study of the changing pattern of English aspirations,* London, Allen and Unwin, 1959; W. K. Jordan, 'The English Background of Modern Philanthropy', *American Historical Review*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 1961, pp. 401–408. For further studies of philanthropy in the eighteenth century see also B. Kirkman-Gray, *A History of English Philanthropy*, London, Frank Cass & Co., 1967; Jane Garnett and Colin Matthew (eds.), *Revival and Religion since 1700: Essays for John Walsh*, London, Hambledon Press, 1993; Martin Daunton, *Progress and Poverty: An Economic and Social History of Britain, 1700 – 1850*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 469; Joanna Innes, 'The "Mixed Economy of Welfare" in Early Modern England: Assessments of the Options from Hale to Malthus c. 1683 – 1803' in Martin Daunton (ed.), *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare in the British Past*, London, University College London Press, 1996, pp. 139-180; David Owen, *English Philanthropy*; Maurice Quinlan, *Victorian Prelude*; Paul Slack, *From Reformation to Improvement.* Also Leonore Davidoff, and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780 – 1850*, London, Routledge, 2002 considers in detail women's philanthropy at this time.

[37] D. Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p. 12.

gained currency among the higher orders of eighteenth century British society and which was increasingly, as the century progressed, appropriated by the middle ranks.[38] Indeed, Paul Langford has argued that the 1760s and 1770s marked a turning point whereby notions of politeness were adapted to articulate the particular mentalité of such middling orders and more narrowly reflect their values and aspirations as a fledgling middle class.[39] This was the birth of sensibility, a cultural manifesto which boasted a supposedly superior middle class world view expressed through personal qualities of modesty, industriousness, honesty and virtue and emphasizing the importance of civic duty.[40] This meant that interest in the self or the individual was turned outwards towards

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[38] For general discussions on the ideology of politeness see Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People. England 1727 - 1783*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, pp. 59 –122; P. Langford, 'British Politeness and the Progress of Western Manners: An Eighteenth Century Enigma', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, VII, 1997, pp. 53-72; P. Langford, 'The Uses of Eighteenth Century Politeness', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, XII, 2002, pp. 311-331; Lawrence Klein, 'Liberty, Manners and Politeness in Early Eighteenth Century England', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 3, 1989, pp. 583–605. For studies on the social spread of politeness in the eighteenth century see Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class. Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660 – 1730*, London, Methuen, 1989, pp. 5–12, 15 –157; David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735 – 1785*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 279–285; Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715 – 1785*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 54–83; John Brewer and Eckhart Hellmuth, *Rethinking Leviathan: The Eighteenth Century State in Britain and Germany*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999; Katherine Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe, 1750 – 1800: authorship, gender and national identity*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001 . A particularly thorough local study on the appropriation of the ideology of politeness has been carried out by John Smail, *The Origins of Middle Class Culture: Halifax, Yorkshire, 1660 – 1780*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1994. For a historiographical appraisal of the development of politeness in the eighteenth century see Lawrence Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 4, 2002, pp. 869–898.

[39] P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 59–122.

[40] For a useful consideration of the conditions from the seventeenth century onwards which enabled a flourishing of sensibility as an ideology and behavioral expression see Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction*, London, Methuen, 1986, pp. 10-31; G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. xvii-xxv.There are a number of historians who have considered the emergence of a collective middle class identity in the eighteenth century including, David Nicholls, 'The English Middle Class and the Ideological Significance of Radicalism, 1760 – 1886', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4, 1985, pp. 415-433; Dror Wahrman, '"Middle Class" Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria', *Journal of British Studies, Vol.* 32, No. 4, 1993, pp. 396-432; Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550 – 1800*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1994; Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort. Commerce, Gender and the Family in England 1680 – 1780*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1996; Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740 – 1830*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1987; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*; J. Smail, *The Origins of Middle Class Culture: Halifax;* P. Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class;* J. Brewer and E. Hellmuth, *Rethinking Leviathan* ; L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes.*

society generally. One beneficial consequence of this was a greater awareness of social and moral problems faced by the lower orders and a concern to alleviate social distress and improve lives. Coupled with a desire actively to effect change in the form of charitable and philanthropic action, the second half of the eighteenth century witnessed the flourishing of charitable institutions such as Thomas Coram's Foundling Hospital and the Marine Society founded by Jonas Hanway, subscribed to heavily by the middling and professional orders.[41] To be sure, the ideological impetus behind practical good works reflected fashionable notions of benevolence and sensibility, and the provision of charity made sound financial and utilitarian sense too. Philanthropy restricted escalating relief costs and usefully put the poor to work, whether it be naval service or prison labour. But it cannot be denied that a significant element of humanitarian concern drove men and women too act collectively for the benefit of their fellow human beings.

Significantly then, in 1759 action for the relief of French prisoners of war undertaken by a group of private individuals was organised on a national scale. On 18th December a meeting was held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand in London, for those subscribers who had undertaken to clothe the French prisoners.[42] It was resolved unanimously to provide immediately 1 000 each of greatcoats, woollen caps, shirts and pairs of breeches, stockings and shoes. Notices of this intention were to be posted in the public newspapers and letters written to various prisons across the country, namely Chatham, Sissinghurst, Winchester, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Falmouth, Bideford, Bristol, Pembroke, Derby, York, Carlisle, Penrith, Portchester and Edinburgh. The organisation met on a weekly basis, raising subscriptions for the purchase of

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[41] James Taylor, 'Philanthropy and Empire: Jonas Hanway and the Infant Poor of London', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1979, pp.285-305; James Taylor, *Jonas Hanway, Founder of the Marine Society. Charity and Policy in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, Scolar Press, 1985, pp. 61–64; D. Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p. 59.
[42] CRO J/1/2219.

clothing and co-ordinating its distribution throughout British prisons where the French were held. The minutes of 4th June 1760 noted how a total of £6 815 18s 2d had been collected via both public and private subscriptions, and when the committee was wound up the following month it was noted that monies remaining after the payment of expenses which stood at £237 11s 5d were to be paid to Colonel Berkeley and be distributed among the French prisoners held at Winchester.

The raising of charitable subscriptions in this way to ease the plight of the French prisoners is significant. Certainly relief had been provided in the 1680s to French Huguenot refugees fleeing to England to escape persecution for their religious beliefs, however, the impetus for such a response had come from the government and the Protestant churches of England and Wales.[43] The Crown and Anchor subscribers were concerned members of society initiating their own action. Moreover the response shows either that attitudes towards the French were not uniformly hostile, as the British press would hope to have fostered, or that such attitudes, where they did exist, were suspended in the face of evidence of the suffering of fellow human beings. As such the episode demonstrates the widening purchase among certain sections of English society of universalist principles of humanitarianism and the increasing readiness to act accordingly. By the time of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars this kind of ideological positioning was being ascribed as a national characteristic.

In December of 1800 a Dr J Currie of Liverpool wrote to Sir Joseph Banks on the conditions to be found at the French prison there. He stated, 'I have seen many spectacles of human misery, but none that has struck me so much as that exhibited by the French prison at present'.[44] Of the food rations he noted, a daily allowance of one-

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[43] Robin Gwynn, 'James II in the Light of his Treatment of Huguenot Refugees in England, 1685 – 1686', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 92, No. 365, 1977, pp. 820-833.
[44] NA WO 1/914. The correspondence found in the National Archives refers to a Mr J Currie, whilst documentation in the Lincolnshire archives makes reference to a Dr J Currie. The dating of the

half pound of meat, one pound of bread and one-half pound of either cabbage or potato and drinking water.[45] Currie said, 'that this is not a sufficient allowance for the preservation of health in men in the flower of life, as the French prisoners in general are.' He even maintained that the ration was 'far short' of the normal food allowance made to prisoners of war held in England, or indeed below any such allowance 'in any period of our history.' A number of those who had died were examined by Currie's colleague, Dr Carson, who had performed several autopsies, 'and their stomachs found to be empty.'[46] Currie also wrote of the naked condition of the men whilst spare clothing was kept in store. He cited one occasion when clothing was offered by a private charity, but was rejected as the particular supply had not been authorised by the Admiralty or the Commissioners of the Sick and Hurt Board. Currie could confirm the veracity of this incident as it was he who had made the offer. He continued, 'Since this refusal, fifty of these miserable prisoners have perished.'[47]

In January of the following year, Currie wrote to a colleague, Dr Bilane, a letter in which he refuted the suggestion that his original correspondence to Sir Joseph Banks had been intended to criticize either the government or the Sick and Hurt Board. His rationale firmly linked the notion of humanity with that of nation. He explained, 'In defence of the general humanity of the Nation I could never require; nor did it ever enter into my mind, to suppose that the executive power, or any Board acting under it, could knowingly suffer men entirely at their mercy to perish of hunger and cold.'[48] Indeed, his awareness of such awful conditions, he claimed, prompted him to act as much out of patriotism as out of humanity in drawing the attention of the authorities. The matter, he

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correspondence can be matched and therefore it has been presumed that Mr Currie and Dr Currie is one and the same person.

[45] See also LRO 920 CUR 75.

[46] LA Hill 39/10.

[47] LA Hill 39/10 23rd December 1800.

[48] LA Hill 39/11 5th January 1801.

concluded, had to be rectified for, 'the honour of the Nation and the cause of humanity.' Further concern over the conditions of the French prison at Liverpool was aired at this time by two local notables Ebenezer Fisher and Thomas Cochrane in correspondence with the French Commissary General, W. Otto. Their motivation for acting thus, it was claimed, was 'from principles of duty and humanity.'[49]

A similar complaint was brought before the Sick and Hurt Board by two Bristol merchants Messrs Batchelor and Andrews, this time concerning the distressing situation of the French men held at Stapleton prison in the town. Batchelor and Andrews were described by the mayor of Bristol as 'two respectable merchants of that City.'[50] Batchelor was the Deputy Governor at St. Peter's Hospital where the poor were cared for, and similarly Andrews was described as a 'poor guardian.' For these reasons both men were trusted not to exaggerate in their description of the conditions and distress they witnessed among the French. On the 20th December 1800 they wrote to the Mayor of Bristol drawing to his attention the state of the men held at Stapleton Prison. They explained,

> We were much struck with the pale and emaciated Appearance of almost everyone we met. They were in general nearly naked, many of them without Shoes or Stockings, walking in the Court Yard, which was some Inches deep in Mud, unpaved, and covered with loose Stones.

Of the food, they said, 'The bread fusty and disagreeable…The Meat which was Beef, of the very worst Quality.' On their visit to the prison they said they had witnessed two men huddled together who, 'appeared both to be dying from Famine.' Indeed, they described the majority of the men they saw as resembling skeletons.[51] They concluded,

> It is much to be feared, that, without some Interference on the Part of Government, or on that of benevolent and opulent Individuals, in Behalf of these

[49] LRO 920 CUR 75 26th September 1800.
[50] CKS U269/0199/1 24th December 1800 Evan Nepean (Secretary to the Admiralty) to the Commissioners for the Sick and Wounded.
[51] CKS U269/0199/1.

> deserted, naked, and starving Sufferers, the Country will be saved the Expense of transporting them to their Native Shore.[52]

Both men were acutely aware of the necessity for a central response to what they saw as a crisis, and the potential consequence to the national reputation should nothing be done. Like Currie's, their reaction understood the humanity of the action to have been an inherent national characteristic. They noted, 'we have a firm Confidence, from the Benevolence and Generosity of the British Disposition, that their Sufferings will obtain that Relief which the Urgency of them instantly demands, and which, if unattended to, would disgrace our national Character.'[53]

How might such evidence be related to prevailing historical interpretation? Significantly in both Liverpool and Bristol the men of action came from the professional and middle ranks and their response reflects the aspects of civic duty and philanthropy identified by Paul Langford as symptomatic of the rise of a 'middle class' sensibility. Likewise, in arguing their case, the men's ready association of 'humanity' with a national characteristic supports Gerald Newman's theory of an ideology adopted and adapted by the middling orders and presented as inherently English in the face of elite cosmopolitanism and perceived degeneracy.[54] Moreover, unlike the models of an aggressive nationality awakened by war and focused against the French, these were responses founded upon, and unified by, positive qualities of 'Englishness' or 'Britishness', a response that made close identification between benevolent action and patriotic virtue.[55] The likes of Currie, Batchelor and Andrews had not viewed the French through a discourse of hostility or opposition, but through a recognition of their

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[52] CKS U269/0199/1.
[53] CKS U269/0199/1 20th December 1800.
[54] G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp. 129–139. J. Brewer and E. Hellmuth, *Rethinking Leviathan* calls this developing discourse 'character'.
[55] This link has also been studied with respect to ancien regime France by Peter Campbell in 'The Language of Patriotism in France, 1750 – 1770', *http://www.reading.ac.uk/e-France/issues.htm*, 2007, pp. 1-43, and by Marisa Linton in her book *The Politics of Virtue in Enlightenment France*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001.

desperate situation as fellow human beings and in need of the assistance which could be provided by those empowered to take action.

This appropriation of 'humanity' as a national quality however, represents at the same time a development that may be understood as both a positive and negative ideological formulation. Humanitarianism as a national characteristic was at odds with the models of an aggressively arrogant nationalism put forward by historians such as Linda Colley which, she claimed, was galvanised by the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and Gerald Newman whose model of national awareness was evolved against perceived characteristics of French degeneracy and elite corruption.[56] Instead it represented a cohering element in the process of developing a national awareness which, along with attributes such as Protestant fervour and commercial acumen, served to unite public sentiment through the identification of more positive national characteristics.[57] The concept of humanitarian duty was a powerful one with which to bring about social cohesion at home. However, at the same time, and by implication, in associating humanity so closely with national character the connection served to differentiate and raise the British culturally above others. The 'others' were not exclusively the French, although they were often held as representative.

Indeed, if one is to examine more closely the tenor of debate surrounding the French prisoners, a close parallel can be drawn with the criticisms levied by the middle ranks at the perceived degeneracy of the elite classes and which posited them as a cultural 'other' to be found within British society. Historians have generally examined this matter within the wider context of tracing social relations and a burgeoning

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[56] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, London, Pimlico, 1992, pp. 237-321; G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp. 63-86.

[57] The argument for a developing national consciousness in Britain based on more 'positive' qualities of national success as opposed to the 'negative' formation of nationality in opposition to the French can be found in David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 8; P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol.2 The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 5.

'horizontal' awareness formative of class. And whereas such criticism was not a monolithic reaction of the middle social ranks, historians agree that such attitudes became more widespread from the middle of the eighteenth century.[58] As notions of sensibility were refined, so the superior virtue and moral integrity of the middle classes was contrasted against the luxury, excess and corruption of the elite lifestyle. One particular aspect of this degeneracy was the nobility's love of gambling and its apparently lax attitude towards debt. The evidence for this was to be found in the fact that a number of nobles fled to France in the wake of incurring large gambling debts, and the publication of sensationalist accounts of large wagers being placed on the outcome of horse races.[59] The love of gaming was identified as a vice by both British and French commentators, each blaming the other nation for causing the problem; however the domestic criticism of the English elites was bound up with the notion that they were seen to be in thrall to all things French and were not merely gambling as a leisure pursuit.

The response of the authorities in the face of criticism over prison conditions is therefore of great interest as it calls on typically negative character traits which could be applied to both French nationals and British elites alike. But, unlike attacks on the latter, whose profligacy was felt to threaten the fabric of British society,

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[58] Stephen Botein, Jack Censer and Harriet Ritvo, 'The Periodical Press in Eighteenth Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* Vol. 23, No. 3, 1981, pp. 464-490, p. 482; Michelle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century,* London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 4–6; Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748 – 1815*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000, pp. 157 –158; Marilyn Morris, 'Princely Debt, Public Credit and Commercial Values in Late Georgian Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 2004, pp. 239-265, pp. 240-242; John Smail, 'Credit, Risk and Honour in Eighteenth Century Commerce', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 3, 2005, pp. 439-456, p. 455; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 461–463, 572–582; L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 21–22; G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, pp. 33, 63–65. Frank O'Gorman and John Cannon have argued for the continuance of social deference to the aristocratic classes and the enduring exercise of elite power, however they also acknowledge a level of criticism coming from the middling orders, albeit ineffectual. See John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 178–179; Frank O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734 – 1832*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, pp. 228–230.

[59] R. Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 157.

the French love of gambling was highlighted as a weakness of character in order to minimise the blame accruing to the British authorities for their conditions of incarceration. Increasingly tied by the notions of humanity as a suitably national response, they acknowledged the distressing conditions, but frequently cited French profligacy and love of gambling as a means of minimizing blame. The meeting of the Bristol mayor and civic notables in the wake of the allegations made by Batchelor and Andrews noted,

> It was, however, with some Degree of Pain that they thought it necessary to observe the extreme Profligacy of the Prisoners themselves, who were, for the most Part, Men captured in Privateers…They were, as it might be expected, in general the lowest of a Nation not too remarkable for their Purity of Principle or of Conduct.[60]

Similarly, at the French prison in Liverpool, it was noted that gambling had become such a problem among the French that gaming tables had been confiscated and regular inspections against the practice ordered by the turnkeys.[61]

Neither were these isolated responses. A report produced in April 1800 on the conditions at Norman's Cross prison in Hertfordshire highlighted the practice by which poorer prisoners were selling their allowance of beef and bread, for sometimes up to a month in advance, leaving them with only a half-penny's worth of potatoes to keep them alive each day.[62] It was also noted that they did the same with their allowances of clothes and bedding in order to get money with which to gamble. A further inspector's report of January 1801 confirmed the continuance of the practice. They described what they had witnessed on a visit to the prison: 'But it is with pain we inform their Lordships that while we were at the Depôt, and almost in our presence, many Articles of Cloathing (sic) given to these ragged and half-naked beings, were sold by them piece by

[60] CKS U269/0199/1 30th December 1800.
[61] LRO 920 CUR 75, Thomas Cochrane.
[62] CKS U269/0199/1.

piece to other prisoners in the adjoining quadrangle.'[63] Such a problem was indeed widespread. Evan Nepean noted in a letter to the Admiralty Office, 'Out of 450 Prisoners to whom Cloathing has been issued within the space of Eight Days, that only Thirty of them have retained their Cloaths.'[64] The mindset of the original report is interesting however, for these men, reduced to a condition of nakedness and starvation, are blamed entirely for their own predicament. It stated, 'the Origin of the Distress so much complained of by the Prisoners is entirely among themselves.'

Such ideas would have attained ready credibility as they reflected a widely held view with respect to the domestic poor, namely that they were wholly or partially to blame for their situation. Poverty was seen as a consequence of moral laxity, a trait which was understood to be an inherent character fault in the lower orders.[65] The explosion in the availability of relatively cheap consumer goods enabled them to aspire to a life of easily won luxury and quick gratification, but their natural idleness meant they were not prepared to acquire it by honest or industrious means. When the poor acquired money, it was believed they would immediately spend it all on the quick pleasures of drink and gambling.[66] In a similar way the blame for the poor living conditions of the French prisoners of war was shifted onto their own doorstep. In

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[63] CKS U269/0199/1.
[64] NA WO 1/909 21st January 1801.
[65] M. Ignatieff, *A Just Measure of Pain*, p. 84; J. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England* p. 232; P. King, *Crime, Justice and Discretion in England*, p. 354; S. Botein, J. Censer and H. Ritvo, 'The Periodical Press in Eighteenth Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, p. 487. The phenomenon has been studied in the particular circumstances of drunkenness and begging by Dana Rabin and Tim Hitchcock respectively. Dana Rabin, 'Drunkenness and Responsibility for Crime in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 3, 2005, pp. 457-477; Tim Hitchcock, 'Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 3, 2005, pp. 478-498. Hitchcock has asserted an underlying culture of mutual obligation between those begging and those donating which belies the discourse of contemporary legislation and pamphlet writers who called for the imprisonment of beggars. Also highlighting this view are, Deborah Valenze, 'Charity, Custom and Humanity: Changing Attitudes towards the Poor in Eighteenth Century England', in J. Garnett and C. Matthew (eds.), *Revival and Religion since 1700*, pp. 59-78; P. Slack, *From Reformation to Improvement*, Chapter 7.
[66] Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1982, p. 106; John Rule, *Albion's People. English Society 1714 - 1815*, London, Longman, 1992, pp. 226–231; J. Brewer and E. Hellmuth, *Rethinking Leviathan*, pp. 251, 258; M Ignatieff, *A Just Measure of Pain*, pp. 82–83; J. Cockburn, *Crime in England*, p. 243; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 148–152.

correspondence to the French Commissary General, W. Otto, the Transport Board concluded, 'if the Ration of the Prisoners were tenfold what it is, they would still sport it away.'[67]

However, the effect of an increasing association in the public mind of humanity with Britishness by the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars meant that the neglect of the French prisoners of war became a source of national shame. Increasing pressure had come to bear on the tenor of official response and the authorities had sought to mitigate their culpability by calling on supposedly inherent French weakness of character, however even this could not render those in power entirely blameless. Despite the supposedly best efforts of the French prisoners to worsen their situation, the British authorities had to acknowledge their responsibility and the necessity to maintain a humane standard of incarceration as a suitable national response.

Indeed, the letter written by Batchelor and Andrews precipitated an official investigation by the Sick and Hurt Board who sent two inspectors, Ambrose Serle and James Johnston, to Stapleton Prison to see conditions for themselves and report back. Their report was subsequently delivered at a meeting of Bristol civic and military notables, along with Batchelor and Andrews present, convened to review the situation. Their response once again demonstrates how humanity and national identity were explicitly linked in the popular consciousness. The council minutes stated, 'It is the cause of humanity and of National Honour, which is now before them, to which the Feelings of Englishmen are, and always were, most eminently alive. In a word, it is the characteristic of the Nation.'[68] The mayor, William Gibbons, subsequently wrote to Serle and Johnston to confirm the motions passed. He too referred to the matter being, 'Proof of the benevolent and humane Consideration that ever had, and I trust ever will,

[67] NA WO 1/914 1st November 1800.
[68] NA WO 1/909 30th December 1800.

form a prominent Feature in the Character of the British Nation.'[69] However, Gibbons confirmed that it had been decided that any allegations of cruelty on the part of the British authorities were unfounded, instead the pitiful state of the French men being put down to the fact that their own government had refused to provide clothing.

What is to be made of this decision? Is it an example of a government appointing inspectors to manipulate the truth in order to avoid further costly repercussions? Or does it provide evidence that the welfare of foreigners on British soil had struck a humanitarian chord and concerns were not only listened to but acted upon through the appointment of inspectors? Despite the conclusion that allegations of wilful neglect were unfounded, the matter had precipitated a thorough investigation on the part of the central authorities and the involvement of Bristol's mayor and councillors. Significantly, it was in that same year that Dundas had written to the Lords of the Admiralty declaring that the negligence of the French authorities in providing clothing for their prisoners overseas had driven his government to provide the same. It was, he wrote, 'an act of compassion for fellow creatures rather than for French prisoners.'[70] It would appear that increasingly it was seen to be a moral duty of government to safeguard the welfare of those in its charge and such responsibility was becoming increasingly detached from notions of blame.

There is, moreover, further evidence that the welfare generally of the French prisoners was an issue taken seriously by the British government at this time. The documentation relating to the Sick and Hurt Board, and later the Transport Board, shows that between 1799 and 1801 a systematic round of inspections was undertaken which focused on the quality and quantity of food rations, clothing allowances, and the

[69] NA WO 1/909 1st January 1801.
[70] LA U269/0199/1 1st January 1801.

state of the accommodation.[71] The reports returned by the inspectors are detailed, but importantly the documentation demonstrates how the authorities worked actively to improve conditions and ensure fairness of treatment. At Portchester Prison, the inspectors sampled the meat provided as a daily allowance for both quality and weight. They privately interviewed a number of the prisoners to ensure that the meal had not been especially prepared for their visit and that it was a fair representation of the quality of food served at other times. They even noted a distinction was made in the diets of West Indian and European prisoners, the former being given a little ginger for their beer and a pound of potatoes instead of half a pound of bread as it was believed better for their constitution, being more closely nutritional to the yams they ate at home.[72]

Ambrose Serle wrote in May 1801 to John Cleverton, the governor at Plymouth prison that if a contractor delivered inferior quality bread and a replacement could not be obtained in time, then the prisoners were to receive an extra two ounces of bread the following day in compensation.[73] In separate correspondence to Henry Kingston, the contractor who had supplied the inferior batch, Serle ordered 'A change of this important Article of Diet must be instantly made in justice to Government as well as to the Prisoners.'[74] In the same month, Serle wrote to the governor at Rochester prison, Mr Slade, regarding the fairness of the beef rations. He requested that Slade was to select a hind and a fore quarter of good beef,

> Such as is, or ought to be, customarily served to the Prisoners of War, and to direct the French Cooks or Butchers, in their eyes and your presence, to weigh the same in the gross and then, as exactly as possible, to cut up the said quarters into distinct half-pounds in order to ascertain with Precision the difference in point of weight.[75]

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[71] NA ADM 105/44 series.
[72] NA ADM 105/44.
[73] NA ADM 105/44.
[74] NA ADM 105/44 8th May 1801.
[75] NA ADM 105/44 23rd May 1801.

What is significant about these responses is that they were being driven centrally and through the administration of a quasi-governmental body, part of whose remit was specifically the welfare of prisoners of war. Notably the full title of the Transport Board included the 'care and custody' of prisoners whereas the previous organisation, the Sick and Hurt Board, was formally entitled only to take care of their exchange. By the turn of the nineteenth century the bureaucratic and organisational machinery was in place to carry out systematic inspection and reporting on prison conditions, and to intervene in a meaningful way over public concerns which were voiced.

It is also clear that this organisational structure had evolved to include the French prisoners themselves. In nascent form such organisation was in place much earlier in the century. The documentation relating to the complaints put forward by the French held at Sissinghurst Castle in 1761 show that the prisoners were employed in the butchery, the bakery and the prison kitchens, but significantly also a group was daily chosen to inspect the weight and quality of the food being prepared.[76] However, by the end of the eighteenth century this sort of organisation appears to have been almost standardized wherever the French were held. Following the inspection of Plymouth gaol the inspectors, Serle, Dacres and Harness wrote to Evan Nepean,

> Some of the Prisoners complained to us that they have not always been allowed the Appointment of Inspectors from among their own Number, to approve or reject the Provisions delivered by the Contractor, as is Customary at the other Prisons, but on Enquiry we found that for sometime past, this Order has been allowed to the Prisoners in the fullest extent.[77]

Within the hierarchy of the prison system French prisoners were permitted to take on inspectoral and managerial roles to ensure the welfare of their fellow men.

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[76] NA ADM 105/42.
[77] NA ADM 105/44 7th May 1801.

Such organisations, whereby the prisoners themselves participated in the administration of their own welfare, represent the increasing standardisation of response by the British authorities throughout the eighteenth century. Reactions at the turn of the century were generally co-ordinated through the Minister of State, and carried out in response to specific complaints or petitions. Lord Nottingham, writing on behalf of the queen in October 1702, requested an investigation into the complaints made by the prisoners at Portsmouth, '…it being her Majesties (sic) intention yt they should be treated suitably to ye Condition of Prisoners at War.' Nottingham wrote again in 1703 concerning the conditions of parole for the French officers at Farnham in Surrey. He ordered,

> Her Majesty having received a complaint from the French officers about the Place which is providing (sic) for them at Farnham, her Majesty would have you take care that the same be made as convenient and fitting for them as may be, but withall (sic), that it be such as may be secure and prevent their escape.[78]

There is evident concern for the welfare of the men under British charge, and indeed Nottingham's correspondence also shows that he ordered physicians to report on the health of certain officers at parole as well as requesting general reports.[79] In September 1708 the Earl of Sunderland wrote again on behalf of the queen, in response to the complaints made by the men held at Plymouth. He remarked,

> Her Majesty being desirous to be fully informed concerning the Complaints which the ffrench Prisoners of War at Plymouth make of their ill-usage, is pleased to order that one of your Board do forthwith go down thither and make a strict Enquiry into the Grounds and occasion of those Complaints of which you'll give me an account that I may lay the same before Her Majesty.[80]

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[78] NA ADM 97/98 11th February 1703. Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham, Secretary of State for the Southern Department.
[79] NA ADM 97/98 19th January 1703. The whereabouts of these officers is not clear; however they are named as the Marquis de la Galisonniere and other gentlemen prisoners.
[80] NA ADM 97/100 8th September 1708. Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

However, these responses were piecemeal in comparison to later efforts, reacting to individual complaints as they arose and co-ordinated through the person of one man, seemingly after direct consultation with the monarch.

What developed over the course of the eighteenth century was a more systematic intervention on behalf of the central authorities to promote the welfare of the French men in their charge. What is not clear from the evidence is whether this intervention marked a greater standardization of response, or whether the acceptable standards of incarceration changed in any way. Without further extensive study of the French side it is also impossible to argue for the development of formalised notions of the conduct of war and the treatment of captive prisoners between civilised states.[81] The evidence relating to the poor conditions at Liverpool French Prison and at Stapleton Prison at the turn of the nineteenth century shows that public concerns were taken seriously and acted upon. It does not prove that this marked a new development in the standards of treatment of prisoners of war by the British government. Treatment of prisoners of war appears to have been less about agreed convention and more about contingent factors such as government preparedness, the character of the prison commander, the state of the prison and indeed the behaviour of the prisoners themselves. There was also the problem of potential reprisals. Certainly the authorities would have been keenly aware that maltreatment of the French prisoners would almost inevitably have elicited reprisals on their own men imprisoned in France, but this was by no means a new phenomenon.

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[81] Philosophical debate took place in the second half of the eighteenth century on the issue of formalized conduct by combatants. See Emerich de Vattel *The Law of Nations*, Paris, 1758; George Friedrich Martens, *Summary of the Law of Nations, founded on the treaties and customs of the modern nations of Europe*, Paris, 1789. The extent to which these ideas ere assimilated into the practical conduct of war for the period under study is examined in Geoffrey Best, *Humanity in War*, London, Methuen, 1983, pp. 31-127. Best has pointed out how the National Assembly in France issued a decree in 1792 advocating the humane treatment of prisoners of war and that any insult or violence committed against them be treated as if committed against a Frenchman. In fact it took over a century after this for international agreement to be drawn on these matters. Tim Blanning has carried out a more general examination of the impact of war on the European continent between 1648 and 1815 in his comprehensive study *The Pursuit of Glory: Europe 1648 – 1815*, London, Penguin, 2007, pp. 531-675.

In August of 1711 a letter to Secretary St. John from the Duke of Marlborough clearly stated the need for restraint in treatment of French prisoners for fear it would incur reprisals by the French authorities on British men held in Spain.[82] There are furthermore several examples from this period of individual acts of reciprocity on the part of the British and French governments.[83] What appears to be new about the debate over issues of welfare by the end of the eighteenth century was that it was conducted within a national discourse of humanity and therefore for which reciprocality was no longer the primary issue. The proper treatment of French prisoners of war became a source of national pride or shame rather than one of competition or one-upmanship. Moreover concern at the conditions of confinement of the French echoed much longer standing debate over the treatment of domestic prisoners which had been conducted in the wider public domain since the 1770s. Because of this and by sheer fact of the greater numbers of French men being brought annually to British gaols or on parole in British communities, public awareness of the problem and perhaps therefore sympathy for the men would have inevitably been greater in comparison to earlier conflicts. This therefore significantly affected the scope and the nature of the response of the British authorities and the structural development of welfare organisations.

Popular Violence and Francophobia

The humanitarian concern that marked the response of Messrs Batchelor and Andrews in Bristol and Dr Currie in Liverpool was by no means a universal sentiment among the English public even by the turn of the nineteenth century. Currie was a doctor and Batchelor and Andrews were better off merchants. The evidence is scant of similar attitudes being adopted by the lower orders. Indeed, there is strong evidence to

[82] NA SP 87/6/106.
[83] For example NA ADM 97/99, HLRO HO/PO/JO/10/6/62/1685.

suggest that responses to the French presence in local communities was organised along social lines and that the lower orders were largely hostile towards the prisoners, most noticeably in the conflicts which took place before the 1790s. This section will therefore consider the evidence that public reaction to the French was socially differentiated by examining the experiences of French prisoners on parole living within English communities. It will then look more specifically at the occurrence of popular violence against the French from the period of the Seven Years War to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in order to trace a narrative of the relationship between popular violence and francophobia at this time.

Initially the prospect of encounter with the French prisoners of war was met with pragmatic concern as opposed to xenophobic hostility. During the War of the Spanish Succession, the mayor of Southampton petitioned the Lords of the Admiralty along with the 'Bailiffs, Burgesses, Gentlemen and Inhabitants' of the town against the great numbers of sick French prisoners brought in. In a period of two weeks over 100 had died, '…to the great Annoyance and Terror of the Inhabitants.'[84] A memorial presented by the Gentlemen and Inhabitants of Berwick upon Tweed during the Seven Years War also stated,

> That as the Villages in this County are all open, as there are no Troops in it, nor any Authority to raise Militia, so it is not in any condition to keep in awe Prisoners who are at their liberty, far less to hinder their joining an Enemy in case of an Invasion, or to prevent them from making their Escape, if they are so minded.[85]

In June 1759 Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Areskine wrote on the matter of parole prisoner numbers. He explained,

> We are unacquainted with the Powers of the Commissioners for the Sick and Wounded to give Orders for Quartering prisoners at large upon their Parole. And

[84] SRO TC Box 4/15/41.
[85] NA SP 54/45/55B.

> if Swarms of them were placed in the open Villages where no Troops are stationed to overawe them, it might be attended with Inconveiencys.[86]

His use of the word 'swarms' is indicative of his fears at the arrival of so many enemy soldiers, yet the fears expressed are entirely rational, that the prisoners might effect their escape, or worse might act as a fifth-column in support of a French invasion. Notably with the population of Southampton it was the sickness brought into the town by the prisoners, not the men themselves, which provided the focus for people's fears. It was, however, with the extended duration of the encounter that English responses appear to have been socially differentiated and that curiosity developed into co-operation or into open hostility.

If one is to explore the thesis of a socially differentiated reaction to the French, it is imperative to acknowledge the sheer diversity of economic status and lived experience to be found across any strata of society. In terms of historical labelling the 'middle ranks' could include wealthy tenant farmers, owners of international trading concerns and men of 'professional' background, as well as shopkeepers and wealthier artisans. Similarly, a definition of the poor could include individual craftsmen and day labourers as well as sturdy beggars. Not surprisingly therefore historians have universally accepted the difficulty in arriving at working criteria to describe each of the social orders and the problems of vagueness with those criteria where each status group borders the one above or below.[87]

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[86] NA SP 54/29/11A.

[87] A comprehensive survey of the language of social status generally in the eighteenth century has been carried out by Penelope Corfield, *Language, History and Class*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991, pp. 101-130. For definitions of the middle ranks see Arno Mayer, 'The Lower Middle Class as Historical Problem', *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 47, No. 4, 1975, pp. 409-435; Peter Sterns, 'The Middle Class: Towards a Precise Definition', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1979, pp. 377-396; M. Bush (ed.), *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe Since 1500: Studies in Social Stratification*, London, Longman, 1992, pp. 115–124; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, St Martin's Press, 1995, p. 95; H. R. French, 'The Search for the 'Middle Sort of People' in England, 1660 – 1800', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 2000, pp. 277-293; J. Barry and C. Brooks, *The Middling Sort of People*, pp. 12–23; P. Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, pp.

Peter Earle has defined his 'middle class' as those people who had to work for a living and who could accumulate capital to improve their lot in life. As a social group they stood distinguished from the lower orders who depended upon manual labour to earn a living.[88] The basis of Earle's definition of the middle ranks was economic whereas Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have highlighted the importance of shared religious beliefs in the formation of a horizontal consciousness of status among this social group.[89] Margaret Hunt has chosen to understand the status in terms of shared experiences, for example commercial endeavour or political exclusion, and shared values, whilst H. T. Dickinson has differentiated between the opportunities available in terms of social advancement to the urban middle ranks which did not exist for those living in rural and provincial areas.[90]

Clearly each of these criteria are relevant and, to some extent, useful albeit more in the way of proving the exception rather than the rule. Taken in isolation, however, each is problematic. The aristocratic classes indulged in commercial ventures as well as those of notionally lesser status.[91] Both the poor and a large proportion of the middling orders were excluded from any official part in the political process, whilst religious non-conformity could be found across the social spectrum. The social fluidity to be found in urban areas was not exclusively available to the middle ranks, neither was rural society entirely static and stable. The distinction to be made between the lower orders and the middle ranks in these respects therefore is not an entirely clear one, especially along a notional dividing line between the two.

3–5; M. Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, pp. 14–20; J. Smail, *The Origins of Middle Class Culture: Halifax*, pp. 10–13; L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 18–24; R. Porter, *English Society*, pp. 86–99; J. Rule, *Albion's People*, pp. 55–84. For definitions of who constituted the poor and lower orders see, R. Porter, *British Society*, pp. 99–101; J. Rule, *Albion's People*, pp. 105–108.

[88] P. Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, p. 3.

[89] L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 18.

[90] H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, Methuen, 1977, pp. 91–120; M. Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, pp. 14–20.

[91] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 55–100. Colley's chapter entitled 'Profits' demonstrates a commonality of purpose and aims between the landed classes and the commercial classes.

Historians have also identified broader distinctions of status predicated on attitudes or mentalité. Both John Smail and Paul Langford have argued that middle class notions of 'respectability' were employed to distinguish them from those lower down in the social order, and John Brewer and Eckhart Hellmuth have pointed out that such concepts in fact served to increase tensions between the social orders.[92] Indeed, despite social ties of paternalism and deference which existed in English society through the eighteenth century, relationships were still marked by fracture. Actions of deference performed by the lower orders, it has been argued, were largely superficial and disguised deeply held resentments and grievances over apparent privilege and injustice.[93] Attitudes towards the lower orders were accordingly characterised by fear; fear of their potential to engage in insurrection and riot thus threatening the very structure of ordered society.[94]

Like the criteria of economic standing, religious belief or shared experience, the use of mentalités to draw definitions of status is problematic. The notion of 'respectability' in itself was vague with no consensus of definition. But, like the perceptions which fed the fear of the middle orders or the resentment of those lower down, these ideas were relative. Different individuals or groups appropriated them in different ways and positioned themselves accordingly with respect to those around them thus shifting the boundaries of status. Notwithstanding these issues, and whilst fully acknowledging the complexity and problems in ascribing definitions, it is possible to

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[92] J. Smail, *The Origins of Middle Class Culture: Halifax*, pp. 191, 197, 220; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 71; J. Brewer and E. Hellmuth, *Rethinking Leviathan*, p. 289; J. Barry and C. Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People*, pp. 84-112. Dror Wahrman has questioned the historiographical approach of defining a middle class on the basis of values or culture by arguing that these may be shared across notional class divisions. D. Wahrman, '"Middle Class" Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria', *Journal of British Studies*, pp. 401, 428.

[93] M. L. Bush, *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe*, p. 165.

[94] Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580 – 1680*, London, Routledge, 2004, p. 235; P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 123; J. Rule, *Albion's People*, p. 226; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, p. 125.

accept broader distinctions of status for the purposes of this thesis. In some cases the occupation or status of those involved is given in the documentation. In others, where references have been made to 'le menu peuple' or the lower orders generally, it should be accepted that this was a relative judgement being expressed from the viewpoint of the commentator. What should be emphasized therefore is that there was never a monolithic reaction to the French prisoners on the basis of social status. Indeed, social background was one among a number of factors including cultural, economic and personal circumstance which helped determine reactions to the French.

There is evidence however that the French officers tended to mix with those English of similar social standing. Such examples are to be found from across the period under study. In July 1758 a Monsieur Rohan requested permission for four French officers to travel once a week into Southampton after having been invited by a Mr and Mrs Donne who he described as 'gens de qualité.'[95] In February 1809 two French generals, Lefevre and Maurin, were reprimanded by the local agent at Wantage for breaking the hours of curfew. They had been out dining, 'with a Gentleman of the first consequence in the Country,' and claimed not to have realised their wrongdoing.[96] Indeed, a number of complaints brought by the French prisoners against fraudulent exaction of fines for breaking curfew gave details of how they had been drinking with, or had been entertained by, local people. The agent who had reprimanded Lefevre and Maurin, John Crapper, wrote of how he had permitted the extension of curfew hours to allow French prisoners to attend 'a Dance unto which they intend to give an invitation to some of the Ladys of Wantage.'[97]

The nature of organisational ties between English and French also supports this view of sociability between similar status groups. J. T. Thorpe has shown that between

[95] NA ADM 97/119.
[96] NA ADM 105/59 19th February 1809.
[97] NA ADM 105/59 21st February 1809.

the period of the Seven Years War and the end of the Napoleonic War some 44 Masonic lodges were established in Britain by French prisoners of war, some even based on the prison hulks at Chatham and Portsmouth.[98] French nationals were also admitted to, or made full members of, English lodges, as were English prisoners held in France.[99] Masonic organisations operated a restricted membership among the wealthier elements of a community commensurate with the class of French officers incarcerated in their midst and which therefore excluded those lower down the social scale. Ties of support and friendship within these organisations were evidently strong. Thorpe has also suggested that those prisoners who were freemasons enjoyed a better standard of living on parole than did other officers, indicative of the existence of support networks provided by their English counterparts. In many respects Masonic brotherhood genuinely seems to have transcended nationality. Captain Louis Marencourt, held prisoner at Plymouth, is described in lodge records as, 'this generous brother and stranger,'[100] for his previous fair treatment of the crew of the 'Three Brothers' captured by the privateer vessel under his command. A consideration of the names of the French lodges established during the eighteenth century may also be revealing of attitudes. With names such as 'United Hearts' and 'Friends United in Adversity'[101] they suggest the existence of genuine mutual support and commonality of experience enjoyed between the men who formed its membership.

Such a phenomenon whereby those of perceived equal status chose to interact is not surprising. The men on parole were gentlemen and officers whose plight was more likely to garner sympathy and support from those British of a similar social background for the very reason that they were recognisably of similar social status and the

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[98] LMF AQC Vol. 77, p. 79. However, AQC Vol. 60, p. 8 sets the number at fifty.
[99] French prisoners were accepted as visitors and members at Launceston, and English prisoners were invited into the lodge at Verdun.
[100] LMF AQC Vol.18 p. 172.
[101] LMF AQC Vol. 60, p. 8.

presumption of a commonality of experience and expectation that this would engender. Notions of social hierarchy and cultural responses that separated oneself from those regarded to be above or below emphasized similarities with those deemed to be social equals. This was a reciprocal process. The French officers evidently gravitated towards their hosts of similar social standing just as local English notables sought to entertain them. This is demonstrated in the number of accounts which mention social status or occupation. The result of such interaction was to forge or to strengthen the ties between these groups and thereby exclude others, for example those lower down the social scale, from such contact.

Yet the role played by the French in the British communities within which they were held, and the nature of people's response to them brought about by direct encounter, was more complex than a simple empathy of social status. The example of Wantage mentioned above and the complaints made against John Crapper, the local agent for prisoners of war, is a useful one to highlight the plight of the French prisoners and the way in which their acquaintance was strategically courted by some and shunned by others as a manifestation of community relationships and politics.[102] In January 1809 the Commissioners for the Transport Service received a complaint against Crapper over his treatment of the fifty or so prisoners there saying he, '...treats them in an uncivil and most humiliating manner, not making the least distinction between them as Men of Rank.'[103] As outlined above, it was Crapper who had taken action against two French generals who had broken the conditions of their parole and indeed appears to have been zealous in the execution of his duty, apparently allowing his anti-French feelings full

[102] As the local parole agent, John Crapper was the man chosen to guard and minister to the needs of the prisoners on parole. Initially parole agents were ideally gentlemen, a rank believed suited to dealing with the gentlemen officers, although this later changed.
[103] NA ADM 105/59.

reign. However, an entirely different picture emerges in a letter written anonymously and signed by 'A True Englishman'. It stated,

> In case that the Prisoners of War residing on Parole here be not kept to stricter Orders, that they will have the command of this Parish, they are out all hours of the Night, they do almost as they have a mind to do, if a Man is loaded ever so hard, he must turn out of the Road for them, and if any Person says any thing, he is reprimanded for it.[104]

In May of 1809 Thomas Goodlake wrote to the Transport Office and described an incident whereby, 'Two French Prisoners (were) found very drunk standing, loitering about the streets of Wantage at Ten O'Clock on Friday night.' When the men were taken to John Crapper he apparently, 'endeavor(ed) to excuse them by saying he had been drinking with them,' and Goodlake went on to accuse him of doing so far too often and 'of great Intimacy with the many prisoners.' [105] He attributed the liberty of the Frenchmen and the problems with their behaviour to Crapper himself in that, 'He has numerous favourites that he indulges and drinks to excess with.'[106]

What is to be made of this contradiction in character description? Goodlake was known to be involved in a personal dispute with Crapper, as evidenced by other townsfolk of Wantage whilst another accusation of over-familiarity might be put down to a misunderstanding. A Mr Hogarth had accused Crapper of drinking with the French officers, but was later proved to have been wrong after he admitted only having seen them all in the same alehouse without proof that they were together.[107] What is more, the letter received by the Transport Office about Crapper's non-observance of rank appears to have been more a concern that social niceties and convention should be observed. Of great interest in all this, however, is that the French prisoners living there were variously seen as friends, drinking companions or merely foreign visitors. Indeed

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[104] NA ADM 105/59 16th February 1809.
[105] NA ADM 105/59 4th May 1809.
[106] NA ADM 105/59 24th May 1809.
[107] NA ADM 105/59 3rd March 1810.

they seem to have played a role within the upper ranks of Wantage society as that of pawns through which personal disputes and hostilities were played out.

Evidently then, the French officers were instrumental in the negotiation of wider relationships within the community as well as being part of that community itself. Their continued and prolonged presence meant that they could become sufficiently integrated into group dynamics as to influence the production of identities. Yet this was largely a relationship between social equals whose social and cultural practice had much in common already and for whom perceptions of 'otherness' were subordinated to acknowledged similarities. If one is to consider the interaction between the French officers and the lower orders a different picture emerges. In general terms relations were largely hostile given the weight of documentary evidence. Where examples of mutually beneficial co-operation between those of lower social rank and the French prisoners may be found, the motivation appears to have been less the result of social or moral obligation and more to effect personal or financial gain.

Notably such co-operation was marked by the provision of assistance to escape back to France, and this proved to be an enduring practice throughout the whole of the eighteenth century with documentary evidence remaining from the period of the War of the Spanish Succession to the Napoleonic Wars.[108] Consistently in these accounts, however, the financial imperative is prominent. Someone who enriched himself considerably through such help was Thomas Feast Moore, known to the French prisoners as Captain Richard Harman of Folkestone. Harman charged approximately £400 for four men he had helped to escape, and received letters of recommendation from those he had successfully discreted to France.[109] Similarly, James Garrat was

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[108] NA SP 34/2/44 7th February 1704; NA SP 34/31/45D 4th April 1711; NA ADM 105/60 4th August 1809.

[109] Wallace Harvey, *Whitstable and the French Prisoners of War*, Whitstable, Empress, 1971, pp. 31-45; F. Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p. 367.

arrested shortly after his arrival from Boulogne on a mission to bring four officers safely back to France for a payment of £50 for each man, whilst a Mr. Thomas Goodman found the regular assistance provided to French escapees so profitable it allowed him to purchase a large farm holding just outside Whitstable in Kent.[110]

There are a select few examples where no financial reward seems to have been given. In 1711 seven Alderney fishermen equipped a boat and aided the escape of two French prisoners for which they received no remuneration.[111] A century later, the correspondence of the Transport Board includes a letter to a C. Bicknell esq. regarding the escape of two prisoners from Wantage and asked that he investigate the conduct of the British nationals who had assisted. He understood they had kept a trunk safe for the men and forwarded it to London in a post chaise accompanied by an English woman whose husband they knew to be French.[112] Evidently the woman's loyalty lay first with her husband and any payment for assistance not to have been expected, but neither were her accomplices paid for their efforts.

Nevertheless, examples of apparently altruistic action such as this are rare suggesting the incentive of financial gain is a useful one for understanding motivation. Indeed, to support this view there are numerous other instances of direct profiteering from the presence of the French prisoners which do not involve co-operative or benevolent action. Several instances, for example, are recounted whereby men would claim a reward for catching a prisoner breaking his parole conditions. As much as ten guineas could be claimed for capturing an escaped prisoner, whilst ten shillings could be earned for taking an officer outside the town limits or out of doors after curfew and could therefore be a lucrative business.[113] One agent at Thame in Oxfordshire was

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[110] NA ADM 105/61. W. Harvey, *Whitstable and the French Prisoners of War*, p. 14.
[111] NA SP 34/31/45D 4th April 1711.
[112] NA ADM 105/60 4th August 1809.
[113] NA ADM 97/119; ADM 97/121; ADM 105/59.

reprimanded for his excessive zeal in hiring people to wait in order to capture those breaking parole conditions,[114] whilst one French man, Channazart told of how two men waited outside the house of John Tonking where he had been drinking, in order to claim their ten shillings when he came out.[115]

Certainly the financial imperative can help explain a socially differentiated response to the French officers. The payment of a reward would always be welcome to a poor man or his family just as wealthier citizens may not have needed such a sum. But in terms of the assistance provided in the escape of French prisoners of war the apparent inaction of the higher social ranks in this sphere of activity could have arisen from a sense of social obligation. As gentlemen, the French officers had sworn a promise, as a condition of their parole, not to escape. To do so would have been ungentlemanly and to assist similarly bad form. Instead they were treated as equals worthy of respect for their status and accordingly accepted and incorporated into local polite society.

This was evidently not true of those among the lower social ranks of English localities whose response to the French was markedly more hostile. Indeed, accounts of physical violence or verbal attacks against the prisoners frequently cite the perpetrators as coming from the lower social ranks. Some measure of conflict is perhaps to be expected given this differing social background of the parties involved, a resentment or antagonism borne of different cultural practice and social expectation. So too is understandable an antagonism built on financial profit, as monetary rewards were frequently offered to those who caught the French men breaking the conditions of their parole. What is less clear is the extent to which hostile attitudes and actions were directed at the prisoners 'Frenchness' as opposed to coming directly from the fact of their presence as aliens within the local community. A consideration of the evidence

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[114] F. Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p. 295.
[115] NA ADM 97/121 1st August 1757.

shows that, where English and French came into conflict, there was often no specific reference to the prisoner's nationality, leaving room for alternative motivations to act other than xenophobia or francophobia.

A number of accounts of individual or group violence against the French, dating from the middle decades of the eighteenth century and provided by the prisoners themselves make clear reference to the social status of the perpetrators and is indicative of an abiding hostility on the part of the lower orders directed at the French officers. The petition of the prisoners at Sudbury dated January 1748 gave specific details on a John Smith and his son, 'who used him (one of the prisoners) very ill having wounded him in several places and set upon him two great dogs which belonged to them.'[116] Both Smith and son were local butchers. The officers at Basingstoke in Hampshire in July 1757 complained that, '…ils furent assailis *par sept ou huit droles* qui les defiérent de sortir en les accablant d'injures attroces et frappant aux portes et au fênetres comme s'ils avoient voulus jeter la maison en bas.'[117] A similar complaint from Monsieur Maurant on parole at Ashburton stated, 'Si je n'etois oblige de sortir de chez moy et par la exposé a tout moment aux insultés atroces *d'un peuple sans regle ny education*.'[118] A petition signed by around forty prisoners held at Crediton and nine men at 'Sodberry' also referred to the frequent insults suffered at the hands of 'le menu peuple',[119] and of attacks using sticks and stones whilst they walked in the street.

Why specifically might the lower orders of society have provided the focal point of hostility towards the French prisoners? One explanation is partly to be found in their social position and partly in a collective mentalité. Interpersonal violence and collective protest were commonplace features of early modern English life, however, by the

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[116] NA ADM 97/115.
[117] NA ADM 97/121 my italics.
[118] NA ADM 97/122 29th November 1757 my italics.
[119] NA ADM 97/122 22nd July 1758.

eighteenth century this phenomenon had become increasingly socially differentiated in favour of the lower social ranks. One explanation for this development is provided by Norbert Elias whose two volume work *The Civilising Process* traced a process across the centuries of the early modern period and beyond whereby codes of civility and restraint in interpersonal behaviour were internalised first among the nobility and the elites, to be generally followed by those of middling rank over the period. As a result public violent behaviour was suppressed among these groups as the 'threshold of shame and embarrassment' was altered and violence increasingly signified as a behavioural response of the lower orders of society.[120]

This developmental theory is supported in terms of a broad chronology by the evidence of the pervasive fear that gripped the English middle and aristocratic ranks of the potential for insurrection and disorder that lay within the power of the lower orders. Indeed, public violence for the dispossessed and ordinarily inarticulate sections of society was a potent weapon which afforded the opportunity to air grievances which would otherwise go unheard and was an increasingly prevalent phenomenon into the early decades of the nineteenth century.[121] Principally these were grievances brought about by the perception of injustice or of excessive privilege and indeed Julius Ruff, in his wide-ranging study on violence in early modern Europe, similarly noted how, during physical attacks on the person, blows were often aimed at the head where men were concerned. This was an exposed part of the body through which injury could fairly easily be inflicted, however it also symbolically represented the site of social

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[120] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2000, p. 239. His detailed analysis of the causes of this evolution is to be found on pp. 312–362.

[121] John Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales, 1790 – 1810*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 6; Julius Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe, 1500 – 1800*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 1–10, 129; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People*, p. 125. Robert Shoemaker, 'The London 'Mob' in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1987, pp. 273–304 looks specifically at the problems of the crowd in London. Nicholas Rogers, *Crowd, Culture and Politics in Georgian Britain*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998 provides a comprehensive overview of the changing historical interpretations on the issue of crowd violence in the early modern period.

pretensions through the wearing of a wig, hat or, in the case of the French officers, a cap or helmet.[122] Moreover, it has been noted that the focus of such frustrations and plebeian disorder could equally be directed at foreign nationals as well as the domestic well-to-do.[123]

To those of the lower orders therefore, the French officers were representative of a level of wealth and privilege beyond attainment. Their social and cultural collaboration with the higher echelons of local society merely served to underline this divide. All the while the French prisoners stood outside the limits of 'community' those within could unite in their hostility or fear, however, once accepted or absorbed into polite society, they created a further imbalance in favour of privilege. It was a development that upset settled and traditional local structures. Seen in this light they are actions and insults directed at outsiders within the community perhaps simply because they were outsiders rather than because they were French. The size of village and small town communities in the eighteenth century meant that relationships were essentially conducted face-to-face. A newcomer arriving from somewhere more than a few days journey distant was instantly noticeable and indeed would regularly have been referred to as an 'outsider' or even 'foreigner'.[124] Coming en masse, the French represented a largescale influx of such outsiders and therefore a threat to local stability.

Indeed, what is significant about the content of these sometimes quite lengthy and detailed accounts of interpersonal violence is the relative scarcity of specifically anti-French language. Inevitably with such extensive contact between English and

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[122] J. Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p. 123.
[123] Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, Manchester, University of Manchester Press, 1959, p. 7.
[124] Steve Hindle, 'A Sense of Place? Becoming and Belonging in the Rural Parish, 1550-1650,' in Alexandra Shepherd and Phil Withington, *Communities in Early Modern England*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 96-114; Peter Clark 'Migration in England during the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', *Past and Present*, No. 83, 1979, pp. 57-90; David Rollison, 'Property, Ideology and Popular Culture in a Gloucestershire Village, 1660 – 1740', *Past and Present*, No. 93, 1981, pp. 70-97. Walter Lingsey, who has come from a village nearby looking for work, is referred to as a 'foreigner'.

French there were a number of incidents which one may directly term 'francophobic'. Overwhelmingly these occurred between individuals or relatively small groups. In isolated cases general derogative reference to nationality was made, for example, the petition of J. Domé and R. Bucaille at Tavistock described how they saw a crowd of people armed with sticks storming the local prison, 'en tyrant et blasphemant contre Dieu et contre la Nation françoise.' [125] However, the men's 'Frenchness', or indeed any of the stereotypical qualities which they were believed to embody were rarely articulated. If the attacks and verbal abuse meted out by the English were a manifestation of xenophobia, there is little evidence that it was informed by the classic oppositional stereotypes to be found in British print culture. Instead, where personal insults were offered, the epithet of 'dog' is more frequently employed.

The information of Joseph Berard, held at Penrith, gave details of his being followed by a group of schoolboys who heckled and shouted at him, calling him a 'Rebel Dog,' and throwing stones.[126] John Dunne, the servant of a French prisoner in Carlisle, testified to being abused by the local blacksmith, George Johnstone, who shouted, 'Damn you, you ____ Rebell Dogg, I will beat you within an inch of your life.' Likewise in Penrith a warrant was issued for the arrest of Samuel Spyby who had gathered with others and assaulted Joseph Prerard, throwing stones at him and calling him 'French Dog'. [127] One prisoner incarcerated at Stapleton Prison after attempting to escape parole at Odiham, described his treatment at the hands of the English akin to that of a dog and a savage.[128] The use of the epithet 'dog' at this time when applied to a

[125] NA ADM 97/125, 9th September 1748.
[126] CuRO D/Hud 8/19/1 June 1746.
[127] CuRO D/Hud 8/19/1.
[128] 'Dog' was also a common insult employed by prison guards against the French prisoners. See, for example NA ADM 97/119 and NA ADM 105/42.

person was a term of general abuse or contempt.[129] It may be employed to imply worthlessness or cowardliness in the opinion of the user, perhaps in judgement of the French soldiers' fighting ability that they were now captive prisoners. However, it was not being tied to the common stereotypical imagery to be found in the mass media such as that portraying the French man as effete fop, sexual monster or even as monkey. Indeed, the insults of 'frog' or 'frog-eater', which were specifically targeted against the French, are not recorded as being used.

The absence of evidence however does not constitute proof positive that francophobic sentiment either did not exist or did not incite people to verbal and physical abuse. Indeed, it would be misguided in the extreme to assume nationality had no part to play in the attacks. The French officers were not only long term interlopers on local society, they personified a nation drawn against Britain in conflict and which therefore threatened its very social and political stability. It is likely that the 'innate conservatism' of popular loyalties would have driven them to react to such a perceived threat by directing their anger and fears against those within physical range.[130] However the character of that hostility did not reflect the pervasive influence of crude and oppositional stereotyping.

Moreover, an apparent decline in the incidence of popular violence against the French prisoners over the course of the second half of the eighteenth century would further suggest that a reappraisal of their 'otherness' had taken place. Archival

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[129] Andrew Simpson and Edward Weiner (eds.), *The Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. 5*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 577.

[130] A number of historians have noted the 'innate conservatism' of the lower orders, see George Rudé, *The Crowd in History. A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730 – 1848*, London, Serif, 1995, pp. 135, 224–226; Nicholas Rogers, *Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 388; John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700 – 1832*, Harlow, Longman, 1992, p. 307; H. T. Dickinson, T*he Politics of the People*, pp. 139–155, 255, 257. E. P. Thompson has called the operation of such social conservatism a 'legitimising notion' whereby protestors explained their actions in terms of a desire to re-establish a traditional way of being. Examples of the focus of popular protest include food supply, military recruitment and the unfair burdens to be borne by the lower orders. See *Customs in Common*, London, Penguin, 1991, pp. 185–258.

documentation reveals a far larger number of such incidents took place in the 1740s and 1750s when compared to the later period of the Napoleonic Wars. A few examples may suffice here. In April 1747 French prisoners at Tavistock made complaint against their treatment at the hands of guards who had found them playing cards on a Sunday. One guard, they said,

> Envoya son camarade appeler la populace, qui ne cherchant que l'occasion de nous accabler…entrent dans la maison, fut exposée au maison nous portent le poing au visage, nous tirans par les habits, nous frappant a coups de poigns, nous accablans de mille injures attroces.[131]

An extremely detailed petition on behalf of the French prisoners at Sudbury stated,

> So the Prisoners are under necessity to be always upon their guard for fear of being murdered in their beds, thirty four Prisoners being not a sufficient number to dispute a victory with five or six hundred Inhabitants, who look less upon them, then (sic) if they were Criminals.[132]

During the period of the Seven Years War, in July 1758 a Monsieur Baly Jeune III, paroled at Callington in Devon, wrote to the commissioner at Plymouth of how, '…Dimanche dernier venant de me promener a 8 heures du soir…une quarantaine d'anglois armé en Baton pour me frapper si je n'avois peu me sauver a la faveur de mes jambes.'[133] Thirty nine of the prisoners held at Goudhurst in Kent signed a petition complaining of being attacked with sticks by the local inhabitants.[134] They also gave details of one evening when five among their number were approached by a group of around fifteen men armed with sticks. Two of the men managed to escape, but three fled

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[131] NA ADM 97/115.
[132] NA ADM 97/115 8th January 1748.
[133] NA ADM 97/121.
[134] NA ADM 97/119 n.d. Although this incident is not dated in the National Archives records, it is included within a bundle of papers all dating from between 1756 and 1758.

back into the house where they had been drinking, 'Le nommé François le Fevre reçut quantité de Coups de Bâtons don't un lui à défiguré tout le visage.'[135]

By contrast with this, the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars is marked by the relative absence of such accounts from the archives. Francis Abell has recounted the occasion when the people of Bridgenorth in Shropshire made an effigy of Bonaparte and paraded it on a donkey through the town. As a culmination they then erected a gibbet and hung and burned the figure.[136] However, events such as this are remarkable for their relative scarcity in the archive records. Certainly the majority of French complaints focused on the conditions and duration of their detention rather than the hostility of the host community. This apparent lack of violence may be a consequence of familiarity. In the 1790s French prisoners were being held in communities where their predecessors had been taken thirty years previously and naturally there would be English men and women alive to recall that experience. Moreover, because of the extended duration of their stay in the years after 1793, the French officers were increasingly integrated into local communities. Any 'shock of otherness' brought about by the initial encounter would be gradually dissipated and replaced by a more realistic appraisal of the person.

Indeed, the account provided by Francis Abell is notable for the fact that it was Napoleon himself who provided the focus of popular derision and hatred as opposed to the French people generally. In the French leader the British propaganda machine had an ideal figure on whom to attach grossly exaggerated and crude stereotypes of tyrant, atheist and murderer because he would never be directly 'encountered' by the domestic

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[135] NA ADM 97/119. Further examples of the hostile reception afforded to French prisoners at this time may be found across England as far north as Cumbria and Penrith (CuRO D/Hud 18/9/1 23rd May 1747; NA ADM 97/120 3rd June 1758), as far west as Falmouth and Plymouth (NA ADM 97/125 19th September 1747; NA ADM 97/121 26th July 1758) and inland towns such as Basingstoke (NA ADM 97/121 12th July 1757).

[136] F. Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, p. 313.

population.[137] In doing so, and in portraying Napoleon as the sole source of French aggression, public hostility found a useful focus and outlet. Conveniently also, it diverted discontent away from the failings of the regime at home and the privations of war. Stuart Semmel, in his excellent account of British propaganda of the period, has argued that the reiteration of French 'otherness' and the crude portrayal of Napoleon said as much about the weakness of the governing classes in Britain as it did about genuine belief.[138] Therefore, as the war dragged on and people faced a daily struggle with the hardship it brought about, they were less inclined to abuse the French in their midst but instead sought to blame the perceived source of their deprivation and high taxation in the form of the governing classes. Indeed historical studies of popular protest at this time focus on the discontent over bread shortages in 1795 and in 1800/01, the riots which took place against enforced conscription into the armed forces, and in the political protest of the proliferating radical societies.[139]

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Viewed across a period of fifty years, the evidence of popular violence and the treatment of both French officers on parole and French soldiers incarcerated in gaol suggests a significant change in attitudes on the part of the English people. The number of accounts or reports of personal violence against French prisoners of war diminished drastically from the period of the Seven Years War to the turn of the nineteenth century, whereas the volume of documentary evidence for the later period as a whole is far greater. Instead, these sources indicate greater integration into local community life

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[137] For a comprehensive examination of British propaganda in the early nineteenth century and the place of the figure of Napoleon see Frank Klingberg and Sigurd Hustvedt, *The Warning Drum; the British Home Front Faces Napoleon: Broadsides of 1803*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1944; Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, pp. 19-38.
[138] S. Semmel, *Napoleon and The British*, p. 54
[139] J. Stevenson and R. Quinault, *Popular Protest and Public Order*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1974; Alan Booth, 'Popular Loyalism and Public Violence in the North West of England, 1790 – 1800', *Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1983, pp. 295 – 313; J. Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances*; J. Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics*.

through practices such as marriage, or the establishment of clubs and societies in which the French men could provide theatrical and musical entertainment for the local well-to-do, for example.[140] As French officers could sometimes be detained for years in English towns and villages so they became integral to the functioning of the local community within which they were held as opposed to providing a focal point for universal hatreds. As animosity with the French nation peaked in the form of regular and larger scale military conflict through the eighteenth century, so the greater numbers of French and English came into contact and were afforded the opportunity of direct encounter. This served to moderate and modify responses providing a more nuanced and interesting picture of Anglo-French relations and attitudes. Indeed once initial contact had developed into durable encounter it became increasingly untenable to formulate reactions within such unrealistically oppositional frameworks as those provided by British print culture. When one considers the enduring nature of interaction which took place between the French prisoners and the British host communities one finds the full range of relationships that would otherwise have existed in any communal grouping, from friendship and love to enmity and hatred. Certainly nationality was an influential factor in moulding responses, but these could equally have been positive as well as negative. The men's 'Frenchness' did not elicit universal hostility as other historians have implied.

The rhetoric of humanity moreover, and its increasing connection with national behaviour by the turn of the nineteenth century, was the product of social and ideological developments largely unconnected with the presence of French nationals on English soil. Instead it was brought about through the struggles of the middle ranks of

[140] There are a number of examples to be found in parish registers, principally relating to the period 1793 – 1815 when French men were detained for longer periods in Britain. F. Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain*, gives examples of marriages taking place in Thame in Oxfordshire and Leek in Staffordshire, p. 308.

society to articulate and embody the true nature of Englishness, and through the reinvigorated philanthropic impulse. Nevertheless, the appropriation of ‘humanity’ as an ideal for universal behaviour had profound implications on the way in which people responded to the presence of the French prisoners of war and the way in which these men were ultimately treated.

Chapter 4: Popular Responses to Military Service during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

From the evidence of Anglo-French encounters studied thus far, it can be seen that a national identification in England in the eighteenth century did not undergo any teleological process of development, to be appropriated uniformly by an increasing proportion of the population. Instead, nationality was both fluid and context-dependent. This then raises the question about the extent to which such an identification can be said to be formed commonly among the British people by the turn of the nineteenth century as has been argued by historians such as Linda Colley and Stephen Conway.[1] In the light of this, therefore, it is pertinent to re-examine the main body of personal evidence used to form such interpretations, namely the responses to government surveys of manpower and resources carried out in the 1790s and again in 1803, to establish a greater understanding of the problems of communal and collective national identification.

The final chapter of this thesis examines popular responses in England to the government's call to arms against the forces of Revolutionary and, later, Napoleonic France after 1793. As it is concerned primarily with issues of military recruitment and attitudes towards armed service the focus is upon men eligible to serve, notionally any able-bodied man between 15 and 55 years old and taller than 5' 4" in height.[2] Evidence for the responses of women to the war effort is virtually non-existent in the records of

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[1] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 – 1837*, London, Pimlico, 1992; Stephen Conway, 'War and National Identity in the mid-eighteenth century British Isles', *English Historical Review*, No. 468, 2001, pp. 863-893, See also Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, pp. 38-41; Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740 – 1830*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1987; Lawrence Stone (ed.), *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 2, 4, 6; Colin Haydon, 'I love my King and my Country, but a Roman Catholic I hate: anti-Catholicism, xenophobia and national identity in eighteenth century England', in T. Claydon and I. McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity 1650 - 1850*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 44-45, for a similar argument examining the impetus behind local military recruitment during the 1740s and 1750s.

[2] J. Gibson, and M. Medlycott, *Militia Lists and Musters 1757 – 1876*, London, Federation of Family History Societies, 2000, p. 7.

government surveys at this time as they specifically sought to reconstruct a picture of available manpower and resources to be called upon in the event of a French invasion.[3] Whilst a significant proportion of the British population are therefore excluded from this study, a focus upon that part eligible for military recruitment is of great value in considering the extent and nature of national awareness and patriotism, for this group of people found themselves in a unique situation. Here were men who potentially could be forced by the political elites of their nation to encounter the French in armed conflict, and possibly die, in defence of an entity notwithstanding their personal opinions towards it.

This chapter seeks to elucidate these opinions further and, in so doing, reflect on the nature of national identification among this group of people. The approach therefore differs from others in this thesis as it is not based on face-to-face encounter between English and French but on responses to the national situation and perceptions of the French threat and is therefore another form of virtual encounter between the two peoples. However, such an approach is of value in several respects. Firstly, it permits a far greater geographical and numerical study of the population than is possible by looking only at those involved in direct contact with French nationals. In doing so it enables a valuable consideration of the extent to which attitudes were mediated by the encounters examined in previous chapters. Secondly, the threat posed by the French and the possibility of having to engage in armed conflict represents a very different domain in which virtual encounter was experienced to that presented by the evidence of the press and in relation to which a number of historical interpretations on national

[3] Linda Colley has included a study on women's patriotism during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars which has formed a chapter in *Britons: Forging the Nation*, entitled 'Womanpower', pp. 237-281. Margaret Hunt has carried out a similar survey for the period of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Kathleen Wilson, *New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 29-47.

awareness have been based.[4] Indeed, as responses to government surveys were sometimes recorded verbatim, it is a perspective that enables reflection on the extent to which the historic anti-French propaganda expounded in the press was appropriated or otherwise by a large part of its target audience. The French declaration of war and the subsequent need for serving military personnel forced men to consider their position with respect to the 'nation' and declare the nature of their attachment, and the historian of this period is fortunate in that a proportion of these opinions have been recorded.

The war itself was therefore instrumental in forming that sense of nationality and indeed those historians who have traced the development of a British nationality through the eighteenth century have unanimously highlighted the importance of war in that process. Steven Conway, in his work on identity during the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years War has shown that the threat of invasion at that time was a powerful impetus at first for the formation of local militia groups with local defence interests at heart, but which, he claimed, would later develop to show greater regard for national concerns.[5] Both Jack Greene and J.C.D. Clark have not only argued that the triumph of the Seven Years War provided for the first time 'British' heroes and successes of which the population could feel proud, but also that the resounding military victory, which saw the French military and political threat weakened globally, was perceived in terms of a national triumph as the result of the national effort.[6] For Linda Colley, focusing on the long term, it was the fact of repeated and sustained conflicts with France throughout the century that provided the impetus for a British national awareness. It was therefore formed in opposition to perceived French characteristics

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[4] This aspect of historical study is discussed more fully in the Introduction pp. 7-20.
[5] S. Conway, 'War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth Century British Isles', *English Historical Review*, p. 864.
[6] Jack Greene, 'Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution', in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol.2 The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 220. J.C.D. Clarke, 'Protestantism, Nationalism and National Identity, 1660 – 1832', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1, March 2000, pp. 249-276, p. 265.

and, through adversity, forced a recognition of commonalities with one's compatriots.[7] Colley's interpretation nevertheless ascribed primary importance to the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in this process, largely because of the unprecedented reliance of the government on the 'active' co-operation of the populace in fighting the war.

Colley's is one among the unanimous voice of historians who agree that the majority of the British population were loyal to the government and supported the principle of the war against France at this time.[8] Her argument for a coherent, popular national awareness and widespread support for the government conduct of the war is significant as it rested partly on a distinction of terminology between 'active' patriotism and 'passive' support by the people. Whilst fully acknowledging the place of political radicals who supported the French constitutional experiment and other dissenting voices critical of government policy and those calling for peace, Colley cited the evidence of unprecedented numbers of men who served in a military capacity in defence of their nation as proof of popular active engagement with the national predicament and therefore of national identification.[9]

It is estimated that 10% of all British adult males undertook military service in the period 1793 – 1815, rising to 16% if volunteers and militia service is included.[10]

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[7] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, see chapters entitled 'Womanpower', pp. 237-281 and 'Manpower', pp. 283-319.

[8] A large number of studies have been carried out on this period and which refer generally to the response to the war by the population. The following list is a selection of studies on the political organisation by the British people which provides a useful context for this sentiment. David Ginter, 'The Loyalist Association Movement of 1792 – 93 and British Public Opinion', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1966, pp. 179–190; J. E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: Anti-war Liberalism in England, 1793 – 1815*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982; R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country: The English Loyalists and the French Revolution*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1983; Emma McLeod, *A War of Ideas*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1998; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*.

[9] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, pp. 283-291.

[10] Richard Glover, *Britain at Bay: Defence Against Bonaparte, 1803 – 1814*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1973, p. 125; Ian Christie, 'Conservatism and Stability in British Society', in Mark Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 170; H. Wheeler and A. Broadley, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England. The Story of the Great Terror*, Cirencester, Nonsuch Publishing, 2007, pp. 99-100; E. MacLeod, *War of Ideas*, p. 228. Austin Gee, *The*

This figure is even higher if the pioneering services are taken into account. This gives an approximate ratio of 1 in 6 of the adult male population of Britain enrolled in the defence of the nation which, at first glance, provides compelling evidence for a mass popular patriotism of the 'active' kind described by Colley. However, assuming a weight of numbers as indicative of public opinion is problematic in two key respects as it suggests firstly that patriotic support for the national effort was consistent over time, and also that enlistment into military service was a straightforward reflection of national awareness through a demonstration of loyalty and, by extension, approval of the government's conduct of the war. However, the naval mutinies at the Nore and at Spithead in 1797, some four years into the war, the increasingly vocal demands for peace, and the numbers of militia deserters by 1808 all demonstrate that popular support for the war fluctuated in intensity as the years passed.[11] It is the aim of this chapter to investigate the second presumption more closely and the place of patriotic loyalty as a motivating factor in driving men to take up arms. In order to provide balance, the study will also consider those men who were unwilling to fight the French and their reasons for doing so, either by refusing to bear arms at all or by desertion from the armed forces.

For a number of reasons to be discussed later in the chapter, military enlistment at this time bore disproportionately on men of poorer backgrounds. Studying the popular response is however problematic. Very little in terms of written evidence has been left behind by the lower orders, and there is understandably also very little that quotes them verbatim. We are therefore fortunate in having two sources which are of immense value that allow us to get at popular opinion: the Posse Comitatus lists of 1798

British Volunteer Movement, 1794 – 1814, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 2 looks at the numbers comprising volunteer forces in Britain at the outbreak of war following the Peace of Amiens.

[11] J. E. Cookson has carried out excellent work on the volunteer movement, its levels of personnel and its relationship with the ruling elites between 1793 and 1815. See J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal*, 32, 1989, pp. 867-891.

and the Levée en Masse Returns of 1803. With such unprecedented levels of recruitment necessary to fight the war, the government needed a detailed picture of the resources and manpower available throughout the country. Lords Lieutenant and their deputies were accordingly required to provide detailed returns in 1798 and again in 1803 of available manpower and equipment to comprise a reserve force in the event of a French invasion. The Posse Comitatus Lists, 1798 were made under the Defence of the Realm Act of that year, and the 1803 lists were made under the First and Second Defence Acts, 1803. Collectively they are known as the 'Defence Lists', and, unlike the militia ballot lists which also had to be provided by local officials, the details of men were not intended to be used for recruitment into the militia forces.[12] Crucially, in some instances, the men's responses are recorded verbatim and therefore they are valuable in providing an accurate and honest indication of people's opinions towards the war and towards the French enemy independent of pressures to enlist.

The evidence furnished by the Defence Lists has been used by Linda Colley to form the bedrock of her argument for a mass, popular British identity. This chapter will complement this work by extending the geographical scope of records used to include detailed surveys of manpower carried out in Kent, East Sussex, Hampshire and Exeter, as well as to provide greater context for the Defence Lists Returns with other government surveys. These were concerned with enlistment rates and the geographical distribution of the fighting force, and are of value in extending the time period of study beyond 1798 and 1803 as well as providing useful comparative detail with respect to occupation and location. As such, they provide an important statistical basis upon which to base a study of popular loyalty and an interpretation of national awareness and identification. In conjunction with the evidence provided by Quarter Sessions records

[12] J. Gibson, and M. Medlycott, *Militia Lists and Musters*, p. 8. The lists of men eligible for ballot into the militia forces became Household Forms after the 1802 Militia Act and were distributed direct to the household and completed by the occupants.

and courts martial proceedings against deserters or absconders, a full range of responses to the national call to arms may be examined.

To be sure, other historical studies of the popular response to war against France at this time may also help to shed light on the nature of patriotism and national identification outside of the political nation. However, interpretations of the situation are far from unanimous. E. P. Thompson's seminal study of working class political culture in the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, *The Making of the English Working Class*, highlighted the formation of a working class consciousness during the 1790s in tension with the social and political status quo and, through this, identified an increasingly strident assertion of political rights by both men and women through the formation of politically radical Corresponding Societies.[13] The wars against France lasted for twenty two years, with only a brief respite between 1802 and 1803, and throughout this period Thompson has argued for a shift in the 'sub-political' attitudes of the lower orders tending away from traditionalism and deference towards a political radicalism brought about through the conduit of class consciousness. H. T. Dickinson has argued for the prevailing effect of economic hardship, especially intensified in the food shortage years of 1795 and 1800 – 1801, rather than political radicalism as the cause of popular disaffection, whilst Roger Wells has claimed that, in the political and economic turbulence of the 1790s, widespread opposition to the conduct of the war manifested, intensifying existing political radicalism and drawing the country close to a revolution of its own.[14]

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[13] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Middlesex, Victor Gollancz, 1982, pp. 85, 202–204, 661–663.

[14] H. T. Dickinson, *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789 – 1815*, London, Macmillan, 1989, pp. 124-125. Roger Wells, *Insurrection: The British Experience 1795 – 1803*, Gloucester, Alan Sutton, 1982; R. Wells, 'English Society and Revolutionary Politics in the 1790s: the case for insurrection', in M. Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution*.

An alternative and opposing view of the situation in Britain at this time has been offered by both J. C. D. Clark and Ian Christie. Christie has argued that a unique social cohesion in Britain, based on fine gradations of status and power, as well as increasing social prosperity and the improved provision of assistance to the poor provided the mechanisms which could uniquely absorb the pressures of political and economic change in the 1790s and the means of uniting the nation behind the war effort.[15] Clark has stressed the continuing strength and resilience throughout the eighteenth century of traditional institutions of power, such as the monarchy, the aristocracy and the Church of England, and the endurance of conservative ideas of authority and deference as instrumental in avoiding revolutionary upheaval at this time.[16] The conservative message therefore found instinctive support among a population which readily believed in the superiority of the British constitution and the benevolence of social and political liberties which accordingly flowed from there. Coupled with the effectiveness of loyalist propaganda in the 1790s, in terms of both circulation levels and the success with which it appropriated the discourse of patriotism, a number of historians have argued for a prevailing loyalism and political conservatism among the population.[17]

Indeed, the early years of the 1790s witnessed a spate of popular protests in Manchester, Birmingham and Nottingham in support of the political status quo. These 'Church and King' riots were a direct response to the presence of politically radical

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[15] Ian Christie, *Stress and Stability in Late Eighteenth Century Britain*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984; I. Christie, 'Conservatism and Stability in British Society', in M. Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution.*
[16] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688 – 1832*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985.
[17] H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, Methuen, 1977; H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Loyalism in Britain in the 1790s' in Eckhart Hellmuth, *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990; Stella Cottrell, 'The Devil on Two Sticks: Francophobia in 1803', in Raphael Samuel, *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British Identity. Volume 3 National Fictions*, London, Routledge, 1989. For studies on the content of loyalist propaganda at this time see Colin Jones (ed.), *Britain and Revolutionary France: Conflict, Subversion and Propaganda,* Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 1983; Thomas Scofield, 'Conservative Political Thought in Britain in Response to the French Revolution', *Historical Journal*, No. 29. 1986, pp. 601-622; Jennifer Mori, 'Languages of Loyalism: patriotism, nationhood and the state in the 1790s', *English Historical Review*, No. 118, 2003, pp. 33-58.

societies and organisations formed in support of the Revolution and calling for religious and political liberty at home.[18] Those involved were drawn largely from the plebeian ranks and therefore the events seemingly represented a mass affirmation, expressed somewhat forcefully and in disorderly fashion, of the polity. However, historical understanding of Church and King protests highlights the problems generally of gauging the identification of the population towards 'nation' and their attitudes towards the war. Whilst Dickinson has concluded those involved were driven by a deep-seated sentiment of loyalty and innate political conservatism, R. B. Rose has argued that the patriotism of the Church and King riots was simply a veneer to indulge in disorder and plunder and hardly indicative of a mass patriotic fervour.[19]

Given such contradictory views, it is clear that 'loyalism', 'patriotism' or indeed 'radicalism' cannot be regarded as unproblematic discourses. With respect to the Church and King protests, the initial role of the authorities is unclear, whether instrumental in encouraging such outpouring of loyalty or as onlookers to a spontaneous series of events. However it is clear that, once demonstrations had escalated, they were seen to threaten the social and political order and so had to be speedily dispersed by the use of regular troops.[20] What is significant moreover is that popular gatherings of any kind were generally feared by the elites because of a perceived potential for insurrection.[21] A Royal Proclamation issued in May 1792, even before the outbreak of

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[18]Studies of the Church and King riots include: R. B. Rose, 'The Priestley Riots of 1791', *Past and Present*, Vol. 18, 1960, pp. 68–88; M. I. Thomis, *Politics and Society in Nottingham, 1785 – 1835*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1969; A. Booth, 'Popular Loyalism and Public Violence in the North West of England, 1790 – 1800', *Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1983 pp. 295–313; John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700 – 1832*, Harlow, Longman,1992; George Rudé, *The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England 1730 - 1848*, London, Serif, 1995.

[19] H. T. Dickinson, *Britain and the French Revolution*, pp. 124-125; R. B. Rose, 'The Priestley Riots of 1791', *Past and Present*.

[20] R. B. Rose, 'The Priestly Riots', *Past and Present*, p. 80; M. I. Thomis, *Politics and Society in Nottingham*, p. 175; H. T. Dickinson, *Britain and the French Revolution*, pp. 119–120; J. Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England*, p. 179.

[21] The attitudes of the authorities towards various popular protests and the social fear of lower order insurrection and disorder is discussed more generally in the case studies of G. Rudé, *The Crowd in History*; J. Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England*.

war between Britain and Revolutionary France, warned the population against any sort of tumult but instead called on people to express their support through a Loyal Address to the government or King.[22] This was a much safer, more controlled, outlet for popular loyalty being made via petition or written representation at the behest of local notables and it offers tacit recognition on the part of central government that large groups of people, loyal or otherwise, were difficult to control and, therefore, not entirely to be trusted.[23]

A similar issue of interpretation has been applied to the formation of volunteer corps as a military response to the conflict with Revolutionary France.[24] Whereas the government was not instrumental in bringing about the very first volunteer corps, it quickly seized upon the impetus to establish local military outfits in order to exert some form of control over their eventual form and responsibilities. Accordingly, they tried to ensure that the membership of these corps was carefully restricted to trustworthy men, untainted by political radicalism, and serving under the command of their social superiors.[25] The key to both the membership and the operation of volunteer corps, as Austin Gee has pointed out, was manageability and the re-statement of the social and political hierarchy.[26] Nevertheless, concerns were still expressed among the elites at the fact that these were independent organisations, responsible for their own governance

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[22] R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country,* p. 1; David Eastwood, 'Patriotism and the English State in the 1790s', in M. Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution,* p. 150.
[23] This point is made both with respect to the Church and King protests as well as otherwise. See David Wykes, 'The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified: the Priestley Riots and the Victims of Church and King Mobs', *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society,* No. 20, 1991 – 1992, pp. 17-39; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain*, London, St. Martin's Press, 1995, p. 286; G. Rudé, *The Crowd in History,* pp. 135-148.
[24] For studies which examine the formation of volunteer corps in the 1790s and again after the commencement of war in 1803 see, J. R. Western, 'The Volunteer Movement as an Anti-Revolutionary Force, 1793 – 1801', *English Historical Review,* Vol. 71, No. 281, 1956, pp. 603-614; J. E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation, 1793 – 1814*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997; J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal*; Austin Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement;* R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country*.
[25] J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal,* p. 869; H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Loyalism in Britain in the 1790s', in E. Hellmuth, *The Transformation of Political Culture,* pp. 524-525; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement,* pp. 4-6.
[26] A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement,* p. 116.

largely unfettered by the dictates of central government. Still graver concerns were aired at the prospect of arming such a band of men.[27]

Essentially the problem lay in the fact that the patriotism of the population could not be determined exactly along the lines desired by the ruling elites. Despite the strength and pervasiveness of the loyalist propaganda message, no one could be sure that it was being appropriated by its audience in the ways intended.[28] As a result, any mass expression of loyalty or patriotism encompassed a variety of views on how that loyalty was constituted or indeed how that patriotic enthusiasm should be expressed. Even supposedly 'safe' outlets for plebeian support for the government and the conduct of the war such as the Loyalist Associations have been shown to have included members who also favoured moderate political reform.[29] And therefore whereas many expressions of loyalty were spontaneous, as opposed to being conceived by those in government, such demonstrations were nevertheless understood to require some form of harnessing or control from above as it was recognised they may not exactly fit the form of patriotic fervour desired by those in charge.[30] Thus 'patriotism', like 'loyalism' or 'radicalism', was a dynamic discourse whose appropriation and expression was altered according to circumstance and to personnel. Through the sheer numbers involved and

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[27] NA HO 42/73. See also H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Loyalism in Britain in the 1790s', in E. Hellmuth, *The Transformation of Political Culture*, p. 525; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, pp. 113-114, 145-148.

[28] H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism, 1789 – 1815', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution*, pp. 105-106. For general theories on cultural appropriation see Roger Chartier, 'Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France', in Stephen Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture*, Berlin, Mouton, 1984, p. 234; Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print: Power and Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1989, p. 4; Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995, p.92.

[29] D. Ginter, 'The Loyalist Association Movement', *Historical Journal*, pp. 179–185. For further studies on the Loyalist Association Movement and the involvement of central government see Austin Mitchell, 'The Association Movement of 1792/93', *Historical Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1961, pp. 56-77; Michael Duffy, 'William Pitt and the Origins of the Loyalist Association Movement of 1792', *Historical Journal*, No. 39, 1996, pp. 943-962; R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country*.

[30] In addition to studies on the origins of the Loyalist Associations, see also Mark Philp, *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797 – 1815*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, pp. 1-2, 7; H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism, 1789 – 1815', in H. T. Dickinson, *Britain and the French Revolution*, p. 120 which consider the spontaneity of the formation of the volunteer corps.

across the twenty two year duration of the conflict there neither was, nor could there be, a single form of national awareness or identification.

Inevitably this has implications for any conclusions to be made in the chapter, not least because of the focus on a specific segment of the population as well as the nature of the archival source material used. Such evidence as is provided by the Posse Comitatus Lists or the Levee en Masse Returns provides a snapshot picture of a specific point in time. However, the basis of analysis as one of national identification is still useful in that it provides an insight into nationality in certain conditions, namely that of perceived national threat, and the diversity of personnel allows conclusions to be drawn with respect to aspects such as proximity to that threat as well as social rank or occupation. The varied nature of the archival material moreover enables a complementary quantitative and qualitative approach to be adopted which may demonstrate not only the variety of responses made to the national call to arms, but also the bases upon which they were made.

A Conditional Patriotism: Responses to the National Call to Arms

An analysis of the statistical data to be found in government surveys relating either to recruitment levels or to a professed willingness to fight bears out the interpretation of a multiplicity of reasons for men taking up arms. Awareness of the national plight and a loyalist patriotism count among the influences of particularist concerns and personal circumstances which determined men's responses. Proximity to the perceived French threat was a major factor. Figure 1 shows a summary of returns for Folkestone in Kent in 1795 and the data for enrolment compiled in 1803. In 1795, out of a total of 718 eligible men between the ages of 15 and 60 years, a total of 354 were either already in volunteer service (215 men) or professed a willingness to do so. This

represents a proportion of 49% of the total number. Those others who were prepared to offer themselves did so within a non-combative capacity, a further 9% of the total eligible. In 1803, at the height of the invasion scare, 516 men out of 748 were either already enrolled in military service or were prepared to do so. As a proportion this number represents 69% of the total and is reflective of the heightened perception of threat and the cumulative effect of ongoing recruitment. Because of the different bases of data collection in 1795 and 1803 there is no indication for the earlier year of the number of men who declared themselves unwilling to serve, however in 1803 this stood at 158. It is however noteworthy that, even at a time of widely held belief in an imminent invasion and occupation by French forces, still 21% of respondents declared themselves, for whatever reason, unwilling to fight.

Figure 1: Summary of Returns for Folkestone, 1795 and 1803 (EKRO **Fo/CPm/9)**

1795: Total number of eligible males between 15 and 60 years: 718

Remarks	**Number**
Infirm	202
Serving in Volunteer Corps	215
Aliens and Quakers	22
Willing to serve on horseback	9
Willing to serve on foot	130
Willing to act as Pioneers	20
Willing to act as servants with cattle	12
Willing to act as servants with teams	7
Willing to act as guides	26

1803: Total number of men surveyed: 748

Remark	**Number**
Currently serving/willing to serve	516
Unwilling to serve	158
Ineligible	49
Apprentice	7
Constable	3
Absconded	2
Quaker	8
Dissenting minister	1
Medical	3
Teacher	1

Folkestone stands at the extreme South Eastern tip of England, less than thirty miles from the nearest point of the French coast and hence a prime target for invasion forces. The Levee en Masse returns are also available for Exeter in Devon. Exeter is a coastal town in the South West of England, and hence much further from French soil, and the returns show that out of 3102 men surveyed, approximately 1200 were unwilling to take up arms (Figure 2). As perhaps to be expected because of the less likelihood of French forces landing there, this represents a larger proportion of the male population than for Folkestone (39%). However, the return shows that 1592 men were either already serving in some capacity or were willing to do so. This represents a

proportion of 51% comparable to that for Folkestone. Evidently the geographical incidence of responses warrants further detailed study of particular localities or communities in order to provide possible explanations for figures such as this.

Figure 2: Summary of data contained in Hoskins, W. G. *Exeter Militia Lists. 1803*, London, Phillimore, 1972

Total number of men surveyed: 3,102

Willing to serve	785
Already serving in some capacity	432
Volunteer	369
Infirm	162
Incapable of serving	39
Lame	32
Blind	11
Deaf	9
Quaker	8
'nervous'	3
Apprentice	46
Constable	25
Clergyman	4
Discharged from some form of military service	6
Aliens	2

Total number currently or previously serving, and those willing to serve in a military capacity: 1,618

Correlation of data on age and willingness/unwillingness to serve in a military capacity

Age (years)	Currently serving/willing to serve	Unwilling to serve
17 – 21	97	53
22 – 26	119	54
27 – 31	93	52
32 – 36	92	34
37 – 41	87	26
42 – 46	80	29
47 – 51	45	29
52 – 56	32	29
56+	2	0

In August 1796 information was gathered from across England and Wales on a county basis on the numbers of men fit and liable to serve in the militia forces and those already serving (Figure 3). The figures were then compared as a ratio of men currently serving to the number of men eligible to do so. Only three counties may be found to have the lowest ratio of less than 1:10; Dorset, Bedford and Montgomery. This relatively high number reflects the fact that Dorset is a southern coastal county under potential threat of a direct invasion attempt by the French. However, both Bedford and Montgomery are more central counties. Various reasons may be offered for this such as the efficiency and eagerness of the Lords Lieutenant to recruit or the strength of popular affiliations to the local landowner who encouraged men to enlist en masse under local leadership.

Figure 3: Returns of Men Fit and Liable to Serve in the Militia, 13th August 1796

Analysis of Figures (NA PRO 30/8/244)

This information lists both numbers of men fit and liable to serve in the militia and the numbers actually serving in the militia at that time. These figures are used to express a ratio to one, as follows:

Number of men serving in the militia **:** Number of men fit and liable to serve in militia

Ratio	Location
Ratio < 1:10	Dorset, Bedford, Montgomery
Ratio between 1:10 and 1:14	Buckingham, Yorkshire – East Riding, Middlesex, Oxford, Northumberland, Hartford, Essex, Suffolk, Warwick, Cornwall, Berkshire, Sussex, Worcester, Cambridge, Southampton, Devon, Leicester, Monmouth, Brecon, Hereford, Wiltshire, Rutland
Ratio between 1:15 and 1:19	Chester, Norfolk, Durham, Yorkshire – North Riding, Northampton, Salop, Gloucester, Kent, Westmoreland
Ratio > 1:20	Lancaster, Yorkshire – West Riding, Derby, Stafford, Pembroke & Haverfordwest, Carmarthen, Surrey, Cardigan, Cumberland

Among the list of those counties with a ratio of men serving to men fit and liable between 1:10 and 1:14, many are southern and/or coastal districts such as Essex, Suffolk, Southampton, Devon and Wiltshire. The presence of districts such as Worcester and Hereford, and Welsh counties of Monmouth and Brecon, reveal the vulnerability felt in these regions at the possibility of a French invasion via Ireland. Surprisingly, both Kent and Norfolk have a ratio of men serving to the numbers eligible of greater than 1:15, and yet both are counties where the threat of invasion would have been keenly felt due to their location. In the case of Norfolk, this anomaly may perhaps be best explained by the fact that it was a predominantly agricultural county, relatively sparsely populated and therefore difficult to organise recruitment. With people reliant on the land for subsistence, there is also less possibility of serving in the militia for extended or even regular periods due to the seasonal nature of the work. In addition, these results do not show the possibility of a large number of men already serving in the regular army or volunteer forces, which appears to have been the case for the East Kent regions. Those with the lowest ratio of eligible men to those serving are again, mainly located in the north and west of England, such as Lancaster, York and Cumberland. Surrey also falls in this category; however, whilst it is a southern county, it has no coastal borders.

A more comprehensive national survey was also undertaken in 1796 to ascertain the numbers of men from each county in England and Wales who were prepared to fight in the event of an invasion by the French (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Numbers of Men Willing to Serve in Case of an Invasion

Analysis of Locations (NA PRO 30/8)

Key
A: Willing to serve anywhere in military district in the case of an invasion.
B: Willing to serve in any part of the county, or up to twenty miles.
C: Willing to serve locally only, or a distance limited to twenty miles.
D: Willingness not ascertained.
E: Column A expressed as a percentage of the total.
F: Column C expressed as a percentage of the total.

Location	A	B	C	D	Total	E	F
Bedford	186	0	160	0	346	53.7	46.2
Berkshire	60	0	0	0	60	100	0
Buckinghamshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambridge	50	0	263	0	313	15.9	84
Chester	380	360	490	0	1230	30.8	39.8
Cinque Ports	1430	0	0	420	1850	77.2	0
Cornwall	2170	400	1091	754	4415	49.1	24.7
Derby	250	150	60	0	460	54.3	13
Devon	5824	50	1978	948	8800	66.1	22.4
Dorset	1575	0	580	110	2265	69.5	25.6
Durham	640	0	1005	300	1945	32.9	51.6
Essex	290	50	1962	60	2362	12.2	83
Gloucester	470	0	1880	0	2350	20	80
Hampshire	1960	60	1100	1020	4140	47.3	26.5
Hereford	180	0	270	0	450	40	60
Hertford	330	110	710	0	1150	28.6	61.7
Huntingdon	100	0	60	0	160	62.5	37.5
Kent	3475	120	990	691	5276	65.8	18.7
Lancaster	2500	50	3890	610	7050	35.4	55.1
Leicester	580	0	340	0	920	63	36.9
Lincoln	780	220	440	0	1440	54.1	30.5
London	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Middlesex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monmouth	46	640	290	0	976	4.7	29.7
Norfolk	1111	100	1710	0	2921	38	58.5
Northampton	450	0	580	0	1030	43.6	56.3
Northumberland	1640	140	380	190	2350	69.7	16.1
Nottingham	420	0	150	700	1270	33	11.8
Oxford	110	0	490	0	600	18.3	81.6
Radnor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	2063	60	1420	1263	4806	42.9	29.5
Stafford	300	0	1720	320	2340	12.8	73.5
Suffolk	1010	60	750	300	2120	47.6	35.3
Surrey	560	0	1760	420	2740	20.4	64.2
Sussex	520	60	120	300	1000	52	12
Warwick	374	0	591	280	1245	30	47.4
Isle of Wight	2126	0	0	0	2126	100	0
Wiltshire	1260	0	1010	0	2270	55.5	44.4
Worcester	230	0	690	0	920	25	75
Yorks – East Riding	1270	0	180	0	1450	87.5	12.4
Yorks – West Riding	2780	0	1170	0	3950	70.3	29.6
Yorks – North Riding	840	60	240	480	1620	51.8	14.8

In terms of overall numbers the evidence is conditionally distorted by the premise of an invasion, however for geographically comparative purposes the data is useful. The information shown in this table summarises in detail the number of men willing to fight and their preferred locations. The total represents the number of men willing to serve in either infantry or cavalry regiments for a particular town or county, and this has been further broken down to show how far from their own locality the men would be willing to travel to take up arms. For easier comparison between locations, I have expressed as a percentage the number of men willing to fight anywhere in the military district, and those unwilling to travel outside of their immediate locality to fight. Generally, where this is a high proportion of respondents willing to serve anywhere in the military district, they are from eastern or southern coastal counties such as Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Kent, the Cinque Ports, Devon and Cornwall, or towns such as Leicester or Nottingham. Berkshire, a more central county, also returns a high proportion of men willing to serve across the military district. The figure of 100% of men willing to fight outside their immediate locality is interesting however, and this may indicate more the zeal of the Lord Lieutenant in demonstrating local loyalty, or alternatively the product of an official not properly completing the task. It could also indicate a firm attachment to the person in charge of mustering a fighting force reflecting ties of deference or employment. The only other region in which this phenomenon occurs is the Isle of Wight which, being of a relatively small population and particularly vulnerable to isolation and attack by the French in an invasion, may be a more accurate reflection of local sentiment.

The incidence of men preferring to serve only in the immediate locality, classified as within twenty miles of their home, follows a similar pattern. In geographically proximate areas to the French coast this proportion is lower as the

military district as a whole was under threat. Hence returns for the Cinque Ports show all men willing to serve in the wider district and counties such as Kent, Dorset and Devon with in excess of 60% of respondents willing to do likewise. Both Norfolk and Essex demonstrate higher levels of local attachment than national, even in the event of an invasion. This is perhaps because the communities in these areas are more isolated both from each other and from the effects of government propaganda. Perhaps also many were farmers or who were engaged in other such trade or businesses where men would be reluctant, or find it impossible, to serve far from home. Notably the respondents to the survey were men not already serving in the armed forces and therefore the figures do not reflect this proportion of men from within a community. In central areas, where the immediacy of the French threat was less keenly perceived, the numbers willing to serve only within the locality rises. In Monmouth, for example, the proportion stood at almost 30% as compared to only 5% willing to serve across the military district. A similar division may be seen in Cambridge with 84% agreeing to serve locally against 16% undertaking to serve across the whole district. Other areas to the north and west of the country, such as Durham, Stafford and Lancaster, and inland towns such as Oxford, Warwick and Hertford also fall into this category. Being protected by their geographical location from any immediate danger of an invading French army, the concerns of the populace were more local than national; a concern to protect personal and local property above the defence of national interests.

Notably, some men explicitly specified their local affiliation in the Defence List Returns. Two among the Exeter returns stated that they would 'do his utmost in Defence of (the) City',[31] whilst the return for East Stratton parish in Hampshire declared, 'The above persons are Willing to be arm'd and Exercised Within the parish of East Stratton,

[31] W.G. Hoskins, *Exeter Militia List 1803*, London, Phillimore, 1972, p. 65.

but not to go out of the said parish Except the French Should land in England then they are Willing to march to any part of Hampshire to meet them'.[32] Clearly in the latter case the willingness to protect national interests was conditional and one may conclude that self-preservation was envisioned within a local sphere. This tells us much about the place of national awareness at this time as a facet of identity. In both cases the men cited geographically or administratively bounded entities as the focus for protection, namely a city and a parish. These are units of space which would have been familiar to those concerned and demarcated the functions of their everyday lives to a great extent.[33] Moreover they were physically definable entities with which to be familiar and offered real places or people in need of protection. The concept of 'nation' could not offer such definite items to be protected and it therefore figured lower as a priority, in the case of the Hampshire respondent, something to be defended only in the event of physical invasion.

Naturally there are alternative explanations for such responses, for example that the men, through the nature of their work, were tied closely to the locality and to leave this in order to fight might entail a reduction or a complete loss of earnings and certainly a disruption to home life. Nevertheless, this still represented a form of tie to the locality before the nation even if envisioned in terms of personal interest. This level of local attachment was significant and has been demonstrated in a number of studies of various aspects of identification at this time. J. E. Cookson, in his work on the volunteer regiments formed after 1793, has demonstrated the heterogeneity of responses to national defence and the continuance of local defence concerns, a sentiment which indeed persisted throughout the war. Cookson claimed that the formation of a volunteer

[32] HRO QS22/1/2/5.
[33] For a discussion on the different types of community in early modern England see, Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington, *Communities in Early Modern England*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 1-15.

corps could help signify the importance of a town or community from whence it had come, and indeed the government encountered resistance to attempted amalgamations of local bodies into larger regional units.[34] Both this and the statistical and qualitative evidence of response demonstrate that men's first thoughts were for the protection of their locality rather than their nation. The latter was only necessary should the French forces mount an attack.

One group response which is of particular interest, however, is the return for Stratfield Turgis in Hampshire which states, 'None would say he was willing to serve'.[35] The word is underlined in the original document indicating perhaps that men would serve only in the event of a crisis or that they would only do so after some coercion or inducement. However, evidence such as this suggests not that people were unpatriotic or were unconcerned for the national interest. Indeed, the fact that the men were prepared to serve, albeit reluctantly, shows that they understood the national predicament and were prepared to fight in defence of Great Britain. In terms of a national awareness therefore, such an identification certainly existed for these men. The 'imagined community' of nation was sufficiently developed to envisage a national interest at stake in the conflict and, indeed, a proportion of those surveyed were prepared to leave their homes in order to defend the wider collective. However, for a majority of men this was conditional upon an actual French invasion. Although prepared to take up arms, the scope of what they were doing so to defend was primarily local in extent. For whatever reason, be it to protect a familiar place and group of people, or to avoid the disruption of war, the men's nationality was subsumed beneath

[34] J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal*, pp. 871–872, 874. Historical studies of popular culture at this time have also demonstrated the strength of local and regional attachments. See E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, London, Penguin, 1993; Alexander Murdoch, *British History 1660 – 1832: National Identity and Local Culture*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998.
[35] HRO QS22/1/2/5.

particularist identities of locality or community or occupation, or indeed interests such as familial or financial.

However, the local collective could be equally significant in provoking a favourable response to the call to arms. There are numerous examples of this propensity to think and act collectively within the locality to be found in the records. The return for Riseley parish, Hampshire stated in 1803: 'We whose names are as follows being the whole number of male Inhabitants of this parish…do Voluntarily enrol ourselves agreably to the Terms of an Act of Parliament passed in the present sessions'.[36] In Great Barford in Bedfordshire, of the 84 men listed, two are shown as infirm and the rest have volunteered.[37] In Glynde in East Sussex, of 42 eligible males, all except four indicate a willingness to serve. Of the remainder, one is already enrolled in the Sussex Yeomanry and another is shown as infirm.[38] In the Hampshire records there are as many returns that show all the men in a parish, or a large majority of them, willing to serve. The return for the tything of Ellisfield states, 'Fifty – all ready to serve, if the French should come, in the Capacity they are best suited for'. In Basing parish, out of a total of 191 eligible men, 19 volunteer to serve on horseback, and a further 172 on foot, and similarly in the tything of Farleigh Wallop all sixteen men volunteered their services.[39] Communities were equally likely however, to take a collective stance against the war. The return for Cliveden parish states 'Their (sic) is no person in this Return willing to serve. Witness my hand this 14th April 1798'. In the parish of Upnately none out of the 43 eligible men are willing to serve in any capacity, and similarly in Dummer parish none out of 80 men show themselves willing to serve their country.

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[36] BLARS *Bedfordshire Muster Lists 1539 – 1831*.
[37] BLARS *Bedfordshire Muster Lists 1539 – 1831*.
[38] ESRO LPL1/E1.
[39] HRO QS22/1/2/5.

This is an aspect of sociability which must be taken into account in any interpretation of the statistics, namely a response proffered en masse to the call to arms determined by immediate ties of network as opposed to commitment to the national interest.[40] In such cases individual opinion is difficult, if not impossible, to gauge and men could even be induced to act contrary to their personal feelings. Men might feel compelled to join the crowd, perhaps through the excitement or solidarity of enlisting with their friends, or perhaps negatively through peer pressure to conform. Failure to do so might result in personal censure or trade exclusion within the locality. In the relatively small, face-to-face parish and rural communities the influence of one's peers could potentially present a considerable pressure determining individual response. However, as Linda Colley has shown, the same could be true for men in urban environments, easily reached en-masse by the loyalist propaganda message, or for men already part of established and close-knit associative networks such as those of occupation.[41]

The element of sociability presents a further consideration in determining the extent of a national identification among men, namely that it homogenises group responses. Any subtle variations of such identification are lost in the collective response to bear arms or otherwise. The historian can, therefore, only be sure that a concern for national interest predominated where such is explicitly stated or strongly implied by respondents. Fortunately, these exist among the source materials and so it is clear that some had appropriated the official, government-promoted discourse of 'nation', and consequently they identified strongly with the national plight. For whatever reason, be it genuine sentiment or to impress the official conducting the survey, men expressed

[40] The strength of collective responses determined by 'horizontal' ties of sociability at occupational or local level has been acknowledged by Austin Gee in his work on the membership of the volunteer corps, *The British Volunteer Movement*, pp. 160-161.
[41] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation*, p. 298.

their desire to defend the country within a stereotypically anti-French rhetoric. Contained within the Exeter militia lists a Mr J. Broom, a carpenter, stated that he would, 'crip the wings of the French Frog Eaters', and John Elworthy, a husbandman, said he would, 'mow down Bonny'.[42] Such comments are interesting in that they reflect the stereotypical constructs and messages of central propaganda. The reference to Bonaparte as 'Bonny', for example, is to be found in satirical imagery such as James Gilroy's *Buonaparté, 48 Hours after Landing*, 1803. Typically and historically, the French were portrayed as consumers of sub-standard fare such as frog's legs or soupe-maigre. Clearly men were accepting and internalising such notions and national stereotyping was readily reproduced. John Elworthy's comment moreover similarly reflects a shift in focus of government propaganda away from the French people as natural adversaries and towards the person of Napoleon as a focus of hate and fear.[43]

Other responses, whilst not employing the stock vocabulary of national stereotypes, clearly demonstrates a strength of feeling commensurate with such xenophobic nationalism suggesting a wider purchase among the population of patriotic sentiment. One man, John Alford, is even described as, 'not only willing, but anxious to serve', and in the parish of Little Staughton, Bedfordshire, four men stated that they would not accept the bounty payment of 40 shillings and will become volunteers.[44] This return also contains a statement that they could raise an equal number of women if necessary. There are also examples of men older than 55 years, and therefore exempt from military service at that time, who declared themselves willing to fight. The tone of these responses is suggestive of a type of gung-ho patriotism and confident xenophobia

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[42] W.G. Hoskins, *Exeter Militia List*, pp. 51, 110.
[43]Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, pp. 38-71; M. Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, pp. 10-11. For specific examples, see Frank Klingberg and Sigurd Hustvedt, *The Warning Drum; The British Home Front Faces Napoleon: Broadsides of 1803*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1944, pp. 59, 98 – 99, 101, 107, 111, 175, 182, 199, 203.
[44] BLARS *Bedfordshire Muster Lists 1539 – 1831*.

that belies the apparent conditional nationality to be brought to the fore in the event of a French invasion. Indeed, men who did not need to do so offered themselves for service. Others forsook a hefty cash payment to volunteer and, as Austin Gee has shown, membership of several volunteer regiments comprised some who were otherwise not liable for conscription into other forms of military service, including married men with more than two children or those who could afford the cost of a substitute to serve.[45]

What is noteworthy, however, is the timing of the Exeter men's remarks, being gathered in 1803 after the breakdown of the peace of Amiens. In the months after the resumption of war the French forces were amassed along her north west coast in preparation for an invasion of the British Isles.[46] This represented a direct, and very real, threat to British livelihoods and people responded accordingly, uniting in defence of the nation and all that it stood for. Indeed, it was a time that witnessed such a great magnitude of enthusiasm to enlist, many of the old volunteer regiments were re-established.[47] Even so, despite the strength of response, it was still considered insufficient against a possible French army of invasion. In June of that year the government had sought to encourage men to volunteer for service under terms known as the 'June Allowances' which provided for eighty five days paid military training and the assurance of never having to fight outside of the military district. However, these measures were not as successful as had been hoped which prompted the passage, in July, of the Levee en Masse Act which empowered the government to order every able-bodied man to be drilled should not sufficient numbers be recruited on a volunteer basis. This move brought about a second wave of volunteering which had to be addressed

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[45] A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, p. 153.
[46] H. Wheeler and A. Broadley, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England*. Although originally published in 1908, this book gives a useful account of the French manoeuvres and preparations to invade England in 1803.
[47] J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815', *Historical Journal*, pp. 881-890.

under the 'August Allowances' which provided less generous terms of service at only twenty five paid training days and the possibility of serving anywhere in the kingdom. Inevitably these measures ensured the longer serving and better trained men were restricted to fighting closer to home whilst those lesser trained, and perhaps less enthusiastic, were placed in the front line to provide a wider 'national' response to French attack.[48]

The episode is significant in that it provides further indication of the conditional and salient nationality among these men. In the immediate aftermath of the resumption of war in 1803, Britain faced a very real threat of invasion. Napoleon had amassed an army of 80 000 troops along the north west French coast with further troops within four days march of the Channel ports. A flotilla of boats and barges were readied to convey men and supplies to England whilst ships of the French navy offered protection.[49] British national security was precariously balanced and, in the hysteria of fear, there was a rush of men to volunteer to bear arms. However, by 1808 approximately 25% of men had quit their post. Indeed, the two years after 1805 witnessed an alarming drop of 90 000 men from the volunteer corps as the French threat was finally seen to recede.[50] As early as 1806 the government were driven to institute a different system of service for volunteers by converting several regiments into local militia groups thus bringing them under greater central control and army regulation to prevent resignations.

The phenomenon of a mass, voluntary taking up of arms in 1803 followed by subsequent resignation or desertion from corps has been labelled a 'national defence patriotism' by Cookson.[51] The fear of a French army of invasion galvanised a national awareness among large parts of the British population, however, such fervour was not to

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[48] R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, pp. 141-142.
[49] M. Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, pp. 1-2.
[50] J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 - 1815', *Historical Journal*, p. 883-889; R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, p. 144.
[51] J. E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation*, p. 37.

last and soon receded as the threat was seen to recede. Indeed, several historians have agreed that there was no lasting patriotic consensus of the conduct of the war throughout the duration of the conflict.[52] Instead, the patriotism of the man expected to fight was drawn more from an enthusiasm or fear rather than from an abiding sense of the national interest. In other words, the national interest could and would be readily set aside in favour of competing identities, it was not the primary or dominant reference point for individual and group identifications.

A further significance of the military recruitments of June to August 1803 lies in the response to the stipulations of the Levee en Masse Act. Faced with the prospect of enforced military service under more restrictive and onerous terms of the militia, many men chose instead to volunteer. In opting for this mode of military service, men were offering a public, pragmatic expression of the relative importance they ascribed to the national situation. There were a number of ways in which men could enrol in armed service to the nation. Aside from enlistment into the regular army or navy, men could be 'conscripted' by ballot to serve in the local militia or Fencibles forces. Men could also volunteer themselves into service, either by joining a local volunteer regiment, usually organised and led by a local notable, or by offering service in the pioneers in which they were responsible for elements of logistical organisation, such as managing livestock or evacuating the population in the event of a French invasion. Therefore, the incidence of men quick to volunteer their service needs to be understood in the light of the other military options open to them as well as in the light of patriotic fervour. The decision to volunteer for military service could often be made for strategic reasons to avoid other forms. The problem with recruitment into the army or navy was twofold; first the initial methods of crimping or empressment introduced an arbitrary, sometimes brutal, aspect

[52] M. Philp, *The French Revolution*, p. 209; M. Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, pp. 1-2, 34; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, p. 97.

to conscription that was deeply unpopular with the communities targeted. Second, the terms and conditions under which men served compared unfavourably to other forms of military service. Terms of service in the militia also compared unfavourably to that of the volunteer corps. Indeed, the social background of those providing the rank and file of the volunteer regiments has been shown to have comprised the likes of skilled workers, artisans and retailers, precisely the class of men with something to lose by an extended absence in the regular forces and who could afford the cost of buying a substitute for the militia.[53]

Enrolment in a volunteer corps, however, also meant that, in most cases, men were exempt from the militia ballot. The system of balloting meant that eligible men from a community were drawn by lots to fulfil government quotas for militia numbers. In itself this was also an unpopular system of recruitment. In a letter from a Mr. John Wailes to Lord Fauconberg in 1797 he wrote of a mob of about 300 seizing and tearing up militia ballot papers held by the constables as they arrived to call the ballot list.[54] However, this system mitigated against the poorer members of society and one finds that a disproportionate number of the lower orders found themselves serving in the militia regiments. Any man drawn from the ballot could avoid service either by payment of a fine to exempt themselves, or provide a substitute to serve in their place. Indeed, as Fortescue, pointed out, 'No one, from the parish overseer to the Secretary of State, ever expected a principle to accept service in the Militia. It was assumed in every quarter that substitutes would be provided practically in every case'.[55] Without the financial

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[53] Roger Wells, 'English Society and Revolutionary Politics in the 1790s: the case for insurrection', in M. Philp, *The French Revolution*, p. 192; M. Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, p. 7; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, pp. 7, 85-87.
[54] NYRO, M.Y. Ashcroft, *To Escape the Monster's Clutches*, Northallerton, North Yorkshire County Records Office, No. 15, 1977, p. 39. Papers for the 'weapontake' of Hallikeld.
[55] J. Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and the Army, 1803 - 1814*, London, Macmillan, 1909, p. 40.

wherewithal to buy themselves out of service, poorer men found themselves recruited or indeed many received payment to serve as a substitute.[56]

Significantly, however, if a man were to enlist in a volunteer regiment he could not only exempt himself from the militia ballot he could also avoid recruitment into the regular armed forces. Volunteering for service in the Fencibles similarly exempted him from empressment into the navy. Moreover, the conditions under which men served in a volunteer capacity enabled them to remain at home and continue with their regular employment, and herein also lay the attraction. Volunteer soldiers were based in their own locality and could only serve elsewhere by the agreement of all members or in the event of a French invasion. Outside of periods of direct threat from the French, such as between 1803 and 1805, the volunteer corps trained for comparatively few days each year. Whereas militia service was for a minimum period of five years to be extended as necessary in a state of war, volunteers served until they chose to resign their post. Such an option was not available to other forms of military service. These advantageous conditions of service to be had from enrolment into the volunteer regiments or Fencibles were a way by which men could demonstrate their patriotic support for the war effort whilst at the same time minimising the disruption to their livelihoods.[57] Indeed, it is the level of resignation or desertion in the years following the resumption of hostilities following the failure of the Treaty of Amiens which provides the strongest evidence of men placing self-interest above national concerns.

In terms of will, however, the cohesion of groups is achieved in different ways and if the evidence suggests that people did not subscribe to a national solidarity and loyalty in the government mould, an alternative was unity through fear. Indeed, just like

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[56] R. Wells, *Insurrection*, pp. 79-81.
[57] Nicholas Rogers, 'The Sea Fencibles, Loyalism and the Reach of the State', in M. Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, p. 52: Roger Wells, 'English Society and Revolutionary Politics: the case for insurrection', in M. Philp, *The French Revolution*, p. 210; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, pp. 7, 51-52.

the Hampshire respondents who undertook to defend the county borders only in the event of French forces landing in England, a number of men declared a willingness to defend the nation but their service was offered conditionally. From the Exeter list the entry for John Southcot, a husbandman, reads, 'If Buoneyparte comes will do anything to make him repent'. Similarly, John Hane, a labourer, says he will, 'fight sword in hand if the French comes', and George Baker, a 33 year old joiner states he would be, 'ready to act if the French come'.[58] In the circumstances of an invasion such a response is not surprising, doubtless many men would have taken up arms. But for the likes of Southcot, Hane and Baker it took a threat of such magnitude to draw them into military service for the nation. Any interpretation as to their reasons for such a response can only be supposition but, given their professions as husbandman and joiner, these were men of skilled trade and regular income. Even John Hane as a labourer may have been in regular paid work. Whether or not their occupational or financial backgrounds were instrumental in providing the men's conditional response, what must be recognised is the influence of personal circumstance in forming identification with the national interest. The concerns of everyday life, of earning a living and coping with the privations of the war on a personal or community level affected people's response to 'nation' and the national predicament.

Any decision whether or not to fight must therefore be understood to a greater degree to be the result of personal circumstance. Men with fewer social or familial ties, or for whom military service made good financial sense were more likely to demonstrate their readiness to fight. Figure 5 shows a breakdown by class of men willing and unwilling to take up arms. Class was an organisational distinction devised by the authorities based on the age and familial status of an individual to ascertain

[58] W.G. Hoskins, *Exeter Militia Lists*, p. 53, 54, 18.

fitness for military service. The returns for Sandwich in Kent in 1803 show the overwhelming number of volunteers came from Class 1 and Class 4. Men classified in the former are those between 17 and 30 years, unmarried and with no children under ten years old. Men in Class 4 comprise any married men between the ages of 17 and 55, but with fewer than two children under ten years old. These are clearly the men with fewer familial responsibilities and therefore greater mobility and freedom to make lifestyle changes, possibly also journeymen or apprentices on low wages. A similar analysis for Frant in Sussex and East Grinstead in Kent likewise show that the greatest numbers of those professed willing to serve came from Class 1 and Class 4 (Figure 6). A correlation of the data to be found in the Exeter Militia List of the same year similarly shows that overwhelmingly, the majority of those currently serving in some capacity or willing to serve were younger men, notably in their late teens and early twenties. Although in the early nineteenth century approximately 55% of the population was under 25 years old,[59] these would have been men with fewer familial or occupational ties, perhaps tempted by the financial gain or machismo to be had from military service and in a position to act upon this. The numbers of men in military service would reflect this demographic feature. Older men, especially those with families, an established household and a regular income, would be less likely to favour upheaval. Indeed, where married men left home for the regular army or the navy, this put an additional burden on the poor rate as the main income winner in the household would be gone, and his bounty money would be needed to buy regimental necessities such as kit.[60]

[59] Andrew Hinde, *England's Population: A History Since the Domesday Survey*, London, Hodder Arnold, 2003, pp. 183-191.
[60] Clive Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars, 1793 - 1815*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1989, p. 40.

Figure 5: Summary of Army of Reserve Returns for Sandwich, 1803: correlation of data on class and willingness/unwillingness to serve (EKRO Sa ALr/1)

	Currently serving/willing to serve	Unwilling to serve
Class 1: men aged 17 to 30, unmarried, and no children under 10 years	113	29
Class 2: men aged 30 to 50, unmarried and no children under 10 years	13	9
Class 3: men aged 17 to 30, married, or with at least two children under 10 years	75	5
Class 4: the remainder between 17 and 55 years	135	86

Figure 6: Willingness to serve in militia forces: analysis by occupation and class under the Defence of the Realm Act (ESRO LPL1/ E1)

East Grinstead: Total number of men fit and liable to serve: 556

Willing to serve/serving:		Unwilling to serve:	
Occupation	**Number**	**Occupation**	**Number**
Baker	1	Bailiff	2
Brazier	1	Bricklayer	5
Bricklayer	8	Butcher	1
Butcher	3	Butler	1
Butler	1	Carpenter	7
Carpenter	10	Coachman	1
Clocksmith	1	Cordwainer	10
Coachman	2	Currier	1
Commissary	1	Farmer	27
Cooper	1	Footman	1
Cordwainer	10	Gardener	5
Currier	4	Glover	1
Excise Officer	2	Hatter	4
Farmer	12	Labourer	129
Fellmonger	1	Miller	1
Flax-dresser	1	Millwright	4
Footman	4	Sawyer	4
Gardener	2	Servant	43
Glover	2	Shopkeeper	3
Grocer	2	Smith	6
Groom	1	Tailor	1
Hatter	3	Tanner	1
Innkeeper	1	Victualler	1
Labourer	44	Warrener	2
Lashlever	3	Weaver	3
Mail driver	2	Wheelwright	7
Miller	5		
Ostler	1		
Postmaster	1		
Sawyer	3		
Servant	20		
Shopkeeper	2		
Smith	4		
Stonemason	2		
Tailor	5		
Victualler	3		
Weaver	1		
Wheelwright	1		
Enrolled in Volunteer Cavalry	10		
Enrolled in Volunteer Infantry	19		
Enrolled in Sussex Yeomanry	2		

East Grinstead

Analysis by class:

	Willing to serve:	Unwilling to serve:
Class	**Number**	**Number**
1	74	79
2	18	20
3	21	34
4	64	155

Frant**:** Total number of men fit and liable to serve: 264

Willing to serve/enrolled: Not willing to serve:

Occupation	**Number**	**Occupation**	**Number**
Enrolled in army	2	Carpenter	1
Enrolled in Voluntary Cavalry	28	Coachman	1
Enrolled in Voluntary Infantry	170	Cordwainer	2
Cordwainer	1	Farmer	11
Labourer	6	Footman	1
Servant	1	Labourer	18
		Merchant	1
		Millwright	1
		Servant	12
		Shopkeeper	1
		Smith	1
		Steward	2
		Tailor	3
		Warrener	1
		Wheelwright	1

Frant

Analysis by class (where indicated):

	Willing to serve/serving:	Unwilling to serve:
Class	**Number**	**Number**
1	67	12
2	10	2
3	28	12
4	79	24

Money was certainly an issue for labouring men who barely earned enough through regular work to feed their families and in volunteering would be unable to afford a day's drill without being paid.[61] Certainly the government acknowledged this problem and endeavoured to hold training days when men were less likely to be working so as to give minimal disruption to their daily lives and income. Frequently, however, the matter of payment was set as a condition of service. In the parish of Easthop in the Basingstoke Hundreds, out of twelve eligible men, only four agreed to serve in any capacity and only then 'if paid for it', whilst in the parish of Shalden the men and their occupations are listed with the note, 'for hire'.[62] The return for the tything of Crookham states, 'The Farmers are Willing to Go in Case of Necessity But Mostly for Hire as they are at Rack Rent'[63] One man in Exeter also stated his situation plainly. John House, a woolsorter responded that he was 'obliged to work daily to maintain wife and ffamily (sic)'.[64] Rural society such as this was more static, with less itinerant or surplus labour than the towns. Fewer men would be in a position to serve in the armed forces without causing severe disruption to their home life. Service in the militia could seriously disrupt the family economy of a working man, especially those gaining their subsistence directly from the land. Parish allowances for a man's family in his absence were often disputed, late or insufficient and the daily pay for a serving man at one shilling was at least a third less than the average wage for a young labourer.[65]

Money and other inducements would equally have been an important incentive in prompting men to volunteer or enlist. Joseph Mayett was himself a poor man who, on several occasions, had been forced to seek charity. In his autobiography he writes of

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[61] J. Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, p. 111.
[62] HRO Q22/1/2/5.
[63] HRO Q22/1/2/5.
[64] W.G. Hoskins, *Exeter Militia List*, p. 58.
[65] John Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales, 1790 - 1810*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 180.

being seduced by the military music and the sight of the soldiers in their smart uniforms, far better quality clothing than he could afford. Free beer and food were also made available by recruiting parties enticing men with a full stomach.[66] The regular army depended heavily on men such as Mayett, the urban poor, the unemployed or unskilled to man its ranks and therefore it was in the form of lump sum cash payments and subsequent regular pay that all parties stood to benefit most. Bounties to enlist could also be lucrative. In December 1792 a Royal Proclamation offered bounties to volunteers, £3 to an able seaman and £2 to an ordinary seaman.[67] Later, in an effort to raise enough men for their quotas under the Acts of 1795, local authorities instituted bounty payments as high as £70 to induce men to volunteer. These measures met with some success as several artisans, tradesmen, shopkeepers and clerks volunteered, especially if they were financially insolvent.[68] Indeed, there are also several cases of men deserting immediately after receipt of their bounty payments, or even deserting the army to take bounty for the navy.[69]

The ballot system by which eligible men were recruited into the militia forces offered an exemption for those who were prepared to pay for a substitute to take their place. By definition this method generally discriminated against poorer members of society precisely because of this option. A great number of men serving as substitutes were of the poorer sort among the lower orders, such as day labourers, and who would have more readily committed to military service for a cash payment. If one is to consider the militia records for the Rape of Lewes in 1797, out of 126 men serving as

[66] Ann Kussmaul, *Autobiography of Joseph Mayett of Quainton, 1783 - 1839*, Buckinghamshire, Bucks Records Society Publications, 1986, p. ix.
[67] C. Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars*, p. 33.
[68] R. Wells, *Insurrection*, p. 81, 82.
[69] NA WO 1/1092.

substitutes 87 could not sign their own name.[70] In other records, out of 43 substitutes, 28 could not sign their name.[71]

Much work has been done on the levels and the nature of literacy in England throughout the early modern period and on how literacy was socially conditioned.[72] Signatures and name marks are a universal form of evidence to be found from among the whole social spectrum and sensitive to literacy levels, and therefore the ability to sign one's name has been accepted as an indication of wider literacy ability.[73] The link between social status and the ability to sign one's name has been extensively studied with agreement that the poor were less literate than their wealthier compatriots and therefore fewer were able to produce a name signature.[74] Lawrence Stone, in his study of literacy in early modern Britain, cited a figure of approximately 70% of urban adult males were literate by the end of the eighteenth century. This total however hides a

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[70] ESRO LLE/2/E1.

[71] ESRO LLE/1/E1.

[72] Lawrence Stone's seminal work in the late 1960s attempted to quantify literacy levels in the early modern period and establish links between social status and literacy. See L. Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England 1640 – 1900', *Past and Present*, No. 42, 1969, pp. 69–139. Since then, analysis has continued, based on the evidence of signatures, to provide interpretations based on gender, geographical location, occupation, and with studies focussing on particular communities. Further measures of literacy have been carried out using the evidence of demand for and production of printed materials, and the evidence of book ownership to be found in wills and inventories. The following list of works are indicative of the wealth of material available: David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order. Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980; J. Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968; Michael Sanderson, 'Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England', *Past and Present*, No. 56, 1974, pp. 75–104; Harvey Graff (ed.), *Literacy and Social Development in the West: A Reader*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981; Rob Houston, 'Literacy and Society in the West, 1500 – 1850', *Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1983, pp. 269–293; David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750 – 1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989; W. B. Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland and Wales, 1500 – 1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 1990, pp.545–571; David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Polity Pearson, 2002.

[73] Ability to sign one's name is a simple indication of literacy which is linked to, but not reflective of, the ability to read or to write with greater complexity. Historians have debated the usefulness of signatures as evidence of 'functional literacy', namely the ability to operate independently in one's society, a definition which itself is vague and open to debate and redefinition. See D. Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order*, pp. 54–59; J. Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 314; L. Stone, Literacy and Education in England', *Past And Present*, p. 98.

[74] Rob Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education, 1500 – 1800*, London, Pearson, 2002, pp. 141–173; D. Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order*, p. 54; R. Houston, 'Literacy and Society in the West', *Social History*, p. 272; L. Stone, Literacy and Education in England', *Past and Present*.

number of discrepancies and Stone acknowledged a level of literacy among the labouring classes between 35% and 40% which underwent a sharp, if temporary, decline from the 1750s until about the 1780s. By the time of the French Wars these levels would have been far from recovered. The figure also excludes rural areas which, in isolated communities, adult male literacy could be as low as 10%.[75]

Given the high incidence of signature marks in the Rape of Lewes militia records - between 65% and 69% of men provided a mark of some kind, usually a simple cross[76] – it demonstrates that the poorer members of society bore the brunt of conscripted as opposed to voluntary military service. This picture is given further credence when comparison is made with the higher social background of men who largely constituted the volunteer corps.[77] What this means is that financial predicament and the form of military service undertaken were directly linked. The implication for a historical understanding of plebeian national identification is that active service was not necessarily a reflection of patriotic sentiment. Men, therefore, found themselves responding to armed service for a variety of reasons including, but not exclusively, an identification with the predicament of the national collective. An interpretation based on sheer numbers of serving men may therefore be misleading as alternative motivations to enlist go unacknowledged.

This may be equally true, however, for instances where men declared an unwillingness to serve. Rather than being understood as a blatantly unpatriotic move, men might refuse to fight for a number of reasons. A further examination of the East Grinstead returns (Figure 6) and the occupational breakdown of respondents throws light on further possibilities. There are certain problems with relying on occupation as a descriptor of status or financial background. For example, a ‘carpenter’ may be used to

[75] L. Stone, ‘Literacy and Education in England’, *Past and Present*, pp. 104-112, 125.
[76] ESRO LLE/1/E1; LLE/2/E1.
[77] A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, pp. 1, 85-87; M. Philp, *The French Revolution*, p. 192.

describe someone of master or journeyman status, a ‘tailor’ may own his own business or be an employee, or indeed a ‘labourer’ may be itinerant or in regular employment. However, from those listed of either response, the largest occupational groups to profess an unwillingness to take up arms were farmers, labourers and servants. What is more, the numbers for each of these men exceeds by more than 50% those in the same occupations who were willing to serve or were already in military service. Once again, any explanation for their exact motivation for responding in this way is supposition but, as farmers and labourers, they were more likely to be those relying on seasonal work or whose livelihoods were crucially tied to such work. The relatively high number of servants unwilling to serve may reflect their employment position where a master could dictate or influence a response. Those in service could have been prevented by their employers from taking up service or may even have been enrolled into a local voluntary corps under the command of their master.

Whilst still providing no explicit explanation for refusal to serve, it is the act itself which is of value to historical interpretation. In 1794 Nicholas Mewett failed to register for militia service despite being balloted and subsequently ordered to appear. He was, thereafter served personally with notice to serve or buy himself out of military service at a cost of £100, yet still he refused to co-operate, paying a fine for his actions. Another, John Brown, had further refused to pay even this amount. A Warrant of Distress was issued against him for recovery of the money but, as he had insufficient goods to cover the amount, he had to be forcibly handed over to his militia regiment to complete active service. At the same meeting of the Subdivision of Pevensey Rape, the further matter of the desertion from the militia of two substitute men was also raised. [78] In these cases it is the men’s location which is of significance. Pevensey, lying on the

[78] ESRO LPM/E1.

Sussex coastline, was a short journey across the English Channel from France and therefore extremely vulnerable should the French decide to attempt an invasion. Yet even here there were men who, for whatever reasons or principles, were still resolutely unwilling to take up arms.

From a wider perspective, the adamant refusal of Mayett and Brown to serve in the militia was tantamount to a refusal to help defend the national interest. But this was not necessarily the product of unpatriotic sentiment. The evidence of the Pevensey records shows that both men refused a particular type of service, namely conscription into a militia regiment. The ballot system, being compulsory, gave some men no choice but to rebel as it forced their hand by requiring them to make a practical expression of their opinions on the war and the national situation notwithstanding their personal circumstance. But, just as hundreds more would have opted for enrolment into a volunteer corps to avoid militia service, so the reaction of Mayett and Brown existed along a spectrum of protest. Theirs was one alternative among several available to men unhappy with the form of service forced upon them. Their actions therefore may be viewed in the light of the options open to them and of their perception of their own situation. Without the alternative of a volunteer corps, their protest took the form of a refusal to co-operate. Nevertheless, it was not necessarily an unpatriotic move. Acting to defend one's nation, or indeed locality, was different to acting under duress in conscripted service. Mayett and Brown may have understood the necessity of service in the national interest and saw that this could be achieved in ways other than enforced military service.

Notwithstanding, as we have seen above, the place of a plebeian political radicalism both critical of the regime's conduct of the war and in favour of an alteration of the balance of power has been extensively studied and compelling arguments given

for its effectiveness as a body of opinion outside the political nation and of a form of patriotism in tension with that advocated by government. Further evidence of this manifested is to be found in the records relating to military service. In December 1803 a charge was brought before a court martial against James Stewart of Wandsworth. He is reported to have said: 'If the French make a Landing in this Country and with great Force, One half of the English would join them'.[79] In the wider community too, military service was denigrated. In Newhaven in 1795 a poem was displayed publically following local protest at the harsh suppression of a mutiny among the Oxfordshire Regiment stationed there. The poem ended:

> On these bloody numskulls, Pitt and George
> For since they can no longer send you to France
> To be murdered like swine or pierced by the lance
> You are sent for by express to make speedy return
> To be shot like a cow, or Hanged in your turn.

In the following year in Cumberland, a crowd of people protesting against the raising of a Supplementary Militia force are quoted as saying, 'Down with the Rich! No Militia! Why should we fight for them. If the French come they will not hurt us – they will only plunder those who already have too much. We can be no worse but maybe gainers'.[80]

The ruling elites greatly feared rhetoric such as this and believed the sentiment to have been far more widespread than providing the impetus behind isolated and individual protests, as is evidenced by the themes of loyalist propaganda intended for popular consumption.[81] However, the specific focus for dissatisfaction was the governing regime itself, either its conduct of the war or the unfair burden of fighting to

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[79] NA HO 42/78.
[80] R. Wells, *Insurrection*, p. 47.
[81] F. Klingberg and S. Hustvedt, *The Warning Drum*. For example, *People of the British Isles and Buonaparte's Succeeding* paints a horrific picture of a successful French invasion, and *Men of England* specifically acknowledged that some English men would be prepared to join the French pp. 182-183, 208-209. See also C Jones (ed.), *Britain and Revolutionary France*, pp. 53-68; S. Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, pp. 38-71.

be borne by the common man. The system of recruitment to the various branches of the military was seen to perpetuate and serve the existing status quo and all its social inequalities. These were not therefore actions necessarily marked by an absence of national identification but grievances aimed at the nation's rulers. Indeed, James Stewart and the angry folks of Cumberland actively countenanced the idea of a French replacement to rule. They thought in national terms and envisaged a national community to be ruled more fairly and so theirs was a political protest not one to be taken as lacking a sense of nationality. Therefore, just as volunteering to bear arms may have been the result of diverse motivations aside from the national interest, so too can a refusal to serve not be taken exclusively as evidence of the absence of national identification.

* * *

Given the unprecedented numbers of men serving and the greater mobility of regiments meant that more people than ever before came face-to-face with their compatriots from afar, one might have expected an enhanced national awareness to have developed. The soldiers themselves were taken out of their immediate locality and sometimes marched the length and breadth of the country. Joseph Mayett, the son of a day labourer from Quainton in Buckinghamshire, enlisted in the regular army in 1803. In his army career he was stationed in garrisons across the whole of the country, from Essex and East Anglia in the east, to Devon in the west, and Northumberland and Manchester in the north. In 1814 his regiment was taken across to Ireland.[82] Mayett's experience therefore extended well beyond the familiar locality and yet at no point in his memoirs does he express a positive support for the government or approval for the conduct of the war. He does not express outright hostility towards the French despite

[82] A. Kussmaul (ed.), *The Autobiography of Joseph Mayett,* p. xii facing.

their status as enemy; neither does he express a world view in the context of ‘nation’. Instead he concentrates on the appalling conditions to be endured through armed service. This would suggest that, although Mayett had physically seen and experienced the boundaries of nation, in England and Ireland at least, his national awareness was just that, a knowledge of the geographical extent of the land and the diversity of its people. Such knowledge, however, does not equate with the kind of patriotic defence of nation so desired by the governing classes and, in Mayett’s case, appears not to have done so at any point during the conflict.

However, it would be wrong to argue that these men enlisted out of personal interest and devoid of awareness of the national predicament. They were drilled and trained as British fighting units and wearing the British colours, and with the potential to be pitched into the front line of battle, they would have had a keen sense of the French threat in national terms. Whether or not they patriotically stood in support of the actions of their government as leaders of the nation is less certain, however, especially given the methods used to recruit conscripts and the subsequent conditions of service to be endured. These men were inevitably aware of the national predicament and were prepared to stand in defence of the nation against the French, but their active loyalism, where the national interest was placed above all others, was more conditional and contingent. The attempted and actual French invasions through Wales and Ireland in 1797 and 1798, and the preparation of an army of invasion in 1803 represented a most direct threat to the national interest which, if launched successfully, would have touched upon everyone’s lives. The perception of immediate danger precipitated a ‘national’ reaction in the rush to volunteer for military service. As the threat passed so too did widespread collective defence fervour instead to be replaced by alternative concerns, or

a different kind of patriotism more critical of the war effort.[83] This process of emphasizing and de-emphasizing national identification supports the notion of fluidity and flexibility of identities to be found in studies of Anglo-French encounter.

Even at times such as these, of heightened fear of invasion, however, the 'national' response contained a distinctly local aspect, indicating a patriotism conceived less in terms of the national collective but rather focused on the community. A number of men steadfastly refused to bear arms or else would only do so to the geographical limits of their own county. Volunteer regiments opposed amalgamation with neighbouring corps or, where this occurred, local rivalries were seen to intensify.[84] As Austin Gee has noted, there was a discrepancy to the way in which such organisations were viewed from within and without. Whereas the government saw the volunteer corps as a tool for national defence and as a means of policing internal dissent, the men who served saw their purpose as one of local defence and local security and focussed against forces of disorder from outside rather than within.[85] The concerted spirit of defence of 1803 to 1805 and the revival of lapsed fighting units, therefore, was more a culmination of disparate local efforts rather than a coherent national response. It was a loyalist patriotism, but one conceived and expressed in local terms.

Yet with coherency comes a measure of unity, and the drawing together of the localised volunteer regiments, both in terms of timing and in terms of outward focus against the possibility of a French invasion, created a national consensus. So although many men may have conceived of their actions in terms of a defence of their community and their livelihoods, theirs was a response which occurred uniformly on a

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[83] Hugh Cunningham has shown how the discourse of patriotism at this time was not entirely appropriated to the loyalist, government favoured form, but instead retained some of its earlier eighteenth century character as critical of the status quo and continued to feed politically radical ideas. H. Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism, 1750 – 1914', *History Workshop Journal*, xii, 1981, pp. 8-33.
[84] J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793 – 1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal*, p. 883.
[85] A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement*, p. 10.

national scale. It is appropriate therefore to talk of an active national identification brought to the fore by perceived threat from without. However, Roger Wells' portrayal of the volatility of public opinion towards the war is an apt one.[86] Certainly the British people had a heightened awareness of the national interest at certain times, but to describe a loyalist nationalism as a defining and enduring aspect of popular identity by the turn of the nineteenth century is misleading. People responded primarily to the privations and burdens that the war imposed and did so within a framework dictated by their own circumstances of occupational or social networks, geographical location and financial status before that of the need for national defence.

[86] R. Wells *Insurrection*, p. 258.

Conclusion

The French nation occupied an important and influential position in the development of English national identities in the eighteenth century. The relationship between the two peoples, characterized by perceived rivalries and acknowledged similarities, and marked by almost continual comparison, was centuries old. However, in the eighteenth century this relationship was brought into sharper focus. The proliferation and wider circulation of printed material at this time meant that notional oppositions of culture, polity and religion, which were afforded a high profile within a frequently stridently xenophobic British print culture, were presented to a larger proportion of the domestic population than ever before. At regular intervals too, from the 1680s until the early nineteenth century, the two states were ranged against one another in a series of military conflicts and wars to maintain an influential role in the European balance of power, to protect and consolidate their respective fledgling empires, and to secure a slice of the expanding markets for trade. Yet, at the same time developments such as these provided the opportunity for encounter between British and French from a wide variety of social and occupational backgrounds. Wars fought to an increasing scale throughout the century meant that more men than ever before were recruited to fight in the armed forces and to face one another in battle. English and French engaged in direct competition over newly established markets and newly discovered resources, whilst the influx of new luxury and exotic goods into Britain created networks of co-operation outside of the law in an effort to avoid paying the punitive taxes and duties levied. The proliferation of printed material, as well as casting the French as ‘other’, served also to engender curiosity about them and the wider world, whilst improving transport and communications links allowed more and more people to satisfy that curiosity through travel and tourism.

Anglo-French encounter, therefore, took place on an increasing scale in terms of numbers and with growing regularity throughout the eighteenth century. This level of contact offers the opportunity for the historian to draw upon anthropological approaches to the matter of national identification and, in doing so, provides a fruitful additional approach to historical studies carried out to date of British nationality during this period. By recognising the value and relevance of identity studies within the anthropological field, for example concerning notions of 'home' to resident non-nationals or the cultural hybridity to evolve in border communities, a further critique may be offered to those historical studies purporting to uncover collective national mentalities or a particular consciousness shaped by the messages of propaganda carried within the printed media.

Significantly the approach is not constrained by the anti-French discourse to be found in such sources, but instead can acknowledge alternative influences and different contexts within which a national identification may be developed. A study of real encounter is therefore of value in two respects. First, it may allow an exploration of the extent to which a largely francophobic discourse that was derived from virtual encounter was mediated and modified. Second, by examining interaction between specific groups or individuals, it offers the potential for idiosyncratic and differentiated forms of nationality to be recognised. As the evidence of the Defence List returns and the public response to the plight of French prisoners of war detained in Britain both demonstrate, national awareness was not forged wholly within a francophobic discourse despite the evidence presented by officially sanctioned printed material. It was differentiated and contextual.

Real encounter, therefore, provides an alternative space within which to examine the development of a national identification. In particular, its value as a basis for study is that it constitutes a complementary paradigm to that of print culture whereby the

French were presented in a highly stylised and stereotyped manner in the form of a 'virtual' encounter with the British people. For such a process of stereotyping to be successful in the activation or manipulation of group identities the target must undergo an element of depersonalization. For as long as the English had never met a Frenchman the belief might prevail that they all existed in abject poverty, subsisting on a diet of frog's legs and wearing nothing but rags and wooden shoes. Stereotypes were also heavily context-dependent, for example the Macaroni fashion which took its lead from French modes of dress made their supposed obsession with outward appearances more believable, or Napoleon's 1798 military campaign in Egypt made French barbarity all the more real to those who read the broadsides.[1] Real encounter with the French meant both that the context within which they were virtually engaged was irrevocably altered and also that they could not be depersonalized to the same extent as in the messages of propaganda.

Within a process of evolving or developing national identification, therefore, the effects of real encounter may serve to modify the picture of French people as presented through virtual encounter. However, contact will always have taken place within a contextual framework provided by that virtual encounter such as was the stereotypical and anti-French message of propaganda which offered the prevailing discourse of print culture at that time and to which large numbers of the British population were exposed. The relationship between real encounter and national identification was therefore conditioned by the manner in which such anti-French propaganda was appropriated by the audience and altered or reproduced in a situation of contact. As shown by the evidence of this thesis, even at times of intense animosity or competition, rarely was the rhetoric of stereotype reproduced. The competition for fishing resources was conceived

[1] Nick Hopkins and Christopher Moore, 'Categorizing the Neighbours: Identity, Distance and Stereotyping', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 3, 2001, pp. 239-252 looks in greater detail generally at the process of stereotyping.

of largely in terms of a general rivalry between the respective fleets, and the language of insult aimed at the French prisoners at parole often took the general term ‘dog’ rather than any nation-specific vocabulary.

However, the act of violence or conflict, or the offering of an insult in itself, is reflective of a notional positioning carried out by the English individual or group with respect to the French with whom they had come into contact. And even though the language or imagery of stereotype may be seldom expressed, an action in itself may describe an awareness of difference or opposition and which, therefore, reflected the messages of propaganda. Nevertheless, in a number of cases, these notional oppositions were broken down and either strategically ignored or challenged and altered. This is evident with the co-operation that existed between smugglers on either side and the incorporation into polite society of the French officer prisoners. Based on evidence such as this, and arising from a significant proportion of those who came into contact with the French, it might be suggested that British nationality for these people had evolved in a different way to that wholly contrasted against a French ‘other’.

However, it is with care that one should offer an alternative model of national identification provided by the evidence of encounter, whether co-operative or conflictual. The daily or regular contact experienced by some and the development of a national awareness and identity among those people describe two distinct narrative arcs, albeit which are related and mutually affective. In other words, the English and French who engaged in contact were not particularly conscious of the way in which their national identification developed as a result and yet it was affected in some way. Similarly, in terms of study, ‘encounter’ and ‘nationality’ are separate foci that nevertheless impact upon one another. The extent and nature of that impact can only be described indirectly through the evidence of language and action.

What of national identification, then, in terms of the relationship between real contact and virtual encounter and the differences in apparent impact? Perhaps the best examples are to be found between the evidence provided in chapters three and four of this thesis, that of the reception afforded to the French prisoners of war between 1793 and 1814, and of the public response to the prospect of taking up arms against a distant enemy. Not surprisingly, the French prisoners were responded to as real people in the light of quotidian interaction instead of as stereotypical constructs and indeed French officers at parole were increasingly incorporated into the dynamics of the wider community in both positive and negative respects. As has been shown, they were very often treated in a manner commensurate with their social and military rank emphasizing this aspect of their personal status and thereby minimising notions of national difference. By those English of lower social rank, the French officers were often regarded with suspicion and hostility, to be exploited for material and financial gain, and whose nationality and enmity in war made them an object of difference. Encounter, therefore, served a dual purpose in this respect. For some it was the means by which notional differences could be seen to be inaccurate and constructed. For others, however, the presence of the French soldiers brought an immediacy to the national conflict and intensified animosities against the ‘other’.

So too with respect to the servicemen incarcerated in English gaols, encounter brought with it an enhanced national awareness. For those English whose curiosity or sense of social obligation led them to enquire further and witness for themselves the conditions in which the French were expected to live, we can see a reflection on the national condition and the nature of a national character that went beyond the rhetorical attributes ascribed by propaganda. Being characterized by their common humanity, Britons were thus united. However, the evidence is not entirely clear as to the extent of

the perceived national collective. These were observations originating with those of middling and professional rank and addressed to those holding power and authority. It is conceivable that the lower orders were not understood to embody such a personal quality.

By contrast, the national identification of those who had not directly encountered the French was more contingent and self-interested. On occasion, the language of patriotic fervour echoed that of propaganda and stereotype with references to ‘Bonny’ and ‘frogs’ thus emphasizing national difference. On the whole, however, reaction to the French threat and the national predicament was characterized by the desire to protect the locality or the community, or to preserve one’s occupational or financial status. This came together at times of perceived crisis but was arguably an appearance of national unity borne of multiple local reactions. The prevalence of the national interest was soon to recede as it became clear that no invasion was to take place. And, although it was never to disappear completely, national identity was superseded by alternative identifications such as required by the need to survive the privations of war or to oppose the war and those who stood in charge of its conduct. Just as those who had seen the conditions of incarceration for French prisoners of war were driven to reflect upon the national condition, therefore, so too did others who had never met a Frenchman as they faced economic hardship or food scarcities in the midst of war. However, for these people, the national disunity they saw had deep political and social causes and which could not be fixed by appeals to an idealised national character.

In terms of identity formation, then, the relationship between virtual encounter and interpersonal contact is a complex one. The crude stereotypes of British propaganda established the French as antithetical ‘other’ and created clear symbolic boundaries by which opposition may be defined in order to achieve a collective unity by exclusion.

The message was variously appropriated by its audience and reproduced differently according to context. Nationality was also evolved by a process of reification and the creation of symbolic boundaries of another kind through encounter, not so much contrasting French otherness, but highlighting the inclusivity of national character. Those who found the treatment of French prisoners in English gaols to be unacceptable sought to establish a moral standard of humanity by which Britons may be defined. In yet another way the symbolic community of nation was ascribed cultural and social meaning through the persuasive argument contained within French applications for citizenship which afforded characteristics of honesty, loyalty and service as British ideals.

In terms of the creation of symbolic boundaries, Anthony Cohen has usefully distinguished between 'public' and 'private' modes, a phenomenon similarly identified by social psychologists as 'social identity theory' and 'identity theory'.[2] These are means by which collective identification may be understood and which, therefore, are of use in our understanding of eighteenth century national identity in Britain through the process of encounter. The 'public' mode, referred to as 'social identity theory' in social psychology, is that by which individuals become aware of their membership of a larger collective by looking outwards and seeking to define themselves against an alien 'other'. The 'private' mode, or 'identity theory' of social psychology, is a process by which the individual looks inwards towards the group and reflects on their own idiosyncrasy within that community and negotiates a role or position accordingly. Although by no means corresponding to virtual and real encounter of the French, the first mode is made far easier through the presentation of stereotypes without encounter, and was indeed the desired outcome of the stridently anti-French propaganda

[2] Anthony Cohen, *Symbolising Boundaries: Identity and Diversity in British Cultures,* Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986, p. 13; Jan Stets and Peter Burke, 'Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, 2000, pp. 224-237, p. 225.

periodically circulated. Encounter, and especially regular or sustained encounter, makes this type of identification far less likely as stereotypes are broken down and even commonalities acknowledged. Instead, the French take on a role in the dynamics of collective identification not solely confined to opposition, either as members incorporated into the group or in relation to whom the group redefines itself.

Generalizing from the Particular

With any study, however, which looks at the particular or the individual, the question of representation must be asked, not only because it was a minority of British people who directly encountered French nationals, but also because the study concentrates on very specific groups. How far then, are the conclusions and arguments put forward in this study representative of a wider collective mentality among the British at that time or else may be used to draw conclusions more generally on the process of national identification? It may be argued that contact and encounter present such a unique and diverse context within which identifications are formed that any conclusions relate solely to the particular groups studied. Certainly, anthropological studies of identity, which tend to restrict focus to the local or the particular as a microcosm of a wider picture, often talk in terms of 'culture' rather than 'national identification' or 'nationalism' precisely because the national collective is such a large group about which to draw conclusions.[3]

Theories of social habitus may provide an alternative justification for tentative generalisations to be made beyond the focus of the case study itself. Social habitus, as an inherent behavioural and reactive propensity of individuals and groups, provides a cultural framework within which people were free to formulate identities with respect to

[3] Liam O'Dowd and Thomas Wilson, *Borders, Nations and States: frontiers of sovereignty in the new Europe*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1996, p. 202.

the French but which also essentially delimited the scope of that response whether or not encounter had taken place. British people were culturally conditioned, so to speak, to behave in a certain way including in relation to the French nation and its people. Habitus, however, must not be confused with the prevalent anti-French discourse of propaganda which, as this thesis has shown, did not produce a uniformly hostile reaction among the English population whether or not they had encountered a French person. Indeed, responses to the French in either case were marked by diversity and idiosyncrasy.

Given this scenario of multiple responses to the French, any generalizations should primarily be restricted to the process of national identification itself rather than attempting to describe its characteristic features in great detail. Thus, for example, anthropological studies of border communities have shown how cultures evolved in these places impact upon, and are instrumental in the construction of notions of, national distinctiveness as these are sites where ideas of cultural identity are developed with greater immediacy against a proximate ‘other’. So, then, for those who operated in border spaces such as the sea, their form of national identification was related directly to that development centrally and among those who did not occupy these spaces. This thesis has demonstrated, however, that it was not a relationship whereby government notions of Britishness and national awareness were reflected unaltered among such groups, neither was a sense of national distinctiveness necessarily offered from them as a result of contact. Instead, alternative considerations, brought about through the experience of encounter, altered the form of national identification. Awareness of these factors may prove useful in any reflection upon the evolution of a national identity among the rest of the English population.

Nationality in Britain in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early decades of the nineteenth is marked by its contingency. It was brought to the fore at certain times and in certain situations, outside of which it occupied less prominence in individual and collective identities. Thus, for example, a perception of threat will produce a group hostility directed outwards and a sense of unity and commonality among the group. Where that threat was seen to derive from the French, as an economic competition for resources, for example, hostility was focused upon them. As we have seen from the evidence of government surveys in the 1790s, however, this was not confined to those who had encountered the French, but the threat perceived from an imminent invasion intensified people's national identification generally in Britain. Given the tenor of propaganda as anti-French, it was relatively easy to frame the rhetoric of national belonging along the lines of opposition and 'otherness' in situations such as these.

What becomes clear, however, is that, even at a time of war, peoples' attitudes towards the French were informed by pragmatic considerations. This is evidenced by the nature of the response towards the prospect of armed service and also by reactions to the imprisoned French officers which may be explained by social or financial motivations. Moreover, those who engaged in smuggling and who treated with their French counterparts did so largely on the basis of personal benefit to be accrued, as did those fishermen who called for more aggressive state protection of their livelihoods against French incursions and disruptions. The form of national identification, therefore, may be understood as evolved in a similar fashion, namely as pragmatic and strategic. Where it suited, an aggressively anti-French nationality could be put forward, such as by those who attacked the French officers at parole and profited from their breaking of parole conditions. But equally, national identification could be formed without such

references to opposition and animosity. Indeed, the French presence could provide a more positive focus for the development of British nationality, something which has gone largely unrecognised by historians to date save for studies on the francophilia of the British elites. The desire of those French who wished to change their legal nationality re-affirmed, through their applications, notions of what it meant to be British, whilst the soldiers incarcerated in British gaols from 1793 onwards facilitated a re-appraisal among some of what characteristics typified, or ought to typify, the national condition.

If the way in which national identification was constituted with respect to the French was fragmented, it was frequently also paradoxical. Many Britons had a love of French luxury goods and continued to buy them in great number whilst, at the same time, applauding government measures to protect domestic commerce and manufactures against French competition.[4] As this thesis has also shown, the smugglers who enjoyed a profitable livelihood courtesy of French entrepreneurs also declared their preparedness to fight against them in war, or, indeed, those who feared the prospect of invasion by Napoleon's forces but who steadfastly refused to enlist to fight against them. Despite this, however, identities were to remain essentially British or English. The case of Thomas Holman, who emigrated to Boulogne and who became a respected and valued member of the local community there, is a rare one to be found for this study in the archives. More typical were the smugglers whose first thought was to flee to the protection of France to escape the full force of the British penal system but who still declared a desire to come home, or others who, having fled there, were motivated by xenophobia to cause further trouble to their French hosts.[5] Similarly those who

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[4] Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727 – 1783*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, p. 321.

[5] There are other examples of this among other groups, for example a printer asking to return to 'my country' from the safety of Paris after being prosecuted for sedition. (NA SP 78/194).

castigated the central authorities for the poor conditions in which the French prisoners were incarcerated, claimed they did so out of characteristic British humanity which essentially lauded such an attribute as superior. The experience of encounter may have served to moderate and modify the messages of Anglo-French antithesis and rivalry to be found in British print culture, and this altered the way in which national identification was developed for many. However, the rhetoric of opposition and difference between English and French was readily used when deemed necessary and such beliefs persisted among a large proportion of the population through the eighteenth century and into the next.

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Glossary

Anker (or anchor): A tub or barrel that held approximately eight Imperial gallons.

Brig: A two-masted square-rigger.

Collector: Principal customs officer of a major port, often also of several sub-ports, directly responsible to the Board of Customs.

Comptroller: An official appointed by the Board of Customs to each Collectorship and subordinate to the Collector. His function was to ensure proper duties were collected.

Cutter: A single-masted, fore-and-aft rigged vessel with two or more headsails.

Frigate: A medium-sized square-rigged warship.

Galley: Any large undecked boat propelled by oarsmen; with or without mast or sails.

Half-anker: A tub or barrel that held approximately four Imperial gallons.

Letter of Marque: A licence granted by the state to a private citizen to arm a ship and seize merchant vessels of another nation.

Man of War: A warship.

Owler: A euphemism for English wool smugglers.

Privateer: An armed, privately owned vessel commissioned for war service by a government.

Shallop: A light boat used for rowing in shallow water.

Sloop: Single-masted fore-and-aft rigged vessel, usually with a single headsail.

Tide-Surveyor: The preventative officer in charge of a boarding crew.

Tide-Waiter: A shore-based Customs officer who boarded vessels on their arrival in port from foreign countries.