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'This trade of Death': war and the figure of the soldier in Gothic fiction, 1764-1823

Lauren Joy Nixon

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Abstract

This thesis explores the British Gothic fiction of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with particular focus on those authors publishing in the aftermath of the French Revolution and during the years of the Revolutionary Wars. Although there has been significant critical study into the Gothic as a literature of terror, responding to the political climate after the fall of the Bastille, very little academic study has interrogated the Gothic's origins as a literature of conflict. This thesis argues that the conventions begun by Horace Walpole in 1764 and continued by writers such as Ann Radcliffe into the 1790s were used within Gothic novels to engage with social anxieties relating to and surrounding war. These novels repeatedly use soldiers as both heroes and villains, employ war as a backdrop to the plot, or place their narrative in a time specifically defined by war.

By analysing the work of Walpole, Radcliffe, Francis Lathom, Regina Maria Roche, Jane Austen, and Mary Shelley alongside contemporary pamphlets, poems, songs, and treatises this thesis explores how the Gothic, in the wake of the Seven Years War and on into the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, engaged with concerns about conflict, the army as an ideological body, and with the soldier himself. Drawing on ideas of chivalry and a growing trend towards nationalism, this thesis explores the ways in which the Gothic was used to discuss notions such as masculinity and national identity whilst reacting to the ever-changing realities of a nation at war.

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Declaration

I, the author, confirm that this thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Lauren Joy Nixon

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Introduction

Reclaiming Ancient Glories?: Military masculinity and the rise of the Gothic

Surely, we are yet *Britons!* Surely, our ancient spirit is not quite evaporated! Surely, we have some Remains of the Love and Liberty, and of the Protestant Religion, left among us! Was there more of this noble Affection, and particularly in all those who are to fight our Battles both by Sea and Land, it might be Means of rendering us more formidable to, and successful against, the common enemy.

H. Worthington, *A Letter Adapted to the present Critical Juncture, Addressed to All Military Gentleman, By SEA and LAND; POINTING OUT The True Soldier, AS Animated by RELIGION AND THE LOVE of his Country*, 1758 ¹

The year of 1793 and the month of September has been productive of unusual sorrow. My gallant Boy lost his leg on the 6th before Dunkirk, & the retreat, which was immediately and rapidly made, compelled them to remove the wounded at the utmost risk of their lives. My poor Charles was remov'd only two hours after his leg had been amputated and not only sufferd extremely in consequence of it but has had the cure much retarded. I received this cruel intelligence on the 11th, and it was a shock almost too severe for me.

Charlotte Smith to Joseph Cooper Walker, October 9th 1793²

Writing to Joseph Cooper Walker in the October of 1793 – the year in which Britain joined the coalition of European nations against Revolutionary France in a conflict that would later become known as the War of the First Coalition – the prolific poet and novelist Charlotte Smith described her despair at learning of her son Charles being wounded in action during the siege of Dunkirk. Charles Dyer Smith, twenty years old and of a ‘spirited and active disposition’³, had

¹ H. Worthington *A Letter Adapted to the present Critical Juncture, Addressed to All Military Gentleman, By SEA and LAND; POINTING OUT The True Soldier, AS Animated by RELIGION AND THE LOVE of his Country* (London: R. Griffiths, 1758), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW107387610&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>. [accessed 30th April 2016], p5

² *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Judith Phillips Stanton (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2003), in ProQuest Ebook Central <<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sheffield/detail.action?docID=237020>> [accessed 1st September 2019], p77-8

³ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p79

entered the 14th Bedfordshire regiment as an ensign in the April of 1793, following the French declaration of war against Britain in the February. Smith – due to issues with her father in law’s will and the disreputable conduct of her husband – had found herself unable to raise the funds to send Charles to university, leaving the young man ‘lingering at home in hopeless inaction’⁴. With so few options otherwise available to him and the army being newly engaged with France, and in need of men to staff their ranks, Charles had travelled to London to attempt to persuade the trustees of his grandfather’s estate to allow him ‘three hundred pounds to purchase an Ensigncy in some new rais’d company’ because – as Smith accepted despite her reticence regarding the scheme – ‘nothing can be more distressing to him and to me than his being at home with’t any plan of Life.’⁵ The purchase of an officer’s commission would provide not only a respectable source of income, but opportunities to improve his character, connections, and fortune. The British government would require a number of new regiments to sustain their campaigns in the aftermath of the French Revolution, and Charles Smith would not be the only man to take the purchase of an officer’s commission in the years between 1793 and 1815. Many young men of the middle and upper classes, in particular younger sons without the prospect of sufficient inheritance, would turn to the military for employment. Unlike other gentlemanly professions, such as the clergy, officers were not required to have a university education and promotions were granted through exemplary conduct in service and in reward for successful campaigns⁶. An officer would be outfitted, educated, and given responsibility befitting to his military rank; a transformation from civilian to soldier that many believed had the ability to refine and enhance character. In her letter to Cooper Walker, Charlotte Smith acknowledged that the months her son had been a soldier had seen him acquire ‘the most flattering character’⁷. Whilst officers were trained in military sciences and discipline, which they were expected to impart upon their regiments, they were also required to be proficient in social graces: as regiments were moved across Britain and Europe, their officers would need to be present in the various societies that played host to them. To maintain good graces and a positive public opinion, it was important that the British officer was as skilled in dancing and pleasing conversation as he was in military manoeuvres. The army, then, could provide a young man such as Charles Smith with the education, refinement and social connections of a gentleman, despite being unable to attend Oxford.

⁴ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p79

⁵ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p62

⁶ There was, however, still a financial element to military promotions as each new rank had to be purchased. Smith herself struggled to afford the promotions of her younger son, Lionel, though often promotions of less wealthy officers were funded by distant relatives or impressed commanding officers.

⁷ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p79

But the military in the late eighteenth century was an inherently paradoxical profession. To achieve success as an officer required more than admirable conduct in both the barracks and the ballroom: as noted in a pamphlet published in 1745, titled *The duty of a soldier: in two letters to a Young Officer in High Command*, 'it is no small or trivial Matter which he undertakes, who receives a commission from the King'⁸. To be respected as an officer required something more than proficiency in military sciences and social graces. As the author of the *The duty of a soldier* notes, 'the Art of War is to be attained by other Methods and Means more studious, more laborious, more manly'⁹: years of active service. War required engagement in a violence that was at odds with the period's ideas of gentlemanly behaviour: the soldier might appear a gentleman during assembly, but his profession was inescapably tied to violence and death. The refinement of officers was intended to prevent the soldiers' descent into brutishness or violence for violence sake, yet the increasingly aggressive nature of the British military campaigns in the decades following Culloden fundamentally troubled this notion. But whilst many fortunes were made on the battlefields of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, hundreds of lives were also irrevocably damaged and lost.¹⁰ The soldier's physical risk, in participating in campaigns, may offer him the chance of wealth and glory but it could also cost him not only his livelihood but his life. This tension in the soldier's identity and the high cost of his successes is illustrated vividly in Smith's letters: after participating in campaigns over the summer, Charles was part of the ill-fated British siege of Dunkirk in September 1793. Injured during the fighting, Charles' right leg was amputated on the field and his regiment was forced to move him just hours later during the retreat. Though news of his injury came with praise of his conduct and bravery, Smith found herself far from comforted and lamented that 'nothing can make him amends for being thus crippled.'¹¹ For Smith, the imagined figure of her injured son verged upon an unbearable horror. The image of Charles, so violently wounded at so young an age, that Smith depicts in these letters is one that in his absence becomes almost abject:

My poor invalid, to whom I have sent his next brother, is at Ostend; he has now left his bed and thinks he shall be at home in about three weeks. Nothing can be more dreadful to my imagination than to figure to myself his appearance; a once active young Man, twenty years old, thus mutilated for life, must appear an afflicting object to a stranger—but to me! I really know not, ardently as I wish to have him at home, how I shall support the sight.

⁸ 'A Field Marshal', *The duty of a soldier: in two letters to a Young Officer in High Command*. By a Field Marshal (London: J. Robinson, 1745) in Eighteenth Century Collections Online, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&docLevel=FASCIMILE&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3306206316&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0> [accessed 23 Oct. 2016], p4

⁹ *The duty of a soldier*, p5

¹⁰ Revolutionary Wars is used in this thesis to refer to the French Revolutionary Wars, being the collected term for the conflicts between 1792 and 1802.

¹¹ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p79

Charlotte Smith to Joseph Cooper Walker, October 9th 1793¹²

Smith's reactions to Charles' injury in her various correspondence demonstrate the traumatic potential of war, which destabilises not only the wounded soldier but those intimately connected to him. Smith repeats again in a letter to Dr Charles Burney (father of the novelist Frances Burney) on the 15th of October that 'much as I wish to have him under my humble roof [...] I know not how I shall support the sight of him at first.'¹³ For Smith, both as a mother and a civilian, Charles' loss of both his physical capabilities and his future potential at just twenty years old as a result of the profession that was intended to transport him into a successful adulthood becomes a reality too perverse to accept. Smith desires to return to her role as mother, but is unable to comprehend how she will care – be it physically, emotionally, or financially – for him in his altered state. Soldiering in Smith's letters is positioned as a terrible paradox, too destructive to be sustainable. In a letter to James Upton Tripp on the 15th of September, 1793, Smith bitterly noted that the trustees had ignored her request for the extra funds she needed for Charles' care despite (in her view) being responsible for his injury by refusing to pay for his tuition. 'They take no notice of my applications,' she writes, 'tho to their infamous conduct it is owing that he has taken up from necessity, and because a young Man cannot be idle, this trade of Death, which at twenty years old made him a mutilated cripple for life.'¹⁴

Smith's language in these letters – of affliction, repulsion, and death – echoes that of the popular Gothic novels which dominated readers' attentions in the 1790s and early 1800s. Though Smith's novels would play an important role in establishing the conventions of the Gothic genre, this is not a thesis about Smith's works. Rather, it is a thesis interested in the way in which the Gothic fiction of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries utilized the form to explore the anxieties and fears of a nation at war. The figure of the soldier and the spectre of war would appear repeatedly in the works of Smith's contemporaries, particularly in the novels of Ann Radcliffe, and those writing in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, such as Jane Austen and Mary Shelley. The tension in Smith's letters between the military as a profession that made young men brave and honourable, shaping them to defend King and country whilst earning a respectable living, and the military as a channel for violence in the name of nationalism, where young lives were lost and maimed, would permeate the literature of the years following the French Revolution. This trade of Death, as Smith declared it, became a centre point of the Gothic imagination during the 1780s and 1790s, beginning a fascination that would persist for

¹² *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p79

¹³ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p83

¹⁴ *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, p73

centuries. The Gothic novel in Britain, as Angela Wright has identified, had its origins in the aftermath of the Seven Years War, ‘a most brutal and acquisitive Anglo-French conflict’¹⁵ fought between 1756 and 1763. Although the conflict was a resounding victory for Britain that vastly expanded its global power and territory, in the decades following the Seven Years War it would become ‘deeply problematic to look across the channel for literary inspiration.’¹⁶ This thesis seeks to uncover the Gothic’s imbrication in the discourses of masculinity, the military, and conflict from the Seven Years War through to the Napoleonic Wars. The study will examine not only how Gothic authors used the conventions of the genre to process anxieties about ideas of masculinity, national identity and the realities of war but what the Gothicising of these anxieties reveals to us about a period of conflict that resonates with society to this day.

Crucial to this discussion of the conflict’s anxieties and perception of the British military in the Gothic fiction of the late eighteenth century is the manner in which Britain as a nation had begun to think of itself and the concept of a British national identity. Kathleen Wilson, in the 2002 study *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century*, suggests that ‘Georgian people, or at least those to whom we have access, tended to assess themselves less through their internal lives (although their state of virtue, sin and morality was important to many) than through their behaviour, social position and reputation.’¹⁷ National identity then was a concept realised through connecting the individual, and the construction of the individual, to the nation they belonged to: a notion that relied on a performance of those ideals and characteristics believed to characterise Britishness alongside an ongoing appreciation of heritage and legacy. The language of nationalism that grew during the Seven Years War would return continually to the idea of the contemporary British public as the inheritors of the Age of Chivalry and the Glorious Revolution: an inheritance that must be protected from invasion. It was this idea of strong, noble British national identity, which valued the protection of virtue and the freedom of the British constitution, that nationalist tracts hinged upon during the Seven Years War and which was seemingly confirmed by a resounding British victory. But whilst the Seven Years War had been a triumph for Britain, the cost of the conflict would burden the country for decades to come: a burden that would not only contribute to the loss of the American Revolutionary Wars in 1783 but a growing bitterness amongst the ranks of the private soldier that they had been misused for aristocratic gain. By the 1790s British national identity had become fraught, complicated by anxieties about military violence, effeminacy, and conflicting opinions about the French Revolution.

¹⁵ Angela Wright, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764-1820: the Import of Terror* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p1

¹⁶ Wright, p1

¹⁷ Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race : Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Routledge, 2002), p2

For Britain to successfully withstand, finance, and maintain renewed conflict with France, it would need to reconstruct its national identity and encourage new national fervour amongst its people. As Kathleen Wilson has argued, national identity was not an automatic state of being but 'like other identities, depended upon the ability of individuals to insert themselves into the web of collective narratives, and to identify themselves with experiences that are shared through representation.'¹⁸ If men were to enlist, funds and provisions were to be raised and the war effort to be supported, there would need to be a shared understanding – one that encompassed all classes and genders – regarding the need for and purpose of these wars. But though the conflict would repeatedly threaten to spill over onto British soil, these would be wars fought away from the British Isles and thus out of the sight of the British civilian population. As Catriona Kennedy has identified, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars would bring 'the massive expansion of the armed forces, the partial militarisation of civilian society, and the deployment of a highly-charged patriotic rhetoric'¹⁹. The patriotic, pro-war propaganda circulated after Britain joined the European coalition in 1793 not only demonstrate the attempts to make 'the war effort the concern of every man and woman, rich and poor, across the four nations of the British Isles'²⁰, but the vast scope of these wars and their effect on civilian lives. In *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime*, Mary Favret notes that for the British public in the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth century war existed in a constant state of temporal and spatial distortion. In a period where wars occurred always off shore and news travelled slowly, Favret argues that 'the geographies of such wartime experience cannot be easily compartmentalized *there* and *here*' but that they '[overflow] these spaces, somehow fugitive and omnipresent at once.'²¹ War in the Gothic of the late eighteenth century is always at once dangerously close and unreachably distant: a looming threat that disrupts domestic life and order but can never be fully seen or understood. In that distance between the domestic and the battlefield was the space for terror and anxiety to develop, as evidenced in Charlotte Smith's horror at the imagined image of her wounded son: the event is communicated to Smith weeks before it can become a reality for her, and she must rely on the reports of others to shape her expectations.

What Charlotte Smith's letters demonstrate is the terror of what Favret calls war at a distance; the suddenness of Charles' injury in the narrative of Smith's letters, her inability to process the

¹⁸ Wilson, p3

¹⁹ Catriona Kennedy, *Narratives of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p2

²⁰ Kennedy, p2

²¹ Mary A. A. Favret, *War at a Distance : Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), in ProQuest Ebook Central <<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sheffield/detail.action?docID=537666>> [accessed December 2018], p4

image of her child's wounded body, and the continued disruption it causes to her family and household reveal how the violence and trauma of conflict stretched beyond the battlefields. What this thesis suggests is that the Gothic, as a literature that grew from one period of war and was popularised during another, served as that 'weft of collective narratives'²². It was 'acts of imagination' such as fiction, Neil Ramsay and Gillian Russell argue, that 'not only brought distant wars to close' but that 'helped to bind the public's sympathies with the soldier at war.'²³ In the Gothic novel's imagined, feudal past the anxieties about manliness, national identity, and war could be explored by authors and thus shared by readers: many of whom were young middle class women, such as Jane Austen's naïve protagonist Catherine Morland. The Gothic allowed the conversations about war to expand beyond the news reported from the front, the debates in parliament, and the opinions of the pamphlets and propaganda; in Emily St. Aubert's ruminations on the war torn Italian countryside in Ann Radcliffe's 1794 novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, civilian readers could imagine and understand the effects of conflict on a nation and its people despite being so far removed from the actuality. What these Gothic texts realise is that war encompasses and affects all things, but often in a way that is violent, uncertain and only ever half observed. The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars would ultimately span over two decades, a tumultuous period of changing leaderships, allegiances, tactics, and ideologies. As the nature of these conflicts shifted, so too would the literature that reflected them: the figure of the soldier would evolve from a troubling vagrant to hero of sensibility, to an exemplar of failed masculinity and ineptitude. This thesis will consider how the Gothic represented and interrogated war and the figure of the soldier from Horace Walpole's genre defining *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764 to Mary Shelley's *Valperga, or the Life of Castruccio* in 1823.

The enormity of war, Ramsay and Russell suggest, 'reinforces the cultural pressure surrounding existing identities of nation and gender, even as it forces individuals to adopt new identities, to become soldier, patriot, coward, traitor, or casualty.'²⁴ War's ability to shape and redefine identities, particularly those relating to gender and nation, is central to this thesis. To fully understand and explore the Gothic's engagement with war in the eighteenth century, it is important to consider how the decades following the Seven Years War shaped British national identity. As scholars such as Wilson, Colley and Gerald Newman have identified, from the mid-eighteenth century Britain experienced the development and steady rise of nationalism, which – although predominantly focused on England – sought to define a distinct national character informed by the Constitution and an imagined glorious military past. Masculinity therefore

²² Wilson, p3

²³ Neil Ramsay and Gillian Russell, 'Introduction' in *Tracing War in British Enlightenment and Romantic Culture*, ed. Neil Ramsay and Gillian Russell, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), Google Ebook

²⁴ Ramsay and Russel, *Tracing War*

became inherently tied to the idea of nation: whilst women were seen to embody national virtues, men were to be the defenders of British lands and values. The fashioning of masculinity and masculine identity thus became intrinsically linked to the development of national identity. Masculinity and notions of manliness were neither linear nor homogenous: conflicting ideas regarding early education, society, and morality would see a number of modes of masculinity produced over the course of the 1700s. What did develop, however, was a recurring conflict in the very concept of masculinity and how it should be embodied, performed, and perceived. As Michèle Cohen has noted, whilst there was no fixed notion of masculinity there were prevalent concerns about 'politeness, the Grand Tour, accomplishments and women's education, the construction of gendered achievement, and ultimately, the forging of an English national and gendered identity.'²⁵ What occurs here, then, is a crisis of masculinity: one informed by rising nationalism and by anxieties about Britain's global position. When discussing a crisis of masculinity what this study is referring to specifically is that which arose, in particular, after the American Wars of Independence, about the fashioning of polite masculinity in Britain. As will be discussed in Chapter Two, Britain's loss of the American colonies troubled the nation's perception of not only its national identity but its masculinity. Since the propaganda of the Seven Years War the notion of masculinity in Britain had been intrinsically linked to nationality and martial superiority, as Linda Colley has demonstrated: manliness and masculine ideals became entwined with the rise of nationalism.

At the heart of these evolving concepts of masculinity and national identity in eighteenth-century Britain were two significant cultural movements: sensibility and chivalry. The years following the Seven Years War would witness what Karen O'Brien has described as a 'a growing interest in Gothic and medieval history' that 'fed into an Enlightenment narrative of Europe's transition from feudalism to commercial modernity'²⁶. With this transition came a revival of interest in the notion of chivalry, as both a code of military honour and as a model of morality or values. This eighteenth century culture of chivalry 'assigned to women a privileged place in the history of European 'manners'²⁷: women were positioned as the embodiment of national virtues, a feminine ideal in whose honour wars would be fought and won. This concept of chivalry, taken from the medieval romances, would be employed throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to construct heroic ideals. This would be achieved predominantly by reinforcing its military origins by imagining a lineage between the chivalric knight and the British soldier, but for chivalry to be amalgamated into contemporary notions of politeness it

²⁵ Michèle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National identity and language in the eighteenth century*, (Routledge: London, 1996)

²⁶ Karen O'Brien, *Women and the Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p7

²⁷ O'Brien, p7

would need to be separated from its feudal origins. Whilst Britain had begun to look back to its past in an attempt to define its present, that supposed barbarity and incivility of feudalism was ill suited to eighteenth-century society. Sensibility, the literary and philosophical movement that had been growing steadily in popularity since the early 1700s, would be vital to this reimagining of chivalry. As what Susan Manning has called ‘a literary mode [that] embodied an experimental approach to character based on Hume’s acceptance of the ubiquity of the passions as motivators to action’²⁸ sensibility would facilitate the separation of chivalric values from the violence of feudalism, allowing it to be reimagined as a contemporary ideal. In its focus on feeling and the importance of the individual human experience, sensibility ‘functioned as a kind of social cement that holds individuals together in a moralized and emotionalized public sphere’²⁹. For literature to construct Wilson’s ‘weft’ of narratives, both chivalry and sensibility would be needed to enable the empathetic connection between character and reader, reader and writer, writer and society, and society and the military. The popularity of sensibility had been central to the abandonment of the Restoration-era models of masculinity, the libertine and the rake, in favour of more domestic and polite modes such as the gentleman. Yet the gentleman’s refinement was one that was seen to soften natural ‘masculine’ roughness and encourage sensibility through socialisation with women. After the loss of the American Wars of Independence this method of male education drew substantial criticism, as many feared that the production of the gentleman had rendered young men effeminate and therefore unable to uphold Britain’s national identity.

The Gothic’s identity as a literature of terror and anxiety, popularised in reaction to the French Revolution, has already been well established by scholars such as Robert Miles, David Punter, and E J Clery during the formation of Gothic studies as a discipline. More recent scholarship, such as Angela Wright’s 2013 monograph *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764-1820: the Import of Terror*, has expanded on the Gothic’s origins in Britain and made firm connections to the events of the Seven Years War. In *Britain, France and the Gothic*, Wright establishes how crucial elements of the Gothic traditions can be traced to Anglo-French tension even before the outbreak of the French Revolution, acknowledging that the desire to create a uniquely ‘British’ form of literature separate from French influence would (despite the Gothic’s French and European origins) give birth to the tradition of the Gothic novel. Similarly, the concept of ‘war Gothic’ is not new, as illustrated by Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet and Steffan Hantke’s 2015 edited collection *War Gothic in Literature and Culture*, which sought to analyse the way in which Gothic texts have represented and imagined war over a variety of different mediums including video

²⁸ Susan Manning, *Sensibility*, in *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1740–1830*, ed. Thomas Keymer, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 80-99, p82

²⁹ Manning, p83

games and cinema. Soltysik Monnet and Hantke's collection acknowledges how the Gothic's relationship with war can be traced back to the Seven Years War and notes its significance during the late eighteenth century, but is primarily concerned with 20th and 21st century texts. But though *War Gothic in Literature and Culture* has been ground-breaking in showcasing an area of the Gothic tradition that has been somewhat understudied despite its textual prevalence, there has been no sustained academic study of how wartime anxieties influenced the early development of Gothic conventions. Whilst significant study has been undertaken into the influence of these conflicts on the tradition of Romanticism, primarily in Philip Shaw's edited collection *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793 – 1822* (2000) and Simon Bainbridge's monograph *British Poetry and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars* (2003), there has been little to no scholarly enquiry of the same in Gothic fiction. Both these texts recognise that Britain's fractured reactions to the Revolution reverberated into the literature of Romanticism, marking it as tradition of ideological and military tensions, and have interrogated the works of contemporaries such as Coleridge, Wordsworth and Byron accordingly. What Shaw's collection and Bainbridge's work also acknowledge is the complexity of the Romantic literary and poetic responses to Napoleon's rise to power, and the perceived loss and corruption of the ideological values upon which the Revolution had been built. Though many studies have considered the Gothic's representation of nationalism, religion and gender in relation to the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror and the wars which followed it, few critics have thus far engaged with Gothic's ongoing fascination with the military. Yet conflict appears in a number of Gothic texts, as either small skirmishes or large scale warfare, and many novels feature soldiers (in various iterations, too: sometimes as knights, sometimes as chevaliers) as both the heroes and villains. What this thesis seeks to do is undertake an original approach to the Gothic novel, spanning from 1764 to 1823, to analyse the way in which war and the figure of the soldier are represented, informed by an understanding of the significant events and occurrences that shaped the course of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars by various pamphlets, treatises and propaganda published during the period.

Chapter One seeks to establish the nature of public opinion of the British army in the years during and following the Seven Years War, considering how anti-French rhetoric was employed by the government and by pamphleteers to encourage large scale nationalism. The literature of the Seven Years War witnessed a 'revival' in the British self-imagination of the nation as one of chivalry and civilisation, whilst the threat of a French invasion was coloured in terms of savagery and barbarism that rendered 'Frenchness' as the ancient antithesis of a superior 'Britishness'. Using Linda Colley's coherent and comprehensive 1992 study *Britons: Forging the Nation* and a selection of primary texts to provide a historical framework, this chapter

establishes how the soldier was transformed from the noble protector of British values during the Seven Years War to a dangerous vagrant in the years that followed: to bear the enormous cost of the conflict the British government suspended a number of the newly formed regiments, leaving large numbers of men who had left their trades to take up arms without employment or income. Whilst the lower ranks of the military became embittered against the government and the aristocratic officer class, perceiving themselves as having been misled to fight a war for profit rather than national protection, British polite society began to find the soldier a troubling and displeasing sight. This chapter uses a series of primary sources, including poems and pamphlets, published during and after the Seven Years War alongside the personal and military correspondence of General Henry Seymour Conway to consider the conflicting opinions regarding the military and the soldier³⁰. As a high ranking and experienced officer, Conway's letters offer not only a view of the realities of life during campaigns and the nature of troops' education and management, but give key insights into how soldiers perceived themselves and their duties. Conway, the younger brother of the Marquess of Hertford, was a well-connected officer who had served under the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden, was a favourite of William Cavendish, 4th Duke of Devonshire, and served as an MP alongside his military career. Conway was also the cousin and close friend of Horace Walpole, a connection that becomes particularly significant when considering the publication of *The Castle of Otranto* alongside political events concerning Conway during 1764. This chapter will question how concerns regarding the mass-disbandment's of regiments following the Seven Years War and the political turmoil involving Henry Seymour Conway informed Walpole's employment of the Gothic and use of militaristic imagery in *The Castle of Otranto*.

Moving away from the Seven Years War and towards the French Revolution, Chapter Two begins an in depth analysis of the presentation of war and the figure of the soldier in the novels of Ann Radcliffe. Focusing on Radcliffe's first two Gothic novels, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789) and *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), this chapter assesses the impact of the Revolution and growing concerns about the possibility of war on the Gothic's representation of masculinity. Both Radcliffe's early novels feature heroes who, at the novel's opening, are on the cusp between adolescent and adulthood and are shaped into maturity by the terror they withstand over the course of the text. Both *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne's* Osbert and *A Sicilian Romance's* Ferdinand are fashioned by a combination of chivalry and sensibility, which allows for the creation of a successful masculinity that is both militaristic and sensitive. This chapter will explore the tensions between ideas of manliness and politeness in the 1780s and 1790s, and how these novels responded to anxieties of a national masculine ineptitude and

³⁰ This section is drawn from archival research undertaken at the Lewis Walpole Library, New England, who were gracious enough to host me on a research trip as the letters are not currently digitised.

fears about martial violence to bridge the gap between the military and society, rehabilitating the soldier as a heroic figure who embodied gentlemanly ideals without risking effeminacy or brutishness.

Chapter Three will continue the study of the relationship between war and the Radcliffean Gothic, discussing *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) as a rejection of both foppishness and manly excess. Moving the action away this time to France, *The Romance of the Forest* expanded and solidified the literary conventions that would come to be the trademarks of Radcliffe's Gothic. The novel's heroine, Adeline, embodies a number of feminine ideals which, the chapter argues, can be read through Kathleen Wilson's suggestion that women were perceived as the embodiment of national virtue. Unlike the heroines of the two preceding novels, Adeline is entirely without family or connections and the terrors she faces are more constant, pressing and abhorrent in nature. This chapter explores the idea that the novel positions the military as space in which masculinity might be fashioned without the risk of effeminacy (through the lens of Michèle Cohen's arguments about excess) or Othering, continuing the alignment of chivalry and sensibility begun in the earlier novels. The Declaration of Pillnitz in the August of 1791 heightened tensions between the European monarchies and the Revolutionary government in France. A novel that both embraces and rejects 'Frenchness', *The Romance of the Forest* demonstrates the increasingly contentious and complicated responses to the revolution in Britain as fears grew that the French Assembly would seek to spread the Revolution's message by force across Europe. *Romance of the Forest* was written during a period of increasing uncertainty, reflected in the events of the novels. Radcliffe presents three military characters in *Romance*: the hero, Theodore de Peyrou, Adeline's disappointed admirer, Louis de La Motte, and the Gothic villain, the Marquis de Montalt. This chapter interrogates how each man's character and mode of masculinity is expressed to the reader not only through their treatment of Adeline, but in their identities as soldiers. The chapter questions the idea of 'heroism' in the construction of masculinity, and the significance of virtue and morality, represented by women and the protection of women, in the figure of the soldier as Gothic hero.

Chapters Four and Five move away from the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution and anxieties about the potential of large scale war in Europe, and into the period following the executions of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. The British expulsion of the French ambassador was met by the Assembly with a declaration of war, which led to Britain joining the coalition led then by Austria and Prussia. The outbreak of war further complicated the British public's opinion of the Revolution: a French invasion was feared even as early as the March of 1793, yet despite Government assertions that the war would be short and decisive there were widespread concerns about how the nation would support and finance the conflict. These two chapters

consider how the outbreak of war, along with the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's highly influential *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) complicated the ideas of military heroism and the sustainability of martial masculinity. Chapter Four continues the study of Radcliffe with a sustained close reading of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, examining how the novel's presentation of war and masculinity shifted dramatically from that of her earlier works. This chapter reads *Udolpho* through the lens of Mary Favret's *War at a Distance*, considering how the novel might be interpreted as a response to Britain's entrance into the War of the First Coalition, exploring anxieties about the conflict's encroachment on the domestic space and its disruption of gender ideals. Both chapters explore how this extended beyond Radcliffe's work and into what has since been regarded as the Radcliffean tradition of Gothic novels: Chapter Four also considers Francis Lathom's 1798 novel *The Midnight Bell* whilst Chapter Five undertakes extensive analysis of Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont*, published the same year. Both these texts have been neglected by the majority of Gothic scholarship, but read through the context of the French Revolutionary Wars both novels offer important commentary and insight into the anxieties about the construction of successful, sustainable masculinity during a time of war and the impact of conflict in the domestic sphere.

Chapter Six, meanwhile, explores the Gothic's legacy as a literature of conflict and the cultural imprint of the Napoleonic Wars on the works of Jane Austen and Mary Shelley. Discussing primarily Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818), *Pride and Prejudice* (1812) and *Persuasion* (1818), and Shelley's *Valperga* (1823), this chapter will look at how the rise of Napoleon altered both the course of the Revolutionary Wars and British public opinion. Both Austen and Shelley's work continues, albeit in two very different directions, the traditions begun by Walpole in 1764 and popularised by authors such as Radcliffe in the 1780s and 1790s. This chapter interrogates how Austen, though not generically Gothic, works within these traditions to reflect the impact of war on polite, middle class British society: a war that is rarely mentioned and scarcely seen, but which fundamentally disrupts the social order in even the most removed country village. The chapter will continue the analysis of these wartime texts through the lens of Favret's theories in *War at a Distance*, considering how Austen continues the conversations about the domestic impacts of war and the paradoxical figure of the soldier begun by Radcliffe and Roche. In the inclusion of *Persuasion*, the chapter also considers how literature attempted to understand the reality of post-Napoleonic Britain, a nation fundamentally altered by over two decades of conflict. This discussion of the post-Napoleonic period continues into analysis of Shelley's historical novel, *Valperga*, which tells the story of the rise to power of Castruccio Castracani degli Antelminelli, a fourteenth century Italian condottiero whom Percy Bysshe Shelley would describe as 'a little Napoleon'. Whilst much of Austen's fiction was written and published during

both the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Shelley's *Valperga* demonstrates how the shock of Napoleon's seizure of power during the Coup of 18 Brumaire and his creation of the First French Empire resonated even almost a decade later.

Recent studies into the Gothic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century – such as Kathleen Hudson's 2018 monograph *Servants and the Gothic, 1764-1831* – demonstrate that though Gothic scholarship has devoted considerable scholarly attention to the period, there remains space for new avenues of study and new interpretations. Drawing on the assertion of James Watt's 1999 work, *Contesting the Gothic*, enquiries such as Hudson's acknowledge Watt's crucial assertion that the Gothic as a tradition is neither linear nor homogeneous but rather a tradition of conflict. The Gothic's ongoing fascination with and fear of the soldier, who appears at once as a chivalric hero and a dangerous, half hidden figure trained for violence, has been touched on by studies interested in Anglo-French relations but never fully explored. In reading these Gothic texts through the lens of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, alongside the pamphlets, treatises, speeches and poetry that were published in reaction to them, this thesis aims to demonstrate the significant, genre defining and lasting impact of war on the Gothic mode. The soldier, in his many guises, appears again and again in the Gothic novels of the 1780s and 1790s and continues to hold sway into the 1800s, even beyond the conflict itself. The Gothic, as a popular literature written predominantly by women and consumed by a largely young, female readership³¹, was a form in which civilian anxieties about the disruptive nature of war could be translated into what Kathleen Wilson calls the 'weft of collective narratives'³².

³¹ Elizabeth Neiman, *Minerva's Gothics: The Politics and Poetics of Romantic Exchange, 1780-1820*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2019)

³² Wilson, p3

Chapter One

'His gallant and indefatigable behaviour': Horace Walpole, Henry Seymour Conway, and finding the soldier in *The Castle of Otranto*

Let them heap what slanders they please on this virtuous Man, yet they ought to make them some how or other coincide with some, however latent, ingredient in his Character. But is Boasting; is Vain-Glory, the smallest Part of that Character? Is he ostentatious, or a Man of the most ingenuous Modesty? When did he brag of his Exploits? where! Is his common Behaviour assuming? Has he arrogated Merit to himself? Has he fatigued Ministers with Solicitations for Rewards? Has he complained of neglected Services? Have his Brother-Officers heard him comparing himself to *Wolfe*? [...] His Life has been spent in public Service.

Horace Walpole, *A Counter-Address to the Public on the Late Dismission of a General Officer*¹

This chapter reconsiders the origins of the Gothic novel as a post-war text, considering the impact of the Seven Years War on the formation of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by establishing the shifting perceptions surrounding the British military during and after the Seven Years War and considering Walpole's own personal connection through his cousin General Henry Seymour Conway. The economic and social strains that the Seven Years War placed on Britain, this chapter argues, left a number of soldiers disenfranchised and disenchanted with the government, thus fracturing the relationship between the military and the state. The dismissal of Conway in April 1764 became a catalysing event, highlighting not only the tensions between the soldier and society but anxieties about the true purpose of the military and the identity of the soldier.

The first preface to Horace Walpole's 1764 novel *The Castle of Otranto*, which purported to be a translation from an Italian manuscript, claimed that the events 'recorded' in the text 'are such as were believed in the darkest ages of christianity' but that 'the language and conduct have nothing that savours of barbarism.'² Walpole, masquerading as the text's translator and editor 'William Marshall, Gent', suggests that the 'Spanish names of the domestics seem to indicate that this work was not composed until the establishment of the Arragonian kings in Naples had made Spanish appellations familiar in that country.'³ This, Marshall/Walpole supposes, places the manuscript somewhere between '1095, the era of the first crusade, and 1243, the date of the

¹ Horace Walpole, *A Counter-Address to the Public on the Late Dismission of a General Officer*, (London: J. Almon, 1764) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CB130495174&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 28th November 2017]

² Horace Walpole, *The Castle Of Otranto* ed. by Michael Gamer, 13th edition (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p5

³ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p5

last, or not long after.⁴ This dating of *The Castle of Otranto* indicates what the title of the second edition would explicitly state: that the novel is a 'Gothic Story'. The period of the Crusades, as with the imagined Arthurian past, would come to play a significant role in the way in which Britain used its idealised, chivalric, military past to shape national identity in the mid to late eighteenth century. The Gothic, as James Watt argues, 'was constructed both as a distant, non-specific period of ignorance and superstition from which an increasingly civilised nation had triumphantly emerged, and as a (similarly distant) fount of constitutional purity and political virtue from which the nation had become dangerously alienated.'⁵ But – as demonstrated by Walpole's dating of *Otranto* – the Gothic was also a conduit for the reclamation of a time perceived to be one of military might and glory: a period in which Britain's armies fought noble wars in the name of Christian moral values. As the novel which has popularly been considered the genesis of the Gothic tradition, critical enquiry into Walpole's *Otranto* has frequently interrogated how the text drew on notions of the medieval past to create the conventions that would come to define the genre. Yet what has rarely been noted by scholars is that *The Castle of Otranto* is a novel that is overshadowed, literally and metaphorically, by war. The first preface places the text in a period defined by conflict, whilst the novel's antagonist, Manfred, is plagued by the fragments of armour belonging to the usurped Alfonso the Good. The novel was written, too, in the aftermath of the Seven Years War and during a year in which Walpole would directly engage with discourses concerning the military profession, following the dismissal of Henry Seymour Conway. By exploring the reception of the military both during and after the Seven Years War and considering Walpole's responses to Conway's dismissal, this chapter hopes to offer new insight on *The Castle of Otranto* by considering it in the context of these significant military events.

The Seven Years War would become crucial in the shaping of Great Britain as a nation and empire, both literally and ideologically. Fought across five continents between two coalitions of European powers headed by Great Britain and France respectively, the Seven Years War was a conflict concerned with trade, land and global power. Lasting from 1756 to 1763 it would become, as Linda Colley has noted in their formative study *Britons* (1992), 'the most dramatically successful war the British ever fought'⁶, conquering Canada and driving the French from territories in India, West Africa and the West Indies. Throughout the Seven Years War Britain demonstrated its naval superiority and ultimately 'assumed for themselves a reputation of being the most aggressive, the most affluent and the most swiftly expanding power in the

⁴ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p5

⁵ James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764 – 1832*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p14

⁶ Linda Colley *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (United Kingdom: Random House UK, 2003), p101

world.⁷ As both Colley and Gerald Newman have argued, the victories of the Seven Years War would be fundamental in consolidating Britain's identity as a global power, reshaping its national identity and giving rise to new ideas of British nationalism. Public support during the Seven Years War 'had been remarkably and deceptively unanimous' and, unlike 'every previous war with France since 1689'⁸, there was no Jacobite threat to complicate the idea of Great Britain as a unified nation. Rather the conflict reignited Britain's traditional rivalry with France; pamphlets, magazines and popular songs decried the French as 'Slaves to Popery and arbitrary Power'⁹ and reminded Englishmen that they were the inheritors of freedom and chivalry. This freedom and chivalry was styled as the natural character of Englishmen since the days of the Arthurian and medieval romances, and a state that had been made the right of all by establishment of the constitution in 1688. H. Worthington, the author of a pamphlet published in 1758 and bearing the somewhat lengthy title of *A Letter Adapted to the present Critical Juncture, Addressed to All Military Gentleman, By SEA and LAND; POINTING OUT The True Soldier, AS Animated by RELIGION AND THE LOVE of his Country*, sought to remind both the nation and the military that 'their fathers [...] were of another Spirit at the glorious Era, the Revolution'¹⁰ of 1688 and that the brave, passionate defence of the nation was their birth right. In his pamphlet Worthington, claiming himself to possess 'a firm and zealous attachment to his Majesty King George' and a 'tender affectionate Concern for my Country'¹¹, violently contrasts the ancient glories of Britons and the legacy of noble chivalry with the perceived evils of the French nation and the dangers of corruption through French influence:

Behold them, like a Swarm of hungry Locusts, ravaging your delightful Country, which before them is like the Garden of Eden, behind as a desolate Wilderness. Imagine you see the Paleness and Horror of every Female Countenance; that you hear the Shrieks and Lamentations of a defenceless Multitude; that you see all who can make no resistance, flying with Amazement from Cities and Villages for Shelter, leaving their dear Habitations, their treasure, their All, to the Ravage of foreign Plunderers. Imagine you see your Neighbours, your Friends, your Kindred pursued by Thousands of these blood-thirsty inhuman Frenchmen; that you see your venerable aged parents butchered, your Virgin Daughters deflowered, your very Wives first prostituted, then cruelly murdered, and it may be, your tender Infants dashed against the Stones! ¹²

Worthington's language, both here and throughout the pamphlet, characterises the French as barbaric and inhuman: the antithesis of the civilised, chivalric British. This depiction of a French invasion as one driven by a lust for consumption and destruction without restraint is positioned as a threat to the British constitution, represented by women and children. The imagery and

⁷ Colley, p101

⁸ Colley, p103

⁹ Worthington *A Letter Adapted to the present Critical Juncture, Addressed to All Military Gentleman, By SEA and LAND; POINTING OUT The True Soldier, AS Animated by RELIGION AND THE LOVE of his Country*, p4

¹⁰ Worthington, p4

¹¹ Worthington, p3

¹² Worthington, p3-4

language employed by Worthington foreshadow that of the Gothic literature published throughout the 1780s and 1790s, in which the vain excesses of the Gothic villain threatens to destroy the virtues of the heroine. Written two years into the Seven Years War, the pamphlet's purpose was to rally the men serving in the British military and navy to success by reminding them of the glories of their forefathers and the superiority of the British constitution. This language of savagery and barbarism used to define the French character, in its opposition to the British, becomes inherently Gothic. The term 'Gothic' in the eighteenth century was used to recall an 'ancient' period perceived as a feudal age of chivalry that – as Watt argues – eventually birthed modern civilisation. The word Gothic, as Nick Groom and Alfred E. Longueil have noted, evolved from the name of the Germanic peoples that warred with the Roman Empire in the 4th and 5th century, culminating in the Sack of Rome in 410. Positioned as the undoing of a great, sophisticated civilisation, the terms Goth and Gothic became synonymous in the British imagination with barbarity and barbarousness. The classical revival of the Renaissance, and the rise of the Enlightenment and Neoclassicism in the eighteenth century, led to the rejection of medieval architecture, literature and supernatural superstitions as uncivilised and therefore barbaric. 'By a trope', Longueil argues, 'all things barbarous became 'Gothic'.'¹³ The language of terror and barbarity used by Worthington renders the imagined French invasion a Gothic threat, that seeks to return Britain to a state of unregulated feudalism.

The paradox in Worthington's *Letter*, however, is that war is a contest won by violence: to succeed in the conflict, British violence would need to overcome French violence. *A Letter*, along with other pamphlets and propaganda published between 1756 and 1763, reconciles itself to British violence by defining it against an imagined French barbarity. Worthington attempts to distinguish British military action by imbuing it with the both Christian and chivalric ideologies, contrasting the Gothic language applied to the French military. 'The *Soldier* and the *Christian*', the pamphlet argues, 'are Characters perfectly harmonious'¹⁴: but only when the soldier is British and not French. The British soldier, Worthington suggests, is characterised by his valour; a '*true Valour*' that is 'not a savage Ferocity, not a brutal Rage, not an insatiable Cruelty; but a manly Greatness, a sedate Firmness and Resolution in the Midst of Danger'¹⁵. This idea of the soldier's valour is an evolution of the ideals of chivalry, a martial code of conduct based in the defending the defenceless and maintaining order. What is crucial here is the idea that the British soldier partakes in violence only for the sake of national protection and in the name of those who cannot defend themselves, whereas the French soldier is imagined rejoicing in the savagery

¹³Alfred E. Longueil, "The Word 'Gothic' in Eighteenth Century Criticism.", *Modern Language Notes*, 38, 8 (1923), 453–460, <www.jstor.org/stable/2915232> [accessed 29th April 2016], p453

¹⁴ Worthington, p3

¹⁵ Worthington, p7

of his violence. The anti-French sentiments of the Seven Years War would become a crucial building block of British national identity, which defined itself against the imagined barbarity of French military and moral conduct. As Gerald Newman has suggested in his 1987 work, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, this Francophobia became intrinsically linked with the growing trend for nationalism in Britain. Nationalism, Newman notes, was an idea more complex and profound than the notion of patriotism, which developed out of periods of war and imperial expansion throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. The propaganda and narratives published during the years between 1756 and 1763 depicted Great Britain as once again defending its constitution and shores from the corrupt, Catholic forces of France. British nationalism had begun to grow in earnest following the Act of Union in 1707, and was fundamentally connected with the idea of Britain – though a Britain dominated by England as its central power – as a united nation that was defined against its European neighbours by its military might.

With its navy well managed, its army well stocked and its public taken in by national fervour, Britain would emerge from the Seven Years War with the control of new colonies and glory of victory. But as the British Empire began to spread across the globe, the nation would be forced to face a variety of new challenges as a consequence. The Seven Years War, then, would fundamentally change the literal and ideological realities of Great Britain as a nation: changes that would be reflected in literature. Angela Wright has argued that ‘the Seven Years War – responsible for sharpening the already fraught relationship Britain held with France – is in many ways responsible for the complex, ambivalent origins of the Gothic romance in 1764.’¹⁶ The conflict, Wright suggests, not only ‘cemented new alliances of commercial, religious and cultural interests’ that would impact Great Britain for decades to come but ‘also confirmed a long standing hostility between England and France.’¹⁷ As such, in the years that followed the Seven Years War, it would become ‘deeply problematic to look across the channel for literary inspiration.’¹⁸ This resistance to the perceived ideas of Frenchness would complicate not only literature, but ideas of civility, taste and gender. France under the ancien régime had been the arbiter of fashion for the rest of Europe, and French styles of refinement and education had shaped those of Britain too. These anxieties about the effects of Frenchness and the dangers of French influence versus the desire for refined, cultured ‘polite’ society would persist from the Seven Years War, through the American Wars of Independence and to the French Revolution and its aftermath.

¹⁶ Wright, p3

¹⁷ Wright, p3

¹⁸ Wright, p1

It is these anxieties, too, about national identity, legacy and morality that would give rise to the Gothic novel. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, was published a year after the Seven Years War had ended. As Wright notes, not only did Walpole add 'A Gothic Story' to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto* but 'to defend his literary experimentation' he 'aligned his novel with the works of William Shakespeare, and against French dramatic models, thereby appealing to the national mood in England.'¹⁹ In his linking of the Gothic mode with rising nationalism – often presented as British, but most accurately English – Walpole tempered the novel's 'continental origins with a nationalistic discourse.'²⁰ If we consider the Gothic novel to have its origins in the Seven Years War and the years that followed it, to have been intrinsically connected to Britain's growing concern over its paradoxical relationship with France and with the desire to fashion a national identity routed in both ancient and modern glories, then arguably so too can we consider it a literature of conflict. Between 1764 and 1823 the Gothic would continually engage with and explore the anxieties of a nation repeatedly on the brink of or at war, that feared invasion and corruption by foreign powers and that, victorious or not, would have to face the long term consequences of prolonged, global conflict. In the *Rise of the Gothic Novel*, Maggie Kilgour claimed that the Gothic was 'part of the reaction against the political, social, scientific, industrial, epistemological revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which enabled the rise of the middle class.'²¹ These 'revolutions', as Kilgour terms them, that shaped the nation and birthed the Gothic mode were often the product of or the cause of conflict: as Colley has argued, Great Britain as a nation in the eighteenth century was 'an invention forged above all by war.'²² When considering the Gothic of this period, we should therefore consider it in the terms of the many wars that spanned the latter half of the long eighteenth century. If the Gothic, as Angela Wright has argued, has its foundations in the Seven Years War, then to understand how and why the soldier might come to be so central to the Gothic novel, that is where we must begin.

The Seven Years War was a decisive, momentous victory for Great Britain and its coalition of allies: after a number of successful campaigns, Britain found itself in possession of a number of new territories and its global reach thus greatly expanded. But this hard won victory, despite its many gains, came at great cost. 'The British government had enormously inflated their national prestige and imperial power'²³, but they were now faced not only with the cost of the war but with the lands and the people it had won them. Though the initial victory was well received,

¹⁹ Wright, p8

²⁰ Wright, p9

²¹ Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995), p,10

²² Colley, p5

²³ Colley, p101

both in public and in parliament, 'the euphoria soon soured.'²⁴ The Seven Years War had placed a huge strain on the country's finances, resulting in 'a massively inflated National Debt which led inexorably to a rise in taxation' after 1763.²⁵ 'The post-war empire', Linda Colley notes, 'necessitated a much greater investment in administrative machinery and military force. This build up had to be paid for, either by British tax payers or their colonists.'²⁶ To be able to maintain the stability of both the nation and the newly acquired colonies, modifications to the budget would need to be made: the ranks of the standing army, which had grown considerably during the war, would need to be reduced. This meant dismissing and discharging large numbers of those who had been recruited for the Seven Years War, principally those of the lower ranks who had volunteered their service rather than purchased commissions. As reward for their enlistment in the army and service on campaign, the private soldier had been promised a wage, an education, and the glory of bravely defending his home and his people. The financial strains of the conflict, however, would see thousands of men who had left their lives as labourers or their professions in trade or agriculture to fight for their country return home not entirely as the heroes they had been promised. The 'social strain of absorbing more than 200,000 demobilised men, most of them poor, some of them mutilated, all of them trained to violence'²⁷ was considerable: many men were unable to return easily to their former lives, either physically wounded or mentally traumatised by battle, and the promised soldier's glory was now greatly diminished by an almost total lack of financial support. In a letter dated the 2nd of May 1763, Horace Walpole wrote to Sir David Dalrymple that 'Your ideas, Sir, on the hard fate of our soldiers concur with mine; I lamented their sufferings, and have tried in vain to suggest some little plans for their relief.'²⁸ Though the majority of the officer class could rely, if not on continued employment in the military, then on family wealth, education and social status to provide for them during peace time or after discharge, the private soldiers and men of the lower ranks were afforded no such luxuries. With hundreds of men, trained for war, turned out upon a nation that could afford them no care or provision, the situation soon turned sour. Abandoned by the very nation they had given themselves up to protect and denied the provisions they had been promised, many discharged soldiers turned to vagrancy and crime in attempt to support themselves. 'We swarm', Walpole lamented, 'with highwaymen, who have been heroes.'²⁹

²⁴ Colley, p101

²⁵ Colley, p101

²⁶ Colley, p102

²⁷ Colley, p101

²⁸ Walpole to Dalrymple, 2nd May, 1763, in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/>> [accessed 11 March 2016]

²⁹ Walpole to Dalrymple, 2nd May, 1763, in 'Yale, 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/>> [accessed 11 March 2016]

This image of the soldier presented by Walpole's letter, as criminal and vagrant, is a far cry from that of both the public opinion and the literature published during the Seven Years War itself. The campaigns of the Seven Years War were neither small nor particularly contained: spread across five continents, victory would require the full force of both the British army and navy. To be able to maintain this global state of warfare, Britain would need men of all classes and creeds to staff the ranks of its military: the Seven Years War, as Linda Colley has noted, would be the first conflict in which the British government could heavily rely on Scottish regiments to bolster its forces. The national need for military men, both for the regular army and the militia, is evident in the literature produced by pro-war propagandists and pamphleteers during the conflict. Worthington's *Letter*, for example, states that 'when dignified by a gallant Behaviour in a Good Cause' such as the war with France, the military profession was 'both important and honourable'³⁰. Another pamphlet, published in 1760 for 'T. Cook, near the Strand', titled *The soldier's catechism* professed that the soldier was made in the service of King and country and led 'from a thirst of glory.'³¹ *The Soldier's Catechism* speaks of the soldier in terms of a national hero, motivated not by personal gain or a violent temperament but by a love of his nation and a desire to protect those in need. The 'voice' of the soldier, who answers the pamphlet's questions, declares himself to have been moved by 'a strong impulse, an inexpressible ardour, a loud call'³² to join the army, confirmed by 'a military turn, a genius for war.'³³ *The Soldier's Catechism*, like Worthington's *Letter*, is clear to categorise the soldier's violence. The notion of 'true Valour', which Worthington claims as the chief characteristic of the British army, is crucial in legitimising the violence the soldier engages in. Whilst the *Letter* contrasts the British soldier's noble profession with the heedless imagined violence of the French, the *Catechism* is careful to present the soldier as without vice: 'Has the constitution you speak of, been impaired[sic] by excesses of women, or wine?/ No, I have used it well, and this usage made me the most grateful returns in a fay, regular, easy flow of spirits.'³⁴ The image of the soldier during the Seven Years War then is an heroic one, a man of strong stature as well as morals and spirit, who loves his country rather than violence, and who will fight honourably against an enemy apparently hell bent on ruin. Francophobic rhetoric during the Seven Years War, like the *Letter*, depicted the French as rapacious, immoral and perverse: couched in anti-Catholic language, the French were placed as the antithesis of Great Britain and therefore a direct threat to the values of its

³⁰ Worthington, p4

³¹ Anon, *The soldier's catechism*. (London: T.Cook, 1760) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW124634111&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>. [accessed 30th April 2016], p2

³² *The soldier's catechism*, p3

³³ *The soldier's catechism*, p3

³⁴ *The soldier's catechism*, p4

constitution. The British soldier is therefore perceived in these texts as an agent of the constitution, an exemplar of British national value capable of repelling the French threat. But this image could not be sustained during a time of peace. The Treaty of Paris, which brought the Seven Years War to an end, had been signed in February of 1763: Walpole's letter was written barely three months later.

In his letter to Darymple, Walpole professed both sympathy and support for the plight of the private soldier. 'We owe our safety to them', he wrote, 'consequently we owe a return of preservation to them, if we can find out methods of employing them honestly.'³⁵ Yet, unsettled by his vagrancy and afraid of his potential for violence, Walpole's sympathies for the soldier were not widely shared by society. Publications after February 1763 were far less positive than those published during the war. Pamphlets and poetry from the second half of the century suggest a gross mistreatment of the private soldier by his superiors and the British government, as well as a general lack of interest, fuelled by distrust, from British society. In a poem published in 1764 entitled 'The Soldier', the poet (anonymous in the original text but identified as the work of Edward Thompson) laments that 'men of arms! --- so lavish of your blood,/ To bleed, to die, for a cold Country's good!' were now neglected: 'What may this England give?/ Not wherewithal to make the *Soldier* live.'³⁶ The poet questions if 'men in power, because their power is great, / Distress the Army to support their State?'³⁷ Despite the positive reception and the pro-war sentiment between 1756 and 1763, the Seven Years War had ultimately been a war for land and power. But as substantial as the gains were, ultimately 'the success had been too great, the territory won was at once too vast and too alien.'³⁸ The new colonies, which were imagined to be the force that would solidify Britain's global power and in turn benefit the entire nation, were too much of a burden to bear. Colley notes that the 'post war national debt was so corpulent that it sucked in almost five-eighths of the governments annual budget in interest payments.'³⁹ Rather than rewarded, the British people found themselves under greater taxation and facing shortages: the only real gains were felt by those at the top of the social hierarchy. The tone of 'The Soldier' indicates a bitterness amongst the lower ranks of the army, 'the men who sav'd their Country's fame,' that had been left to 'Rot on a dunghill'⁴⁰ because of the very

³⁵ Walpole to Dalrymple, 2nd May, 1763, in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/>> [accessed 11 March 2016].

³⁶ Anon [asct. Edward Thompson], 'The Soldier', (London: J. Almon, 1764), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3315429666&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 10th September 2015], p4

³⁷ 'The Soldier', p6

³⁸ Colley, p101

³⁹ Colley, p136

⁴⁰ 'The Soldier', p4

territory they fought to secure. The poem reveals a sense of resentment towards society (primarily the upper classes), implying that, like the poet, many soldiers felt that leading them into a war for gain and profit betrayed their military code as protectors and defenders. The poet continues that:

We without fear in war, in peace have fears;
 Of half-pay cheated, and of all arrears:
 Are not these fears sufficient, sad alarms!
 To make the brave renounce bearing arms?

‘The Soldier’⁴¹

If, as I have suggested, the British soldier’s violence was legitimised by his valour, which derived from war waged only in the name of defending the nation’s virtues and borders, then the Seven Years War fundamentally problematised the military identity. The notion that the military could be – and indeed had been – misled by those in command to commit violence for the purposes of greed and gain, disrupted the image of the soldier as a chivalric hero. This complicated the acceptance of the soldier’s violence and, the tone of the poem suggests, caused a growing distrust between the military and the public that was compounded by the government’s abandonment of the private soldier to a state of visible poverty.

The poet’s claims ‘of half pay cheated’⁴², suggesting that the officers had denied pay where it was owed, are confirmed in another anonymous text entitled *The Soldier’s Friend; or, Considerations on the Late Pretended Augmentation of the Subsistence of the Private Soldiers* published in 1792. The unknown author⁴³ addresses the revelation that though ‘the Private Soldier ought always to have received three shillings a week for his subsistence, and that only sixpence a week ought to have been retained as arrears’ commanding officers of numerous regiments ‘have, “of late years,” been above the law; and they have thought proper to pay the Soldier only ‘eighteen pence or two shillings a week.’⁴⁴ Though it is unclear as to how long this reduction in pay had lasted, the claims made by the author of ‘The Soldier’ suggests that such withholding – or more accurately the denial – of wages dated back to at least the end of the Seven Years War. A publication entitled *The Private Soldier’s and the Militia Man’s Friend*, dated 1786 and authored by a ‘Henry Trenchard, Serjeant Major’, confirms the private soldier’s

⁴¹ ‘The Soldier’, p2

⁴² ‘The Soldier’, p6

⁴³ The author of the text refers to themselves as a subaltern, but it is unclear if this is in the military sense – as a low ranking commissioned officer – or in the social sense.

⁴⁴ Anon., *The Soldier’s Friend; or, Considerations on the Late Pretended Augmentation of the Subsistence of the Private Soldiers*, [London: J. Ridgway, 1792] in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3305368292&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 3rd December 2015], p11

meagre pay: 'your pay is so small that it is impossible for you to support yourself on it, without you are strict observers of economy.'⁴⁵ Recalling the heroes turned highwaymen of Walpole's letter, *The Soldier's Friend* argues that these reduced wages failed to properly sustain the private soldier, yet 'the poor wretch has been obliged to subsist on it; unless when hunger has driven him to plunder people whom he was paid to defend.'⁴⁶ Though *The Private Soldier's and the Militia Man's Friend* suggests that through sensible economy the soldier may survive on such small pay, *The Soldier's Friend* indicates that this was not the case. Denied their deserved pay the foot soldier faced, as the author claims, a harder life in England than they might abroad at war. Without the funds to properly support themselves, many were forced into vagrancy and petty crime. In the eighteenth stanza of the 'The Soldier', the poet expresses similar concerns:

But can Reduction in a noble cause,
Hurt the firm Soul, at least the souls of those
Who bore the frowns of France? and shame to say,
Bear too the frowns of England on half-pay.
Thus, like a whore, the Army learns t'allure,
Robs the brave youth --- then kicks him from the door:
Denies the pay for which he bravely fought,
And doubts his honour from his thread-bare coat.

'The Soldier'⁴⁷

The poet's claim that those who 'bore the frowns of France' must now 'bear too the frowns of England' suggests that the French's disdain for the red coat had followed the soldiers to England. The final line of the stanza implies that rather than acting as a symbol of the soldier's honour and bravery, his uniform instead invited doubt to his character as he was unable to maintain it. With no wages to sustain him and no good public opinion to support him, both texts indicate that – as Walpole's correspondence implies – many private soldiers were indeed forced to turn to crime.

The author of *The Soldier's Friend* argues that it is 'to this [being the withholding of pay by officers] we may attribute all the robberies committed' by low ranked soldiers 'and the desertions which have been the disgrace of the British Army for several years past.'⁴⁸ In 1776,

⁴⁵ Henry Trenchard, *The Private Soldier's and the Militia Man's Friend*, (London: G. Kearsley, 1786) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3310320353&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 30th March 2016], p7

⁴⁶ *The Soldier's Friend*, p11

⁴⁷ 'The Soldier', p7

⁴⁸ *The Soldier's Friend*, p16

after a period of increasingly strained relations and militia skirmishes, the American colonies declared independence from Britain. The resulting conflict, the American Wars of Independence, would see France join the American forces to secure a British defeat that resulted not only in the loss of the colonies, but further inflated the national debt accrued from the Seven Years War. Evidently, Britain's defeat in the American Wars of Independence did little to improve either the state or opinion of the soldier. As Colley notes 'all military defeats are shattering to those caught up in them, but this defeat proved particularly so.'⁴⁹ The defeat, Britain's first since the Act of Union, resulted in what Colley calls 'a blow to the ruling order's pride and reputation' that was 'immediate and immense'⁵⁰ but arguably also to the public opinion and faith in the British military. Both 'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend*, despite being composed almost thirty years apart, comment on the public's lack of interest in the lower ranks of the military. They imply a widespread sense of distrust and even disgust toward them in polite society, and lament the private soldier's lack of value. In the opening stanza of 'The Soldier' the poet praises the victories of the British army against the Jacobite rebellion whilst exalting their virtues:

From such exalted, chosen Legions, came
The godlike character, the *Soldiers* fame ---

Hail! men of arms, who, when the world began,
Protected honour, when the cause of man.
Hail! men of arms, whose gen'rous souls defend
The injur'd Beauty, where she seeks a friend.

'The Soldier'⁵¹

Both 'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend* argue for, materially speaking, no more than is the soldier's due so that he may live as he has earned the right to. Instead, 'The Soldier' implies that the soldier pursues his career not for glory or material gain but to protect his country and its virtues. The poet's description of soldiers as the defenders of honour and beauty reconjures the image of a chivalric knight (as was popular during the Seven Years War), starkly contrasting the thread-bare vagrants and criminals of Walpole's letter. Both 'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend* demonstrate a concern that when new conflict arose the British Army – half-starved, undervalued and disenchanting – would be in no state to face it, nor would they be willing.

The figure of the soldier was, in the years that followed the Treaty of Paris, perceived more as a criminal than a national hero. Though the private soldier, largely forced into poverty and

⁴⁹ Colley, p148

⁵⁰ Colley, p149

⁵¹ 'The Soldier', p7

vagrancy, suffered the largest blow to his reputation, 'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend* suggest that the ranks of the officer were not looked on as fondly as they had been. Reports of officers enforcing unrealistic uniform standards, of wages withheld and unfair dismissals – as suggested by *The Soldier's Friend* – tarnished the idea of the officer class. Though *The Private Soldier's and the Militia Man's Friend* favours the officers, its instructions to private soldiers reveal expectations to maintain a standard of dress and equipment, financed themselves, that support *The Soldier's Friend's* accusations. Men who could afford to purchase commissions were expected to be gentleman by birth and status, and thus responsible for the care and cultivation of the men in their command. 'The Soldier', like *The Soldier's Friend*, suggests that not only has the private soldier been unfairly used but that the officer class has been degraded by men unfit for war, who are given salaries to 'prance' at assemblies rather than serve. The poet demands to know how 'can men of courage, men of honour, bear / to starve – whilst some proud Peer's scholastic heir / whipping his top, or rolling of his hoop, / is in his goe-cart trundl'd to a Troop' and dressed up 'with the same colours that I bore in France.'⁵² This notion that the ranks of the officer had been filled with the coddled sons of the aristocracy, who had no care nor capability as military leaders, whilst private and lower ranking soldiers had been abandoned to poverty is continued throughout the poem; how, the poet asks, can these young men with no sense of the world command those who fought at battles such as Minden? *The Soldier's Friend* echoes these concerns in 1792 by suggesting that it was the vanity and superciliousness of the officers that had caused such struggle amongst their soldiers, by insisting on them keeping unrealistic standards of regimental dress geared more to fashion than purpose. What begins here, then, is a concern that would linger until well into the Revolutionary Wars: that a crisis of masculinity had disrupted national manliness, resulting in a weakness and insufficiency in the military. The British military system in the eighteenth century relied on the men of rank who populated the officer class using the refinements of their birth, status, and education to fashion the lower ranks into respectable, dependable soldiers. If, as the poet of 'The Soldier' fears, upper class young men were not gentleman but 'pratty' children who would take their 'nurse, and rattle to the field'⁵³ then the whole of the British army would suffer as a result. What 'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend* allude to is a fear of effeminacy and the corruption of masculinity: a fear that was, in many ways, born out of the same Francophobia expressed in the likes of Worthington's *Letter* and *The Soldier's Catechism*.

'The Soldier' and *The Soldier's Friend* speak of the plight of the private soldiers and the perceived failings of the current officer class. The position of officer, as noted in the Introduction, was one that bore significant responsibility: one that these texts suggest was not being properly

⁵² 'The Soldier', p6

⁵³ 'The Soldier', p6

met or fulfilled. Yet despite its criticisms of the aristocratic officers, the frontispiece to ‘The Soldier’ declares the poem to be inscribed to ‘the Honourable General Conway’. The name Conway is mentioned again twice in the poem: first in the second stanza, where the poet speaks of the soldier’s virtues and suggests they are exemplified in ‘our Conway’s heart’⁵⁴, and again later, when the poet details the crimes against the soldier by the government and society and states that he will ‘let Conway’s injuries speak;/ And if the crimson does quit the cheek/ Of all but Ministers, I’ll cease to tell.’⁵⁵ Although this is the only information the poet gives regarding his dedicatee, the concerns of the poem correlate with a series of events in 1764 – concerning the military and the government – that involved Henry Seymour Conway. Despite having been promoted to lieutenant general in 1759, Conway had been stripped of his command – along with his position in the royal court, as Groom of the Bedchamber – in 1764 after voicing his disapproval against the government’s treatment of John Wilkes and voting against their policies concerning the American colonies. Conway’s double dismissal caused a stir both at court and in public: Conway himself challenged the decision, stating that his actions as a member of parliament should not influence his position as a soldier, whilst others feared that the government was intending to use the incident to unfairly remove political opponents from the military. Not all supported Conway, however: a pamphlet published shortly after, titled *An Address to the Public, on the Late Dismission of a General officer*, by the political writer William Guthrie argued that the government had been right to dismiss Conway. ‘Military promotions, and those too of the highest ranks’, Guthrie claimed, ‘are by no means the settled regular consequence of ability in the profession’⁵⁶. For the military to truly serve the country, the pamphlet argues, the government needed to retain power over the officers to prevent corruption:

If a line is to be drawn between military and civil commissions, and it is to be the doctrine of the day, that officers, be their conduct in departments of business wholly foreign to their profession what it will, are not dismissed but for military offences only, and by judges of their own, surely that would be a wound to the freedom of this country, which I will not charge even the clamorous abettors of such a tenet with the design of giving. When once the officers find they are to depend on no power but their own, it is to be feared they would soon begin to think they have a legal right to their commission and to their pay.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ ‘The Soldier’, p2

⁵⁵ ‘The Soldier’, p17

⁵⁶ William Guthrie, *An Address to the Public, on the Late Dismission of a General officer*, (London: W. Nicoll, 1764) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW104514647&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 10th November 2017], p12

⁵⁷ Guthrie, p16

The pamphlet's fears that, were the government not in control of the appointment and dismissal of officers, the military would have too much independent power, recalls the anxieties regarding the military in the aftermath of the Seven Years War. The pamphlet's critique of the officer class suggests that promotions were granted based on social status rather than merit, undermining the military code of valour, and that their rank could too easily be used for personal gain instead of national service. As a soldier of the crown, Guthrie argues, Conway should have voted in favour of the government rather than against it.

But Guthrie's *Address* was not limited to the matter of relations between the government and the military. Conway, the pamphlet states, had earned his dismissal by going 'out of his way, and of his profession, to perplex and harass the servants whom the king thought proper to employ'⁵⁸. In taking a military commission and a royal appointment, Guthrie suggests that Conway had willingly become a servant to the crown – and by extension the government – and therefore should 'never expect that his royal majesty would submit to be thus braved'⁵⁹. The pamphlet offers little sympathy for Conway's position, or the defences made in his name: the loss of earnings, it argues, should be nothing for an aristocratic man who had till now been so generously paid. As for his brother officers, Guthrie supposes that as 'the cause in which this general was engaged related no way to the defence of their profession', the military 'will not then think themselves aggrieved in this particular dismissal.'⁶⁰ The Conway of Guthrie's *Address* is a man possessed of 'disgust, caprice, ambition, or some such motive' who, 'forgetful of his own situation and regardless of the opinions and advices of his friends', had rightfully earned his dismissal from his command.⁶¹ Having discussed the situation of the dismissal and the parliamentary elements, the pamphlet concludes that if 'the General's rise in the army had been the effect of an uncommon military genius, like that of *Wolfe*, wholly separate and detached from any parliamentary connections, or from the interest of the great family to which he is allied; much might have been said in support'⁶². For Guthrie, Conway's rank is the product of his social and political privilege rather than reward for his military successes. Whilst Guthrie states that he does not 'mean to depreciate the General's conduct; or to set it below the standard'⁶³, the picture painted by his *Address* is resoundingly negative. In its critique of Conway's character and the defences in his favour, the *Address* draws on the same fears of *The Soldier's Friend* and 'The Soldier', that the commanding ranks of the military had been corrupted by men abusing the army for their own personal gain. Anxieties about the officers who

⁵⁸ Guthrie, p20

⁵⁹ Guthrie, p26

⁶⁰ Guthrie, p22

⁶¹ Guthrie, p27-28

⁶² Guthrie, p32-33

⁶³ Guthrie, p33

commanded regiments in the name of the King, but issued orders that served their own interests – thus corrupting the lower ranks – would dominate military discourse in the years following the Seven Years War. Guthrie, in his arguments that the military should have no say in state affairs or politics and should only serve the crown (and the government) as ordered, plays into the growing distance and tensions between society and the military. In rendering Conway greedy and self-serving, the pamphlet amplifies concerns about the misuse of the military and the type of man who would use war for his own gain.

Yet although *An Address to the Public, on the Late Dismission of a General officer* echoes similar concerns to ‘The Soldier’, the poem is clear in its distrust and disgust in the actions of the British government. Whereas Guthrie’s pamphlet praises the good sense and judgement of the government, ‘The Soldier’ is expressly critical of ministers’ decisions in regards to the military: ‘Tell me the difference now of being brave, / And being a base, rank coward to the grave? Since Ministers dare leave the brave to rot, / Their deeds forgotten, themselves forgot.’⁶⁴ This tone of bitterness permeates ‘The Soldier’, in stark contrast the pro-government sentiments of *An Address*. The poem later utilises language of death, decay and suffering to express the private soldier’s anger and betrayal:

O! should the Ghosts of those dear injur’d souls,
 Rise from their murky graves, and dreary holes;
 With bloody arms, with bloody hammocks hung,
 And roll this catechism o’er the tongue?
 ‘Where is that right for which we spilt our blood?’
 ‘Where is our Widow’s, where our Children’s food?’
 ‘Where is one man, besides thyself, would dare’
 ‘To rob so many by so’base a share?’
 ‘Keep twenty thousand pounds to glut thy pride:
 ‘O shame! O shame! O shame! To have it said,
 ‘You starve the living, disturb the dead.’

‘The Soldier’⁶⁵

This image of the fallen soldier returned from the dead, crawling from ‘their murky graves’ to discover that the Seven Years War had financially benefited only a privileged few violently contradicts the promise of the propaganda before 1763 that those who enlisted would enjoy improved situations and heroic valour that – like that of Charlotte Smith’s letters – foreshadows

⁶⁴ ‘The Soldier’, p7

⁶⁵ ‘The Soldier’, p16

the imagery employed by the writers of the Gothic later in the century. The dead soldier, like Smith's imagination of her wounded son, is made abject; a horrific spectre 'with bloody arms' and 'bloody hammocks hung'⁶⁶ who, rather than a glorious death in service of his country, returns to shame the living. The question, then, is why would a poem with such violent, anti-government language be dedicated to General Henry Conway?

What is evident in the poet's harsh chastisement of the government is a fear that ministers had, and would to continue to, remodel the army favouring the privileged sons of the aristocracy who supported their policies in place of those who had proved themselves in service. 'The Soldier' repeatedly returns to the idea that those who had fought and suffered during the Seven Years War had been cast off, their heroic service ignored, which is related directly to Conway. Though William Guthrie suggested that Conway had reached lieutenant general as a result of his family connections and personal fortune, the poet of 'The Soldier' declares that if Conway's injuries – assumed in context to be his dismissal – do not make 'all but Ministers' sympathetic to them then he will 'cease to tell / How brave he fought, how wrong'd the SOLDIER fell.'⁶⁷ The poem then continues to speak of a soldier who, considering the mention of his name directly preceding and the dedication on the title page, appears to be Conway:

This brave young Man, whom patriot glory bore
To fight your battles, on a foreign shore;
This brave young man, who acted as he shou'd,
Stood firm for Liberty, and England's good:
Smiles at reduction 'mongst the meanest things,
Except low passion, 'and the pride of Kings.

'The Soldier'⁶⁸

Whereas the *Address* characterised Conway as a man who acted in his own interest and misused his military position, 'The Soldier' presents Conway as an exemplary soldier: brave, patriotic and honest. Although there are no exact dates for 'The Soldier', it seems reasonable that the poem was published in defence of Conway following his dismissal and to counter the statements made by Guthrie in his *Address*. Nor would 'The Soldier' be the only piece published in Conway's defence: Horace Walpole, Conway's cousin and close friend, published his own *A Counter-Address to the Public, on the Late Dismissal of a General Officer* in retaliation to Guthrie. Maternal cousins, Conway and Walpole had been at Eton College together as young men and remained close friends in their adulthood. Walpole maintained correspondence with Conway

⁶⁶ 'The Soldier', p16

⁶⁷ 'The Soldier', p17-18

⁶⁸ 'The Soldier', p18

throughout the latter's military campaigns and career, as well with his wife, Caroline (Walpole would also later become the guardian and mentor of Conway's daughter, the sculptor and writer Anne Seymour Damer), and with his brother, Francis Seymour Conway, Marquess of Hertford.

Amongst the conflicting accounts of Conway's character and intentions after his dismissal, is the correspondence of Conway himself. But although the letters written between the Conway brothers, as well as to and from Walpole and their extended acquaintance, reveal how the dismissal was received and felt, these letters demonstrate little about Conway as an officer. In both the personal and military letters written during the campaigns Conway was dispatched on however, chiefly in Germany between 1761 and 1763, there are illuminating insights; not only into the management and executions of the campaigns themselves, but the realities of the responsibilities and duties of an officer.⁶⁹ Chief among the concerns expressed by Conway in these letters are the supplies and provisions available for his regiment and the behaviour of his men. Conway's correspondence during the Seven Years War details the practical issues of war on the continent: there are not enough men to form regiments, waggons to transport them or supplies to maintain to them. In a letter dated April 24th, 1761, Conway insists on the importance of setting up another field hospital despite resistance – 'they should understand they had better comply with a good grace than have any compulsion use'⁷⁰ – and later a letter from May 1st, written from Paderborn, mentions the hospitals being unable to cope with the scale of the conflict. In a letter to the Marquess of Granby in the January of 1762, Conway reports that his regiment has no oats and that the shortages of food and difficult conditions have led to poor behaviour amongst his men; in another letter the following month, Conway wrote again to Granby to inform him that some of the men had begun to demand their discharge. But whilst in some ways Conway's letters paint a poor picture of the British military – he talks repeatedly of drunkenness and disorderly behaviour, of court martials and the need for discipline as well as poorly trained and outfitted brigades – they also reveal in practice the values lauded by the pamphleteers of the period. Conway frequently refers to the men of his regiment as being under his care, rather than command, and to his fellow officers as his 'brother officers'. The correspondence reveals a commanding officer who confesses himself to possess a 'feeling of tenderness'⁷¹ for the men who serve under him, and who believes it his duty to manage their behaviour not only for the sake of military success but for their own wellbeing. In a letter to Granby in June 1761, Conway writes of two private soldiers facing court martial for desertion and illegally hunting boar: though Conway states that whilst one man is of a good character, and the other very poor, he asks Granby for a pardon for both as it would be unfair to

⁶⁹ These letters are not currently digitised, and all transcriptions are my own.

⁷⁰ Farmington, Lewis Walpole Library, Letter Books of military correspondence 1761-64, I

⁷¹ Letter 17th May 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

give different punishments for the same crime.⁷² A 'general officer', Conway felt, should 'know what strength he really has to trust to'⁷³: it was an officer's responsibility to properly know the men under his command, to manage them accordingly but to treat them justly. 'There can be no Justice without an equal rule', Conway wrote in a letter discussing his feelings on the proper management of the brigades, 'either the inequality of it is monstrous or the Return not true.'⁷⁴

Conway's letters reveal a balance between military reason and sensible feeling, suggesting an awareness that one could not be sacrificed for the other but that the two must exist concurrently for a regiment to be successful. In a series of letters from 1762, Conway reports that a number of private soldiers and grenadiers had been found guilty of crimes ranging from desertion, poaching, and drunkenness to highway robbery. The letters acknowledge that such serious crimes must be punished, not only for the sake of justice but to set a proper example to the other men of the regiment. Yet in multiple cases, Conway advocates for pardons or reduced charges: of the four men found guilty of robbery, only one is condemned to death.⁷⁵ The men, Conway's letters suggest, can only be partially blamed for their poor conduct when faced with such dire circumstances and lack of provisions. 'It is impossible', he writes in a letter to Major General Townshend, 'not to be sensible of the difficulties Officers labour under in the Course of a Campaign and for any Man of Feeling and Generosity not to wish that all might be done that possibly can to make the Service easy to him.'⁷⁶ For Conway, the role of an officer was one equally of care and command: as a gentleman of birth and education, both formal and military, he perceived himself as directly responsible for the proper fashioning of the men who served him. Later in his letter to Townshend, Conway commented that 'it is a shocking thing to see Regiments almost compleatly[sic] the General Returns marching from a variety of causes miserably weak'⁷⁷. As seen often in his correspondence, Conway was critical of the excessive bureaucracy involved in properly maintaining the men on campaigns. 'This is the real test of our strength,' he continues, 'all the rest is so much paper, and if this is the case now at the opening of the campaign, what will it be at the end of it.'⁷⁸ Conway feared that the need to constantly write for approval and for continuous requests for supplies would make the campaigns unnecessarily difficult for the private soldiers, negatively impacting morale and encouraging desertion. This, Conway's letters suggest, was the responsibility of an officer: to lessen the

⁷² Letter 19th June 1761 to Granby, LWL, MC. II

⁷³ Letter 1st June 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

⁷⁴ Letter 1st June 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

⁷⁵ The harshness of military punishments were, in of themselves, the point of much debate during the long eighteenth century: many found them barbaric and outdate. While it is difficult to ascertain Conway's exact feelings on them, it is clear that he is unwilling to subject his man harsh treatments if possible.

⁷⁶ Letter 1st June 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

⁷⁷ Letter 1st June 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

⁷⁸ Letter 1st June 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

private soldiers' burden and manage them as efficiently as possible. To be unfeeling and to fail to understand the circumstances of his men would be to fail as their officer, but this also came with a duty to properly instruct and drill them. As Conway wrote to a Major General in the May of 1761, 'tho' I think the method of treating Officers should always be the softest in manner, I think it ought not be less firm and when a proper order is given out, there should be no relaxation from the execution of it.⁷⁹ This balance between proper military discipline and sensibility appears of significant importance to Conway over the course of his correspondence; a set of values which, as is indicated by the dedication of 'The Soldier', earned him the reputation as a beloved commander amongst the lower ranks.

The theme of a duty of care between the soldier and officer, one based in the ideal of military fraternity, appears in Conway's personal as well as his military correspondence. In a letter to Francis Seymour Conway on the 2nd of November, 1762, following the siege of Cassel – in which Conway assisted Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, who commanded British, Hanoverian and Hessian forces against the French – Conway wrote that he hoped that his brother would 'be pleased to hear' about the siege 'as it probably puts an end to the Campaign and a most noble one for the honour of our Arms and of our Commander.'⁸⁰ This notion that British army existed as one – that the victories or failures of one regiment belonged to all – in the service of the nation and that the officer had a moral and social obligation to be a role model for his troops is one that Conway seems to have held to closely. In a letter from Paderborn on the 19th May 1761, ahead of beginning a march to a new billet, Conway wrote to another officer, Beckwith, that 'if the [General] Officers are not the proper judges of character' in recruiting suitable men for the drafts then 'I don't know where to find them.'⁸¹ Though Conway continues the letter with the acknowledgement that finding men in time of war is a difficult task – another letter notes that he had been sent men 'who were shorter than the firelocks they are meant to carry'⁸² - and that 'no judgement is infallible'⁸³, the letter admonishes Beckwith for his distrust in his fellow soldier: 'your expressions of the ignorance and partiality of the Gen. Officers [is] very unbecoming.' 'I am most surprised' Conway writes, that 'one [...] who had your peculiar merit and talent uses such language' and cautions that 'others who only fancy they have it, will take the same liberty'⁸⁴. Beckwith's name appears again later in Conway's correspondence, in a letter to his brother in February 1763. The elder Conway had written to his brother concerned by reports that he had failed to pull the Britannic Legion out of towns to be evacuated at the close of the Seven Years

⁷⁹ Letter 28th May 1761 to Major General Cesar, LWL, MC. I

⁸⁰ Letter 2nd November 1762, LWL, LFSC

⁸¹ Letter 19th May 1761, to Beckwith, LWL, MC. I

⁸² Letter 26th May 1761 to Major General Townshend, LWL, MC. I

⁸³ Letter 19th May 1761, to Beckwith, LWL, MC. I

⁸⁴ Letter 19th May 1761, to Beckwith, LWL, MC. I

War, as was proper conduct. Beckwith, an English officer with the command of a Prussian legion, had promised to Conway but ultimately refused to pull back his men. In his response, Conway wrote to assure his brother that he had not only acted honourably but that he had firmly admonished Beckwith, echoing the criticisms of the earlier letter: 'I told him he had shamefully broken his word and meanly sacrificed his honour and reputation as an English officer and gentleman'⁸⁵. This speech, Conway notes to his brother, was made in the presence of a number of other officers (some of high rank) and the letter makes a particular point that Beckwith failed to meet Conway's criticisms with the fortitude expected. 'All the nex' day he lay abed with a nervous fever and never appeared amongst us again', Conway continues, before declaring 'Thus much for the Grenadier Hero Beckwith!'⁸⁶

Conway's admonishment of Beckwith exemplifies the core values of the British officer class: that they should be both an officer and a gentleman. Throughout his correspondence Conway demonstrates a conscious effort to combine his values as a gentleman with his ideas of proper military conduct and discipline. His disgust with Beckwith, passionately expressed in his letter to his brother, arises chiefly from the Grenadier's failure to adhere to either and thus results in Conway's dismissal of the notion of Beckwith as heroic. What Conway's correspondence reveals is a notion of heroism that is intrinsically linked to national pride and gentlemanly virtue: that the officer should be an exemplar of an Englishman, a gentleman, and a soldier so that the men in his command might be fashioned by his example. This, for Conway, was not only the way to build successful regiments but to ensure successful campaigns. Whilst the correspondence does not shy away from the violent realities of active war – the injured and traumatised men, the harsh conditions of marches and encampments, the drain on the lands and towns that supported the campaigns – violence itself is neither glamourised nor revelled in. Though active in a number of engagements, Conway rarely details the events of battles themselves or recounts personal glories. The soldier's violence, here, is tempered by his values and monitored by his commanding officer. Within Conway's correspondence, then, exists an idealised but functional idea of a British soldier. Conway's conduct, after all, earned him an excellent reputation both at home and abroad as a reliable military leader and respectable gentleman. Conway was a favourite of Ferdinand, Prince of Brunswick, with whom he led a number of campaigns in the Seven Years War (the Prince valued Conway's military judgement, and even trusted the command of his troops to him after being waylaid by injury), and was well received at the court of Queen Caroline of Denmark (formerly Princess Caroline Matilda of Great Britain) when stationed there in the 1770s. Conway had also developed a good relationship with Prince William, Duke of Cumberland, who had previously appointed him to his staff and who had

⁸⁵ Letter 2nd February 1763, LWL, LFSC

⁸⁶ Letter 2nd February 1763, LWL, LFSC

promoted Conway to colonel before the battle of Culloden, and William Cavendish, 4th Duke of Devonshire, who had helped to further both Conway's military and political career during his time as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Having been appointed Groom of the Bedchamber by George II in 1757, too, suggests that the quality of Conway's character was, by the time he returned from Europe in 1763, well known. This conduct is likely what recommended Conway so highly to the poet of 'The Soldier' and caused such uproar in his defence: as the 'The Soldier' indicates, Conway was an officer who readily bore the difficulties of life on campaign alongside his men and who recommended himself to them through his admirable conduct. Despite Guthrie's claims, Conway had served on a number of crucial campaigns and – as both his correspondence and 'The Soldier' suggest – considered his profession to be central to his person.

Conway's dismissal from both the Bedchamber and the command of his regiment, after suffering so much in the name of service to his country, was – as Guthrie's address notes – the subject of much controversy. Having heard the news at a social engagement, Horace Walpole wrote to Conway assuming that he could only have been dismissed from his position as Groom of the Bedchamber and not of his regiment. Conway's removal from his generalcy for his actions as MP was perceived by many, such as Walpole, as unfair and unjust punishment and, as 'The Soldier' suggests, feared that the government sought to remove political opponents from the army: both Walpole's *Counter-address* and 'The Soldier' suggest that the ministry hoped to replace tried and tested officers with the sons of loyal ministers, to ensure the military's loyalty to the government. In a letter to his brother on the 23rd of April, Conway wrote that 'what makes it much stranger is that I don't hear that any of the many officers who could with [illegible] the same questions in the minority are turn'd out.'⁸⁷ In being removed from his command, Conway had lost not only his occupation but the chief source of his income. Commenting on the incident to his brother, Conway remarked that 'it seems almost impossible to conceive it should be so and yet do I suspect it is, and if it is it seems to one upon the coolest reflection I am able to give it the harshest and most unjust treatment.'⁸⁸ Although Guthrie's *Address* assumed that the loss of his officer's wage would be no great injury to Conway, family correspondence suggests otherwise. In a letter to Conway on the 19th of April 1764, Walpole declared 'that whatever you do I shall act with you. I resent anything done to you as to myself. My fortunes shall never be separated from yours – except that sometimes or other I hope yours will be great, and I am content with mine.'⁸⁹ A day later, Walpole wrote to Francis Seymour Conway to express his dismay at the alarming rashness of the ministry's judgement and noted that Henry, though

⁸⁷ Letter 23rd April 1764, LWL, LFSC

⁸⁸ Letter 23rd April 1764, LWL, LFSC

⁸⁹ Walpole to HS Conway, 19th April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&page=375>> [accessed 27th November 2017]

'gentle and indifferent as his nature', would not bear being removed from his regiment: 'his resentment, if his profession were touched, would be as serious as such spirit and such abilities could make it.'⁹⁰ Writing again to Henry on the 21st April, Walpole asked his cousin to 'let me beg you, in the most earnest and most sincere of all professions, to suffer to make your loss as light as it is in my power to make.'⁹¹ Walpole would offer Conway £6000 (which Conway refused on principle, along with an offer of financial support from the Duke of Devonshire), arguing that 'you suffer for your spotless integrity'⁹² whilst Francis Seymour Conway wrote to Walpole that 'I am hurt to the greatest degree at this dismissal from the army, and so vexed with English politics that I detest the name and idea of them.'⁹³

The letters between the three men demonstrate that for Conway, the military was more than a steady wage: Conway's own letters demonstrate a commitment to the army that is both personal and professional, whilst Walpole and Francis Seymour Conway note that though being removed from his position as Groom would be a minor inconvenience, being removed from his regiment would be a great loss. Conway's profession, it seems, was central to the construction of his identity. Walpole wrote again to Conway on the 21st of April too, confessing that knowing Conway would disapprove of any hasty action his 'anger shall be a little more manly, the plan of my revenge a little deeper laid than in peevish bon mots'⁹⁴. Keen to defend Conway's honour and to see him restored to his post, Walpole published his rebuttal of Guthrie's claims. The pamphlet attacked both Guthrie and the author of a letter published in the *Gazetteer* that May, criticised the ministry for its choices, and firmly defended Conway's character. Walpole's primary argument hinged on the fact that Conway's military profession should have been separate to his role as MP and courtier, recalling the anger of 'The Soldier' by asking how a man who had served so faithfully could be so unfairly rewarded:

General Conway has gone thro' a regular course in his profession for near seven and twenty years, has been formed under those heroes the Duke of Cumberland and Prince Ferdinand, had been engaged in six regular battles, besides many smaller actions, and

⁹⁰ Walpole to Hertford, 20th April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=400&type=b>> [accessed 27th November 2017]

⁹¹ Walpole to HS Conway, 21st April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=405&type=b>> [accessed 27th November 2017]

⁹² Walpole to HS Conway, 21st April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=405&type=b>> [accessed 27th November 2017]

⁹³ Hertford to Walpole, 30th April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=411&type=b>> [accessed 27th November 2017]

⁹⁴ Yale, 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence', 2011 <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=400&type=b>>, [accessed 27th November 2017]

therefore whatever talents he has, or whatever military knowledge he has acquir'd (if either are allow'd to him) have been proved by long and painful service.⁹⁵

Conway, Walpole argued, was 'eminently distinguished for his gallant and indefatigable behaviour'⁹⁶ and deserved neither his dismissal nor the criticism levelled against him considering his service of King and country. Walpole criticised, too, the proposed new modelling of the army, asking what use it could be to dismiss the present officers when they had 'conquered in every quarter of the globe'⁹⁷. Walpole's defence of Conway in *A counter-address to the public* demonstrates the notion that in dismissing him, the ministry had both fundamentally damaged Conway's identity and denied him what was rightfully his. Walpole argues that 'taking away the profession of an Officer who has served for twenty-six years [...] and come home recommended to favour by Prince Ferdinand'⁹⁸ was not only an insult to Conway's dedication but to 'the Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, and the Revolution'⁹⁹. Walpole's statements in the *Counter-address* align with those of the 'The Soldier', who recalls the conflicts with the Jacobite rebels as well as with France during the Seven Years War, to highlight the unfair treatment received by the returned soldiers.

What Walpole's pamphlet, his letter to Dalrymple, and 'The Soldier' suggest is that despite the triumphs of 1763, the British army suffered a series of mistreatments from the government and public. The men who had been returned heroes from the Seven Years War found their reputations tarnished, their achievements unrewarded and their salaries withheld. Writing to Conway on the 24th of April, Walpole told his cousin that 'I rejoice that you feel your loss so little: that you act with dignity and propriety does not surprise me.'¹⁰⁰ For Walpole, Conway's was a masculinity that should have been not only rewarded but taken as example by others: which Conway, although indirectly, acknowledges himself in his letter to Beckwith in 1761. 'To have you behave in character and with character, is my first of all wishes; for then it will not be in the power of man to make you unhappy' he advised Conway: 'Ask yourself – is there a man in England with whom you would change character? – is there a man in England who would not change with you? Then think how little they have taken away!'¹⁰¹ Walpole's impassioned support of Conway, both in their private correspondence and in his public defence, suggests an

⁹⁵ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p16

⁹⁶ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p6

⁹⁷ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p11

⁹⁸ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p14

⁹⁹ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p16

¹⁰⁰ Walpole to HS Conway, 24th April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011)

<<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=407&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹⁰¹ Walpole to HS Conway, 24th April 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011),

<<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=407&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

appreciation for the latter's character as much as his military exploits. To Walpole, Conway's military success was commendable not just because it was the benefit of the nation but because it proved him to be exemplary. This model of heroism, expressed by Conway in his letters and insisted on by Walpole, arguably aligned the contemporary values of sentimentality and sensibility with the military profession.

What is crucial here, is that Conway *is* both an officer and a gentleman. What is perhaps significant too is that later that same year, Walpole would publish the first edition of *The Castle of Otranto*. The novel, set in medieval Italy, is the tale of the titular castle and the family who reside within it: the patriarch Manfred knows that his bloodline is not the rightful heir to the castle and that should his lineage ever fail an ancient curse will come to pass. After the death of his son Conrad on his wedding day, Manfred resolves to avoid the curse by taking Conrad's intended bride as his own so that he might produce another heir. As Manfred casts off his wife and relentlessly pursues his would-be daughter in law, the young peasant Theodore finds himself embroiled in the chaos at the castle. Naturally noble and chivalric, Theodore is moved by the distress of the heroines, Matilda and Isabella, to become their protector. As the novel reaches its climax, it is revealed that Theodore is the true heir to Otranto; Manfred mistakenly murders his daughter, thus ending his bloodline and bringing the vengeful spirit of the usurped Alfonso down upon the castle. In Theodore – a young man 'with large black eyes, a smooth white forehead, and manly curling locks like jet' described as 'a young hero resembling the picture of the good Alfonso'¹⁰² – Walpole presents a hero who is naturally brave and noble despite his upbringing as a peasant, who defends female virtue from patriarchal tyranny but is also displaced from his birth right. Considering Walpole's concern in 1763 for the vagrant soldiers turned loose upon the country and his defence in the spring of 1764 of Henry Seymour Conway, it seems possible that *The Castle of Otranto's* interest in notions of heroism, valour, and manliness might stem from Walpole's perception and proximity to the military. To place this influence in *The Castle of Otranto*, however, we must first consider the literary mode and ideologies that Walpole was responding to in creating what he would later call a Gothic story.

In 1762, a year prior to the conclusion of the Seven Years War, Richard Hurd, an 'author of *Moral and Political Dialogues* and editor of *Horace*'¹⁰³, had published an argument in favour and in defence of Gothic Romances entitled *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*. Hurd's *Letters* sought to readdress the literature of the medieval period and to encourage a reconsideration of its

¹⁰² Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p10

¹⁰³ Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (Dublin: Richard Watts, Skinner Row, 1762) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3313766938&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 10th September 2015] p.2

significance and value in British society. Chivalry, as both a term and an idea, had inherently militaristic origins: associated with the knights of Arthurian legends and medieval romances, who slew giants and dragons on the behalf of damsels and villagers who could not defend themselves, chivalry was a code of masculine honour and virtue exemplified by such tales. *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* sought not only to challenge the mid-eighteenth-century rejection of the romances, but to position chivalry as an inherently British alternative to Neoclassicism. James Watt suggests that Hurd ‘disputed the critical authority of a ‘French’ Neoclassicism’ in favour of ‘a reclamation of native literary antiquity.’¹⁰⁴ This attempt at reclamation, Watt notes, has ‘been interpreted as an attempt to define a distinctive cultural pedigree that would complement Britain’s military success in the Seven Years War.’¹⁰⁵ Increasingly, and more so during and following the Seven Years War, British society feared the influence of France and its effect on the British national identity and condition. As Michèle Cohen demonstrated in *Fashioning Masculinity* (1996), British society in the eighteenth century had looked to France to dictate fashions, manners and modes of refinement. The French style of dress and decorum had been fundamental in shaping the British idea of politeness, with the French honnête homme becoming the foundation for the gentleman. The Seven Years War, which positioned France again as the enemy to all things British, complicated and problematised this influence of French style in British manners and ideologies. Worthington’s letter in 1758 proclaimed the desperate need to improve the nation’s war efforts, ‘unless we are beginning to reconcile ourselves to the Thought of our noble Country’s becoming a Province to *France*, and of ourselves (if suffered to live) becoming Slaves to Popery and arbitrary Power.’¹⁰⁶ Where the British soldier was ‘sober and virtuous’ and ‘by Temperance is strong and virtuous’¹⁰⁷, the French, as we have seen, were depicted as enemies indulgent in violence and immoral excess. This growing rejection of the French influence can also be seen in *The Soldier’s Catechism*: when questioned ‘Can you dance?’ the received reply is ‘Not as well as a Master, nor so finely as a Beau. I had rather make the French dance to the tune of Britons strike home.’¹⁰⁸ This idea that a British martial masculinity must exist outside of French influence was crucial to the nation’s imagined national fortitude; to withstand French invasion then they must be without French corruption. This Francophobia arising from the Seven Years War, as Gerald Newman has argued, played a substantial role in the creation of English nationalism and national identity. But as Cohen notes, post-Enlightenment British society required refinement and politeness: if they could not look to France, then where could they look?

¹⁰⁴ James Watt, ‘Eighteenth-Century Gothic: Nation, *History*, Gender’, *Gothic Studies*, 14 (2012), 7–20, p10

¹⁰⁵ Watt, ‘Eighteenth-Century Gothic: Nation, History, Gender’, p10

¹⁰⁶ Worthington, p4

¹⁰⁷ Worthington, p23

¹⁰⁸ *The Soldier’s Catechism*, p11

In its exploration of the Age of Chivalry and contemplations on the worth of medieval romances, Hurd's *Letters* presents chivalry as an inherently British form: it is figured as the feudal forefather to eighteenth century society, a history and lineage belonging to the British people. Chivalry, Hurd suggests, 'seems to have sprung immediately out of the feudal constitution'¹⁰⁹, identifying it as a military code:

In this state of things one sees, that all imaginable encouragement was to be given to the use of arms, under every different form of attack and defence, according to the safety of these different communities, or the ambition their leaders, might require. And this condition of the times, I suppose, gave rise to that military institution, which we know by the name of CHIVALRY.¹¹⁰

Considering, as Watt identifies, neoclassicism's French origins, Hurd's defence of chivalry may be read as an attempt to define and champion something that was inherently British and therefore without French influence. Though chivalry itself was, from its origins in the literature of the Middle Ages, hardly a form divorced from France, Hurd's *Letters* arguably seek to rewrite the history of chivalry in the terms of British nationalism. In identifying chivalry as the behavioural code followed by the knights of Arthurian legend and medieval romance rather than as a French form, Hurd presents a similar image to that of 'The Soldier's' first and second stanzas, hailing the soldiers as heroic. Arguably then, in his defence of chivalry and the Gothic as a superior art form to neoclassicism, Hurd also presents it as an inherently British form without French influence.

As Audley L. Smith notes, though Hurd's previous works had 'defended for more than a decade the orthodox precepts of his day', *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* 'provides critical justification for the literature of the Middle Ages and in modern poetry by insisting that the chivalric manners and Gothic superstitions are more poetic than those of the Greek age.'¹¹¹ Indeed, Hurd sought not simply to defend what he called Gothic romances as an art form and to re-educate readers on its perceived values, but also to suggest that the form allowed an exploration of nature and beauty that made it superior to that of the Classical Greek and Roman styles. However Hurd's use of the term 'gothic romances' within *Letters* refers arguably not to a coherent form, but to a general style and period. As discussed earlier in the chapter, Gothic by the mid-eighteenth century was used as a term that referred in general to the art, architecture and literature of the Middle Ages. Nick Groom has argued that 'when Catholic orthodoxies were first questioned by the emerging Renaissance, a new definition of Gothic was conceived – a definition that primarily focused on mediaeval architecture and culture.' Groom continues that

¹⁰⁹ Hurd, p6

¹¹⁰ Hurd, p7

¹¹¹ Audley L. Smith, Richard Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, *ELH*, 1, 6 (1939) 58-81, p58

'the post-classical past was judged aesthetically, and condemned as bad art.'¹¹² Alfred E. Longueil notes that it was not until the eighteenth century that Gothic was 'used in literature with a critical edge', which came to encompass 'three meanings, all closely allied, – barbarous, medieval, supernatural.'¹¹³ Arguably then Hurd terms these texts 'Gothic romances' not to indicate a form but to differentiate them from the classical and neo-classical, as a 'simple foil to "classic", "heroic," or "Grecian."¹¹⁴ To his eighteenth-century contemporaries they were medieval, in period, setting or style and so, by Longueil and Groom's definitions, barbarous and out of fashion. If that which was barbarous was also Gothic, then so they become qualified by Hurd as 'Gothic romances'.

Longueil claims that 'Hurd's theme is the contrast between classic and literary method' and that his 'achievement, then is the re-neutralizing of the word "Gothic". Under his pen it loses its implication of libel and becomes once more a staid adjective of description.'¹¹⁵ Hurd refers in particular throughout *Letters* to Edmund Spenser's 1590 epic poem *The Faerie Queen*, claiming it to be 'one of the noblest productions of modern poetry' that had by the mid-eighteenth century 'fallen into so general a neglect, that all the zeal of it's [sic] is esteemed officious and impertinent, and will never restore it to those honours which it has, once for all, irrecoverably lost.'¹¹⁶ *Letters* argued that 'if we would understand the romances, we must know the institution which gave birth to them; if we would understand chivalry, we must know from what causes it was derived.'¹¹⁷ Hurd suggested that amidst the rise of Neoclassicism, critics' understanding and appreciation of the chivalric ideals that informed the Gothic romances had been forgotten and, as a result, such works had become devalued. In Letter VII he argues that contemporary critics' attempts to read *The Faerie Queen* as a classical poem had rendered it without merit, but that to read it as a Gothic poem 'it would not be difficult to unfold it's [sic] merit.'¹¹⁸ However *Letters* also recognised that it was the supernatural and fantastical elements of the Gothic that caused eighteenth-century critics to dismiss it. 'These Giants' Hurd claims 'were oppressive feudal Lords, and every Lord was to be met with, like the Giant in his strong hold or castle'¹¹⁹ whilst those of 'lower form, who imitated the violence of their superiors, and had not their castles, but their lurking places were the Savages of Romance. The greater Lord was called a Giant, for his power; and the less, a Savage, for his brutality.'¹²⁰ He continues that the truth of these analogies

¹¹² Nick Groom, *The Gothic: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p12

¹¹³ Longueil, p454

¹¹⁴ Longueil, p456

¹¹⁵ Longueil, p456-7

¹¹⁶ Hurd, p59

¹¹⁷ Smith, p58

¹¹⁸ Hurd, p5

¹¹⁹ Hurd, p18

¹²⁰ Hurd, p18

is evident in the texts themselves, that 'all this is shadowed out in the gothic tales, and sometimes expressed in plain words.'¹²¹ 'Monsters, Dragons, and Serpents' meanwhile, were an expression of societies' anxieties surrounding a foreign other. Hurd states that these tales were born not only from 'the vulgar belief in enchantments' but also of 'their being reported on the faith of the Eastern tradition, by adventurers into the holy land.'¹²² Arguably then, Hurd's analogical readings of the romances suggest that the fantastical and supernatural were in fact an outlet for an exploration of contemporary concerns and fears, to engage in a serious discourse under the guise of a 'faerie' story¹²³. In the final letter of the text, Hurd states that 'what we have gotten in this revolution [of literature], you will say, is a great deal of good sense. What we have lost, is a world of fine fabling, the illusion of which is so grateful to the *charming Spirit*, that in spite of philosophy and fashion *Faery* [sic] Spenser still ranks highest amongst the Poets.'¹²⁴ That *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* sought to legitimise the Gothic style is undeniable. Towards the end of the first letter, Hurd states that:

The spirit of Chivalry, was a fire which soon spent itself: But that of *Romance*, which was kindled at it, burnt long, and continued its light and heat even to the politer ages.

The greatest geniuses of our own and foreign countries, such as Ariosto and Tasso in Italy, and Spenser and Milton in England, were seduced by these barbarities of their forefathers; were even charmed by the Gothic Romances. Was this caprice and absurdity in them? Or, may there not be something in the Gothic Romance peculiarly suited to the views of a genius, and to the ends of poetry? And may not the philosophic moderns have gone too far, in their perpetual ridicule and contempt of it?¹²⁵

Audley L. Smith argues that, over its course, *Letters* 'finds the Gothic superstitions more poetical than the Greek and Roman for the very Romantic reason that they more powerfully stimulate the imagination.'¹²⁶

With *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, then, Hurd puts forth the notion that literature may be both 'fine fabling' and serious, that Gothic romances could be more than entertaining but insubstantial fairy tales. As such, *Letters* created a platform for a new style of Gothic literature to emerge and grow: the Gothic novel. In defending what Watt calls a 'native literary antiquity' Hurd arguably sought to 'reclaim' a British art form, and its corresponding values, that would

¹²¹ Hurd, p18

¹²² Hurd, p19

¹²³ It is worth noting that in his 'A Letter of the Authors', addressed to Sir Walter Raleigh in the dedication of *The Faerie Queen*, Edmund Spenser acknowledges the allegorical nature of his work: 'SIR, knowing how doubtfully all allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which I have entituled the *Faery Queene*, being a continued allegory, or darke conceit, I have thought good, aswell for avoyding of gealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading therof, (being so by you commanded,) to discover unto you the general intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned, without expressing of any particular purposes or by accidents therein occasioned.'

¹²⁴ Hurd, p63-64

¹²⁵ Hurd, p4

¹²⁶ Smith, p60

complement the ideals of mid-eighteenth-century British society in place of French neoclassicism. By reaching into Britain's ancient, fabled past and championing the values that once led it to glory, *Letters* sought to create a foundation for the Gothic as a form of British expression and exploration of national identity, values and concerns. With *The Castle of Otranto*, published two years after *Letters*, Watt argues that 'Horace Walpole seems to have indulged in this kind of literary nationalism, or at least exploited its popular appeal, when he set the example of Shakespeare against Voltaire in the preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto*.'¹²⁷ In the second preface to *Otranto*, which acknowledged his authorship, Walpole declared that 'I had a higher authority than my own opinion for this conduct. The great master of nature, Shakespeare, was the model I copied.'¹²⁸ If, as Watt suggests, Walpole endorsed Hurd's notion of the Gothic as British form, be it an indulgence or an exploitation, then his criticism of Voltaire's translations of Shakespeare is arguably a continuation of Hurd's arguments for the Gothic over neoclassicism. As noted earlier in this chapter, Walpole's first preface placed *The Castle of Otranto* at some point during the period of the Crusades, which *Letters* explicitly ties to the origins of the Gothic romances. In *Contesting the Gothic*, Watt argued that Horace Walpole 'explicitly defined himself against the example of such writers' as those that Hurd's *Letters* championed 'and in effect aligned himself with those who were condemned by Hurd as sceptical and ridiculing 'philosophic moderns.'¹²⁹ Though as Watt notes, 'it is inaccurate to associate Walpole or his work too closely with other contemporary writers on the Gothic, such as Hurd'¹³⁰, I would argue that whilst Walpole may not have intended *The Castle of Otranto* to comply with or compliment Hurd's work, the second preface indicates an engagement with the 'literary nationalism' of *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*. Considering, as Angela Wright has acknowledged, Walpole's pragmatic desire to define *Otranto* against French styles as a primary influence in terming the novel 'A Gothic Story' then we may read *The Castle of Otranto* as a 'serious' Gothic romance that employs the form as an analogy.

In a letter to Conway on the 5th of June 1764, Walpole wrote to inform his cousin that 'though not writing to you, I have been employed about you, as I have ever since the 21st of April'¹³¹. Walpole assured Conway that although he had been ordered 'to drop [him] and defend [the government]', his 'honour required that I should declare my adherence to you in the most

¹²⁷ Watt, 'Eighteenth-Century Gothic: Nation, History, Gender', p10

¹²⁸ Horace Walpole, *The Castle Of Otranto* ed. by Michael Gamer, 13th edition (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p10

¹²⁹ Watt, *Contesting the Gothic*, p27

¹³⁰ Watt, *Contesting the Gothic* p27

¹³¹ Walpole to HS Conway, 5th June 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=420&type=b> [accessed 30th November 2017]

authentic manner.¹³² Guthrie's rebuttal to Walpole in September, as Markman Ellis has noted, suggested that Walpole had corrupted Conway's virtue with homosexual desire.¹³³ Walpole dismissed the criticisms in a letter to Conway the criticisms, stating that "They have nothing better to say than that I am in love with you, have been so these twenty years, and am no giant."¹³⁴ and wrote again to assure him that "they may ruin me, but no calumny shall make me desert you."¹³⁵ Jill Campbell has argued that Walpole had been 'stunned and enraged at his cousin Henry Seymour Conway's loss of his military and civil posts'¹³⁶ and immersed himself in the writing of *The Castle of Otranto*. Certainly these letters, to both Henry and Francis Seymour Conway, demonstrate that throughout 1764 Walpole had continued to defend and seek justice for Conway's dismissal which must have coincided with his work on the first edition of *Otranto*. This, Campbell argues, has led to 'interpretative accounts' that emphasize the depth of Walpole's personal devotion to Conway as well as his feelings of guilt about his own role in urging him to oppose the administration.¹³⁷ Campbell's argues that although previous analysis of *Otranto* have acknowledged the significance of the relationship between the cousins, they have failed to explore 'the deeper logic' of the novel as a queer expression of Walpole's feelings for Conway and read the sexual subtext in the appearance of the giant and helmet and sword¹³⁸. Rather, Campell suggests, these enquiries have been more concerned with how the context of 1764 informs critical readings surrounding sexuality, incest, and affection: yet few have focused on the militaristic aspects of the text. Walpole's *Counter-address* defended not only Conway's character and his right to a democratic voice in parliament, but his reputation as a soldier and an officer. In the *Counter-address's* depiction of Conway and his virtues, Toni Wein has suggested, are the notions which would come to form the heroics of *The Castle of Otranto's* noble peasant Theodore.¹³⁹ Although not a novel about war, it is no less one shaped by it: Theodore is not a soldier, but he embodies the ideals of chivalry, an inherently militaristic code. Theodore's identity is inherently liked, too, throughout the text to the image of his ancestor,

¹³² Walpole to HS Conway, 5th June 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=420&type=b> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹³³ Markman Ellis, *The History of Gothic Fiction*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p41

¹³⁴ Walpole to HS Conway, 1st September 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=463&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹³⁵ Walpole to HS Conway, 1st September 1764 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=463&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹³⁶ Jill Campbell, "I am no giant": Horace Walpole, heterosexual incest, and love among men' in *The Eighteenth Century*, 39 (1998), 2, 238-260, p241

¹³⁷ Campbell, p241

¹³⁸ Campbell, p241-2

¹³⁹ Toni Wein, *British Identities, Heroic Nationalisms, and the Gothic Novel, 1764 -1824* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)

Alfonso the Good, who fought in the Crusades and whose giant military accoutrements appear to violently disrupt Manfred's power and lineage.

Writing on the 13th of October 1764 following the death of the Duke of Devonshire, Walpole adamantly assured Conway that the Duke's decision to leave a legacy of £5000 to him would not only improve the difficult financial circumstances of his unemployment but would be regarded widely as positive evidence in his favour. 'Measure it', Walpole wrote, 'with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more!'¹⁴⁰ The rationale for Conway's dismissal, Walpole maintained in both his correspondence and his *Counter-address*, was one of greed and cowardice, and it was a punishment that his cousin had far from earned. The Duke of Devonshire's legacy was received as proof not only of Conway's innocence in the situation of proof of his good character. For Walpole, the Duke's financial backing of Conway was evidence that his virtue and valour would eventually be recognised, and that he would be remembered as the unfairly injured party:

Why, it is glory, it is conscious innocence, it is satisfaction – it is affluence without guilt. – Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants [...] Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad: can greater honour be paid to it?¹⁴¹

This notion, that though virtue might be threatened or wronged by 'the bad' it will ultimately emerge victorious, is at the heart of *The Castle of Otranto*. Prior to the events of the novel the prince of Otranto, Alfonso, is poisoned whilst on crusade to the Holy Land by his chamberlain Ricardo who assumes his title with a forged will. Beset by storms on his return voyage, Ricardo pleads with heaven for salvation and his safe return is accompanied with the prophecy that 'Ricardo's posterity should reign in Otranto until the rightful owner should be grown too large to inhabit the castle, and as long as issue-male from Ricardo's loins should remain to enjoy it.'¹⁴² This prophecy is inherited by Manfred, the novel's villainous protagonist, who is driven to ensure the success of his line by any means necessary regardless of morality or propriety. The prophecy's fulfilment, with the death of Manfred's children and the appearance of the noble peasant Theodore as Otranto's lost rightful heir, results however in the complete destruction of the castle: 'the moment Theodore appeared, the walls of the castle behind Manfred were thrown

¹⁴⁰ Walpole to HS Conway, 13th October 1764, in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=475&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹⁴¹ Walpole to HS Conway, 13th October 1764, in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=38&seq=475&type=b>> [accessed 30th November 2017]

¹⁴² Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p99

down with a mighty force, and the form of Alfonso, dilated to an immense magnitude, appeared in the centre of the ruins.¹⁴³ The castle's destruction is both supernatural and sublime, as the massive shade of Alfonso 'accompanied by a clap of thunder' pronounces this true heir before ascending 'solemnly towards heaven, where the clouds parting asunder, the form of Saint Nicholas was seen; and receiving Alfonso's shade, they were wrapt from mortal eyes in a blaze of glory.'¹⁴⁴

The Castle of Otranto's narrative, arguably, is that power gained by unjust means is unsustainable and, ultimately, destructive. What is significant in the context of 1764 is that *The Castle of Otranto* is a story of usurpation. In the opening statement of his *Counter-address*, Walpole declared that in it 'nothing is meant [sic], but an attempt to prove that a Man who has been deeply wounded, did not deserve the Punishment for his late Conduct, nor could apprehend he had such ungenerous Enemies as would add the grossest abuse to the full Vengeance which Power had given some Men an Opportunity of exercising.'¹⁴⁵ The pamphlet claimed that despite the unjustness, Conway had borne his dismissal with a 'Resignation and Patience'¹⁴⁶ that should convince countrymen in his favour and ascribed to him a noble but modest bravery that characterised him clearly as heroic. Conway's heroism is defined in the pamphlet not by his own words in his defence, but by those of others: an 'anecdote' provided by Walpole to counter Guthrie's claims states that, in conversation about another lieutenant colonel, an officer had remarked that 'indeed, I do not pretend to the Intrepidity of *Harry Conway*, who walks up to the Mouth of a Cannon, with as much Indifference as if he was going to dance a Minuet.'¹⁴⁷ Repeatedly, the *Counter-address* returns to the idea that to remove Conway from his generalcy was an insult to his years of service that broke the contract between the soldier and his country. Responding to Guthrie's claim in his *Address* that the army would feel no great loss at the dismissal, Walpole argued that Conway's loss of his command had instead been taken as an affront to the service of all soldiers:

They do think it hard that the Rewards of Years, of Blood, of Bravery, spent and exerted in the Service of their King and Country, should be of so precarious a Tenure, they are to be sacrificed to the Vengeance of fretful and perplexed Ministers – Nay, that the Rewards of Honour are incompatible with the Dictates of Conscience: that the Merit of ten Campaigns can be obliterated by one Session: that to serve their King and Country is not enough; they must serve ministers also. ¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p98

¹⁴⁴ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p99

¹⁴⁵ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p4

¹⁴⁶ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p4

¹⁴⁷ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p38

¹⁴⁸ Walpole, *A counter-address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer*, p26

To expect the military to ‘tremble when a Brother-Officer is cashiered for his Virtue, and to abandon him’, Walpole suggests, is to insult and contradict the foundations of the entire profession. The pamphlet frames Conway’s situation as a usurpation: that Conway’s position had been unfairly and unjustly taken from him by the ministers using the very power and security that he had fought wars to give them. Through this lens, then, *The Castle of Otranto* becomes an extension of the *Counter-address*. Like ‘The Soldier’, *Otranto* contrasts chivalric, heroic masculinity against models of manliness that lack morality and courage or are coloured by vice and greed rather than valour. If the Gothic is, as suggested earlier, a form that uses the supernatural and the medieval past as a form of analogy then in *The Castle of Otranto* we might read not only a defence of Henry Seymour Conway, but a comment on masculinity and a warning about the eventual state of a nation ruled by those who seek to take power they have not rightfully earned.

As the hero and villain of *The Castle of Otranto*, Theodore and Manfred embody two conflicting modes of masculine behaviour and two opposing codes of conduct. Following the death of his son, Conrad, Manfred – conscious that Otranto is his by improper and immoral means – becomes entirely consumed by his desire to maintain his lineage, thus devolving into a state of feudal tyranny in which he is defined solely by his identity as prince of Otranto. Without chivalry to monitor or check his actions, Manfred becomes the giant or dragon of the ‘Gothick’ romances in human form; his every action, opinion, and value is informed by his desire to maintain his feudal power and identity. Feudalism, *Letters* suggests, was intolerable by contemporary standards because it opposed the values and virtues instilled upon Britain by the Glorious Revolution and the Enlightenment. Manfred’s obsession with his feudal power and model renders him both terrifying and camp; although his hyper-machismo becomes ridiculous in its excess, it remains threatening in its potential for destruction. In his response to Conrad’s death and the appearance of the giant helmet, Manfred becomes increasingly irrational: ‘enraged at the vigour, however decently exerted’¹⁴⁹ by Theodore after he recognises the helmet as Alfonso’s, Manfred abuses his position and power by accusing Theodore of an impossible murder. Learning that the helmet is missing from the statue, Manfred ‘grew perfectly frantic; and, as if he sought an object within the tempest within him, he rushed again on the young peasant crying, Villain! monster! sorcerer! ‘tis thou hast slain my son!’¹⁵⁰ Manfred’s response to the helmet – a symbol of military might that directly opposes and undermines Manfred’s power as inheritor by usurpation – is near comical: so infuriated is Manfred by its appearance that he is overcome by his own rage, unable to make a reasonable or rational assessment and indulging instead in the supernatural. However, though Manfred’s rage becomes camp in its irrationality

¹⁴⁹ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p20

¹⁵⁰ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p20

and insufficiency, his hyper-machismo is still dangerous and destabilising. The prince's impassioned response is neither questioned nor rejected by his people, 'who wanted some object within the scope of their capacities on whom they might discharge their bewildered reasonings'¹⁵¹, and follow his orders without question. Manfred's leadership is informed only by his own desires; he governs without consideration or care for his people or his family. Their purpose is to serve him and enact his will, and thus they are permitted no agency or control over their narratives. Manfred's abuses of his power and his total command of his people, rendered terrible in their efficiency but ridiculous in their absurdity, echo the criticisms that Guthrie's pamphlet levied at Conway but invert them; reassigning these failings to the figure of power rather than the soldier.

Within Manfred's feudal model, a daughter as an heir signals the end of the patriarchal line. Matilda, despite her health, beauty, quality of mind, and commitment to her filial duty as his daughter, is thus rendered valueless. Manfred 'never showed any symptom of affection for Matilda'¹⁵², declaring in the wake of the death of his infirm heir Conrad that 'I do not want a daughter.'¹⁵³ Rather than look to his daughter, whose mutual infatuation with Theodore, Otranto's true heir, may have led to a marriage that united the two bloodlines, Manfred instead casts off his wife, Hippolita, and seeks to force his would be daughter-in-law Isabella into an incestuous marriage: 'Instead of a sickly boy, you shall have a husband in the prime of his age, who will know how to value your beauties, and who may expect a numerous offspring.'¹⁵⁴ To Manfred, the women of his family possess value only in their usefulness to him. The irony then is that by this code Matilda, who does possess the power to prevent the prophecy coming to pass, is rendered useless and cast off in favour of a wild chase after the unwilling Isabella. This blindness to the true power in his possession and how Manfred might best secure his familial line and title, arguably echoes Walpole's criticisms of the ministry after Conway's dismissal. In his *Counter-address*, Walpole suggested that the ministry's removal of Conway's command defied the laws of the constitution and the values won by the Revolution of 1688. By taking Conway's profession and intending to remodel the army, the *Counter-address* implied that government was wilfully acting in spite of itself: foolishly seeking to cement its power by removing the very force that secured it in the first place. By attributing such behaviours to Manfred *Otranto* positions them as inherently feudal and unchivalric, suggesting that they too are unsustainable and unnatural.

¹⁵¹ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p20

¹⁵² Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p17

¹⁵³ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p22

¹⁵⁴ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p24

Theodore, the novel's hero and Otranto's true heir, appears in direct opposition to Manfred: pulled into the castle's misfortunes by chance, Theodore is throughout driven by a pure, natural desire to protect the distressed and threatened women. It is Theodore, 'a young peasant, whom rumour had drawn thither from a neighbouring village' who first observes 'that the miraculous helmet' which crushes Conrad 'was exactly like that on the figure in black marble of Alfonso the Good, one of their former princes, in the church of St. Nicholas.'¹⁵⁵ In positioning Theodore against Manfred, the absurdity of his tyrannical behaviours are amplified: Theodore's responses to the accusations made against him remain calm and collected, despite their ludicrousness. Nor is Theodore's reaction to his imprisonment one of self-pity: he is conscious of the injustice of his situation, but realises that the situation of the princesses is more important than his own. Upon meeting Isabella as she attempts to flee, Theodore reveals a natural inclination to chivalry declaring that 'I value not my life... it will be some comfort to lose it in trying to deliver you from [Manfred's] tyranny.'¹⁵⁶ Later, when responding to Matilda's enquiries as to his presence in her father's castle Theodore informs the princess that though his situation is 'indeed unhappy' and he knows 'not what wealth is' he neither needs nor would take her offers of charity:

I am young and healthy, and am not ashamed of owing my support to myself – yet think me not proud, or that I disdain your generous offers. I will remember you in my orisons, and will pray for blessings on your gracious self and your noble mistress – if I sigh, lady, it is for others, not for myself.¹⁵⁷

Matilda's servant, Bianca, assumes the young man's response to be one coloured by love and is rebuffed by her mistress, who asks 'what right have we to pry into the secrets of this young man's heart?'¹⁵⁸ Matilda observes that Theodore, by his speech, 'seems virtuous and frank' and that his confession of unhappiness does not 'authorise [them] to make a property of him'.¹⁵⁹ This exchange passes without either party perceiving the other: Matilda and Bianca are drawn to the princess' window by the sound of Theodore's singing below, but are only able to hear and not see him. This chivalry in Theodore is reflected in the sensibility of Matilda, who is quick to offer aid when she hears the 'melancholy cast'¹⁶⁰ of his speech but refuses to pry into the cause of his suffering or to demand his reasons as Bianca suggests. Later, when Theodore is finally seen by the women rather than heard, they observe that 'his person was noble, handsome and commanding' and Bianca exclaims 'is not that youth the exact resemblance of Alfonso's picture

¹⁵⁵ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p20

¹⁵⁶ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p28

¹⁵⁷ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p39

¹⁵⁸ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p40

¹⁵⁹ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p40

¹⁶⁰ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p39

in the gallery?’¹⁶¹ Though these descriptions signal Theodore’s true identity they also suggest that the young hero is intrinsically chivalric, his masculinity formed by a nobility of birth if not by a noble education and by a natural inclination to feeling and honour. Captured by Manfred after Isabella’s escape, charged with false claims and faced with execution, Theodore declares ‘the injustice of which thou art guilty towards me [...] convinces me that I have done a good deed in delivering the princess from thy tyranny. May she be happy, whatever becomes of me!’¹⁶² Manfred, ruled solely by his own feudalism and desire for absolute power, is unable to comprehend any reason for Theodore’s actions excepting infatuation with Isabella. But in both his speech and behaviour, Theodore recalls the knight errant Hurd speaks of in *Letters* ‘wandering the world over in search of occasions on which to exercise their generous and disinterested valour.’¹⁶³ Theodore offers his protection, and if required his life, to the terrorised princesses of Otranto not for glory or infatuation, but on the principle of what is right and just. Arguably then Theodore, in his adherence to the romantic ideals of chivalry, also embodies the masculine ideals of Walpole’s contemporary readership. His devotion to the protection of feminine virtue and proper morals aligns him with the concepts of husbandry – a gentlemanly ideal popular during the eighteenth century that valued the careful cultivation of one’s self, family, lands, and tenants – whilst his eloquent speech and attachment to Matilda reveal a natural sensibility.

Contrasted with Theodore’s chivalry, Manfred’s feudalism marks him undeniably as a villain. All at Otranto are subject to his tyranny; he disregards both his wife and daughter, recognises his duty as a pseudo-father to Isabella only as a tool with which to keep her under his power and treats his domestics cruelly. At the novel’s frenzied climax, troubled by his likeness to Alfonso, ‘Theodore... unhinged the soul of Manfred’¹⁶⁴ and in his all-consuming quest to secure his bloodline, Manfred mistakenly kills Matilda.¹⁶⁵ The murder of his daughter, who may have otherwise continued Manfred’s bloodline and united it to Theodore’s, breaks Manfred’s single minded focus and signifies the complete collapse of not only his patriarchal line, but arguably of his own masculinity and the feudal code to which it subscribes. As the shade of Alfonso appears to declare Theodore the true Prince of Otranto, ‘the walls of the castle behind Manfred were thrown down with mighty force.’¹⁶⁶ Manfred’s feudal desires doom his own offspring just as those of his ancestors have doomed him, ultimately destroying all that they had coveted. Recognising his failure and reflecting upon his loss, Manfred reveals the crimes of his ancestor

¹⁶¹ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p49

¹⁶² Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, p49

¹⁶³ Hurd, p10

¹⁶⁴ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p74

¹⁶⁵ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p95

¹⁶⁶ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p98

and declares to those gathered that 'List, sirs, and may this bloody record be a warning to future tyrants.'¹⁶⁷ As Manfred's quest to secure his line leads him only to destroy it, arguably the *Castle of Otranto's* conclusion signifies a total failure of a feudal code of masculinity. That the usurpers 'posterity should reign in Otranto until the rightful owner should be grown too large to inhabit the castle'¹⁶⁸ suggests inevitable failure and that the feudal model is inherently unsustainable. In *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, Hurd suggests that chivalry grew from feudalism, to civilise it: 'my notion is, that Chivalry was no absurd and freakish institution, but the natural and even sober effect of the feudal policy; whose turbulent genius breathed nothing but war, and was fierce and military even in its amusements.'¹⁶⁹ Yet *The Castle of Otranto* arguably separates the concepts into two opposing masculinities, as embodied by its hero and villain. In claiming his birth right, Theodore's chivalry does not 'sober' or civilise Manfred's feudalism but completely replaces it. Though he does so willingly, with the castle walls fallen about him, no allies to support him and no children living, Manfred must resign his title and power to Theodore. If we are to consider *The Castle of Otranto* as a Gothic romance in the vein of *Letters*, that utilises an ancient setting and supernatural occurrences to comment upon contemporary issues through analogy, then arguably Manfred's downfall signifies not necessarily a need for a rejection of feudalism but a rejection of a certain type of 'negative' hyper-masculinity. In its vilification of Manfred as feudal in his values, and therefore outdated and barbaric by contemporary reckoning, the novel condemns the masculine traits ascribed to him and thereby suggests that such masculinity has no place in eighteenth century society: it is incapable of successfully sustaining a household and certainly not, considering Otranto is a principality, a country. Equally then, in its replacement of Manfred with Theodore *The Castle of Otranto* proposes not only that chivalry can, and indeed must, exist without feudalism but that the values of the knights of old romances could be complementary to those of contemporary British society. In Theodore, *Otranto* offers an attractive blend of chivalry and sensibility imbued with modest origins to produce a masculinity that may restore and revive a failing society.

In this depiction of feudalism and chivalry, what *The Castle of Otranto* demonstrates is a patriarchal power which has forgotten how and by what means land, power, and title have been won, and which seeks to maintain it by methods that defy rationality and are ultimately self-destructive. In imbuing Theodore with the virtues and morals of chivalry, Walpole arguably ascribes militaristic values to his hero. It is Theodore who highlights the unjustness of his treatment, the barbarity inflicted on the Princesses and the absurdity of Manfred's conduct. What *Otranto* appears to do here, then, is to employ the Gothic analogy to further explore and

¹⁶⁷ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p99

¹⁶⁸ Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* p99

¹⁶⁹ Hurd, p3

expose the arguments against the treatment of Henry Seymour Conway by the ministry in the April of 1764. What the novel mocks in *Manfred* is ultimately that which Walpole criticised in his *Counter-address*; a ruling body refusing to acknowledge the origin of its own power and, rather than rewarding those men and values who fought to secure it, attempting to remove them as a threat or opposition. What the *Counter-address* warns of the ministry, is *Manfred's* fate at the end of *Otranto*: by pursuing perverse and irrational means, the castle has fallen, his line has ended and his power has been entirely lost. Whether, to recall James Watt, in *The Castle of Otranto* Walpole sought to engage sincerely with the literary nationalism or to exploit it, the novel continued Hurd's notion that Gothic romance may function as form of British expression. *Otranto's* popularity with readers would give birth to a new genre of fiction, one that would fascinate readers for generations to come, and that cemented Hurd's theory of the Gothic as analogy as a chief convention within it. What is perhaps most significant, for the purposes of this thesis, is that *Otranto's* narrative of the unsustainability of ill-gotten power and its suggestion that those who are noble, such as Theodore and Henry Seymour Conway, who behave with honour and valour will ultimately overcome those who seek to deny them their rightful positions is inherited by the Gothic as one of its central conventions. Clara Reeve's 1778 novel *The Old English Baron*, originally published in 1777 as *The Champion of Virtue* – which consciously declared itself to be the inheritor of Walpole's Gothic – is also a story of usurpation and virtue rewarded. In her preface to the second edition, Reeve declared that 'history represents human nature as it is in real life'¹⁷⁰. Romances, Reeve suggested, 'displays only the amiable side of the picture, it shews the pleasing features, and throws a veil over the blemishes: Mankind are naturally pleased with what gratifies their vanity'¹⁷¹. In *The Old English Baron* it is not just Edmund's countenance and resemblance to his deceased friend that endears the youth to Sir Philip Harclay, but his excellence in the chivalric arts. After watching him at practice with sons of the Baron Fitz Owen, Sir Philip wonders that 'if one day such rare qualities as he possesses, should one day create envy, and raise him enemies; in which case he might come to lose [the Baron's] favour, without any fault [...] of his own.'¹⁷²

This is what eventually comes to pass. As Edmund, falsely assumed to be the son of a cottager but in fact son and rightful heir of the usurped Lord Lovel, continues in his martial training he draws the resentment of Fitz-Owen's eldest son and his other charges. When the young men enter the Regent's service in France, 'to learn the art of war, and signalize their courage and abilities'¹⁷³, Edmund's superiority in their military endeavours only worsens the ill-will towards

¹⁷⁰ Clara Reeve, *The Old English Baron*, ed. by James Trainer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p2

¹⁷¹ Reeve, p2

¹⁷² Reeve, p17

¹⁷³ Reeve, p20

him. Supposing Edmund to be 'proud and vain-glorious'¹⁷⁴, Wenlock, Hewson, and Markham form a plot against him, intending 'to draw him off, and leave him to the enemy'¹⁷⁵. Despite the scheme, Edmund behaves with exemplary conduct: '[he] advanced the foremost of the party; he drew out the leader on the French side; he slew him.'¹⁷⁶ Recognising that the victory 'was chiefly owing' to Edmund's heroic behaviour and skill, the Regent decides 'to confer upon [Edmund] the honour of knighthood, which [he had] well deserved.'¹⁷⁷ The knighting is interrupted however, by Wenlock, who objects that Edmund is not a gentlemen and therefore cannot be knighted. Edmund, of course, is in fact of noble birth (and is eventually restored to his position) but the injustice of the scene – in which a young man has fought honourably and bravely in service of his King and country is denied his proper reward or position – echoes the sentiments of Walpole's *Counter-address*. In *The Old English Baron's* final lines, Reeve writes that the events of the novel 'furnish a striking lesson to posterity, of the over-ruling hand of Providence, and the certainty of RETRIBUTION.'¹⁷⁸ What is interesting here is that, if we do read *The Castle of Otranto's* narrative through the lens of Henry Seymour Conway's dismissal, then in the novels which later emulated and imitated Walpole's Gothic we continue to find narratives concerned with chivalry, valour, and virtue rewarded.

¹⁷⁴ Reeve, p23

¹⁷⁵ Reeve, p24

¹⁷⁶ Reeve, p25

¹⁷⁷ Reeve, p25

¹⁷⁸ Reeve, p136

Chapter Two

'That which is right': Fashioning the soldier as hero in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* and *A Sicilian Romance*

The profession of a soldier, in my humble opinion, carries with it a very extensive and honourable name; it is allowed to be lawful by Holy Writ. Emperors and Kings, by ancient and modern history, have deemed themselves dignified by being enrolled soldiers: and in the reign of his present majesty, George the III. three of the princes of the royal family are living instance of the values of the profession.

Philip Astley, *Remarks on the Profession and Duty of a Soldier; with other observations relative to the army at this time in actual service on the continent*, 1794¹

Moving on from the Gothic novel's origins in the 1760s, this chapter focuses on the early novels of Ann Radcliffe, one of the most popular and formative Gothic authors of the late eighteenth century. This chapter explores Britain's response to the French Revolution, in particular the renewed possibility of war with France and the growing threat of invasion. Radcliffe's early novels, this chapter argues, reflect society's concerns about the British military's ability to withstand either war or invasion following the loss of the American Wars of Independence. These novels rehabilitate the image of the soldier, rejecting the image of the criminal or vagrant by redefining him as a chivalric hero and ascribing him the qualities of sensibility.

In 1796 a song entitled 'The Good Militia Man; or, the Man that is worth a Host' appeared in the *Cheap Repository*, purported to be 'by Honest Dan the Plough-boy turned Soldier' who 'at [his] country's call [...] turn'd Militia Man.'² Written – in order to be sung – in the first person, the verses of 'The Good Militia Man' exalt the moral code and values of the British soldier as the titular 'Man that's worth a host.' No longer a simple plough boy, 'Honest Dan' tells how he can now be seen daily 'In Regimentals bright, Sir, / Of Scarlet I do Shine, / With hair tied up so tight,

¹ Philip Astley, *Remarks on the profession and duty of a soldier; with other observations relative to the army, at this time in actual service on the Continent*, (London, 1794), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW109024082&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 20th September 2016]

The texts frontispiece lists the author as 'Philip Astley, Esq. of Hercules Hall, Lambeth, London', identifying him as the famous equestrian and so called father of the modern circus. Prior his fame as the master of 'Astley's Amphitheatre' Astley served in the Seven Years War, achieving the rank of Sergeant Major.

² 'The good militia man; or, the man that is worth a host, being a new song, by honest Dan the plough-boy turned soldier.' (London: 1796) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW116259416&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>, [accessed 20th September 2016], p4

Sir, / And whiten'd all so fine.'³ Rather than shun or turn away from the soldiers 'of Maidens not a few, Sir / Come crouding[sic] round the green; / And so do Parents too, Sir; / The Children push between.'⁴ Similar sentiments can be found in another song, published the year before in 1795, entitled 'A Soldier for me', which declares that soldier's 'charming red coat, and / more charming cockade, / Could ne'er be resisted by widow / or a maid.'⁵ Though both 'The Good Militia Man' and 'A Soldier for Me' acknowledge that it is the soldier's adherence to his moral code and his patriotic bravery that make him worthy of such admiration, it is the physical figure of the soldier in martial dress that captures both the eyes and hearts of young women. Whereas once French styles had been the height of fashion in both Europe and the Americas, the French Revolution heralded the decline of the lavish *habit a la francaise* in masculine fashion. The luxurious French designs were abandoned in favour of a 'plain, quasi-military'⁶ style that would dominate men's fashion for decades after the 1790s, consisting of muted, sombre colours and clean, defined lines. Though this shift towards a more simple style would be adopted universally, Linda Colley notes that 'Great Britain seems to have been one of the first European nations in which this shift in style from peacock male to sombre man of action became apparent.'⁷ Uniforms, Colley argues, 'were the embodiment of authority, but they also denoted a service to the nation.'⁸ The soldier's red coat therefore ascribed a worthiness to its wearer arguably separate from class, defined instead by the honourable values of his profession. In songs, pamphlets, and fashion plates the soldier appears as the pinnacle of masculinity, to be emulated by men and desired by women. By the time 'The Good Militia Man' was published, Europe was three years into the War of the First Coalition and Britain was again deep in conflict with France. Such depictions of the soldier as 'so noble, so gallant / and gay'⁹ are a distinct departure, however, from that of the ragged red coat and potentially violent vagrant of the years following the Seven Years Wars and the American Wars of Independence. As discussed in the Introduction, the soldier was a figure after 1763 that seemed at odds with ideas of polite, genteel society: more a highwayman than a hero, as Horace Walpole observed. How, by the War of the First Coalition, could the soldier have reclaimed his status?

In 1788 Britain had revelled in its freedom as centenary celebrations took place across the nation in honour of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. However the following year witnessed the

³ 'The Good Militia Man', p4

⁴ 'A Soldier for Me' (Manchester: Swindells, 1795) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CB3330523373&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>, [accessed 20th September 2016]

⁵ 'A Soldier for Me'

⁶ Colley, p187

⁷ Colley, p187

⁸ Colley p186-7

⁹ 'A Soldier for Me'

Bastille fall, throwing Europe once again into turmoil and threatening British moral and social order. The French Revolution would dominate European politics and literature for the next thirty or so years: the Revolutionaries' rallying cry of 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité' would challenge the monarchies of Europe's great powers, birthing philosophies and ideologies on human rights, government, education, and the arts that would fundamentally change the continent forever. But the Revolution would also bring chaos and an age of terror, with public executions, political and military coups and, eventually, the apparent loss of that which the Revolution had been founded upon overhauled by the ascent of Napoleon Bonaparte as an absolute ruler that was watched by many with a mixture of fascination and horror. It is almost impossible to separate the state of Britain after 1789 from the Revolution unfolding across the channel. As William Doyle has argued, 'all educated Europeans were aware in the 1780's that they lived in an age of upheaval and defiance of authority.'¹⁰ British responses to the Revolution were mixed. Many respected its ideals, believing that in overthrowing the ancien régime France had finally won themselves the constitutional freedoms that had been enjoyed by Englishmen since 1688. Others, such as Edmund Burke, warned that the Revolution signalled the end of the 'Age of Chivalry' and threatened to drag Europe into a state of absolute chaos. But despite the initial support or apathy of the British public toward the French Revolution, it was what Maggie Kilgour has called 'an attempt to break all links between the past and present'¹¹ and thus in many ways the antithesis of Britain's desire to define itself by the glories of its past. That it would eventually become the threat to Britain's national safety which Edmund Burke had feared it would be in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* was perhaps unavoidable. By 1791, 'the days when Europe could observe events in France with detachment were now over.'¹² As Doyle has noted, 'increasingly, the Revolutionaries would seek to solve their problems by inflicting them on their neighbours'¹³ and the prospect of war loomed ever closer. Nigel Aston suggests that in Revolutionary France, eager to spread its principles across Europe, 'the assumption was that subject peoples' in other countries 'were eagerly awaiting their liberators.'¹⁴ However, many nations, including Russia, Spain and Sweden, had begun to censor materials relating to the Revolution whilst in Germany 'even those who had been carried away by enthusiasm two years previously, viewed the continuing upheaval in France with mounting horror.'¹⁵ Though responses to the Revolution were varied in Britain, the centuries-old rivalry between the two

¹⁰ William Doyle, 'Chapter 7' in *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p1

¹¹ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, p24

¹² Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, p173

¹³ Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, p173

¹⁴ Nigel Aston, *The French Revolution, 1789-1804: Authority, liberty and the search for stability* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p161

¹⁵ Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, p170

countries was far from forgotten, as Doyle identifies: 'Ever since the disasters of the Seven Years War Frenchmen had longed to see British arrogance humbled, and the power of "the modern Carthage" broken.'¹⁶ The American Wars of Independence had further complicated the tense relationship between the two countries, as the French alliance with the United States had played a crucial role in Britain's crushing defeat.

As tensions rose across Europe after 1789, with Britain's loss in America still in recent memory, France appeared to possess significant military advantage. Amongst anxieties about the Revolution and possible war on the continent were concerns that Britain had experienced a national crisis of morality and masculinity. Arthur N. Gilbert argues that 'given the concern with foreign infection, the French Revolution spawned in England an interest in private morality.'¹⁷ 'At least part of the concern,' Gilbert suggests, was the 'fear that marriage and the family were being undermined by vice.'¹⁸ The losses in the American Wars had severely wounded both Britain's superiority over France and its imperial identity, and national failures were increasingly ascribed to a declining, immoral national masculinity. After Britain's inability to maintain power over its colonies, concerns grew that the nation was producing a generation of young men who had deviated too far into the realms of politeness and feeling. Many thinkers and critics, including Richard Hurd, were vocal in their criticisms of the methods by which gentleman were 'produced' in the late eighteenth century. The idea of the 'gentleman' had developed over the course of the eighteenth century, responding to the ideals of movements such as the Enlightenment and sensibility that had coincided with a growth of the middle classes. These new ideologies and class developments prompted British society to look inwards and domestic success steadily became a valuable commodity. According to Janet Todd:

The coming of the Hanoverians provided political stability and appeared to denote a shift in class power. Although England was, beyond any consideration of Whig or Tory, ruled by aristocratic elite, the power of the middle and trading classes was felt to be increasing. Money was a factor of considerable importance in politics and society, and, although a rise in the world was ratified by land ownership, the rise itself often resulted from trade.¹⁹

This new social order required a new model of masculinity to manage it, one that rejected the misogyny of feudalism and the hedonistic excesses of the Restoration's rakes and libertines. As novelists such as Samuel Richardson and Frances Burney rejected the rake for his

¹⁶ Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, p66

¹⁷ Arthur N. Gilbert, 'Sexual deviance and disaster during the Napoleonic wars', *Albion*, i, 9 (1977b), 98-113, p101

¹⁸ Gilbert, p101

¹⁹ Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction*, (Methuen: London, 1986), p11

performativity and destructiveness, the ideas of the gentleman would come to dominate both literature and society. The gentleman was imagined to be the exemplary British masculinity: he would be well born and educated, his manners manly and composed, and his heart open to sensibility but without overindulgence. Key to this idea was the concept of 'husbandry' which, as Elaine McGirr has noted 'became an increasingly central term in eighteenth century debates about the nature of masculinity; the husbandry of estates was linked, metaphorically and literally, with marital roles and male sexuality.'²⁰ The notion of husbandry encouraged gentlemen to embrace their responsibilities as husbands, brothers, fathers and managers of estates. The well-being of their tenants, the productivity of their lands and the daily functions of their households and expenses were now expected to be the chief concerns of a gentleman and a successful, thriving family and estate the signifier of his masculinity. On a national scale it was imagined that in practicing the art of husbandry the wealth of the nation might be nurtured and expanded, thus fostering a powerful and self-sustaining Britain.

This fashioning of polite, gentlemanly masculinity, however, was not without issue. As Michèle Cohen has detailed in *Fashioning Masculinity*, inspired by the French idea of *honnête* and the culture of salons, English gentlemanliness was fashioned via education from and socialisation with women. The French notion of *politesse*, Cohen notes, which informed 'social, linguistic and aesthetic ideals'²¹ relied on the presence of aristocratic women: 'women were central to cultural and social developments of the seventeenth century, not merely because they reigned over the space of the salon, nor because they were also the arbiters of taste, but because polite conversation and, most crucially, *honnêteté*, could not be achieved without them.'²² These were the styles and methods which Britain had adopted in its quest to construct the gentleman but as practices that were inherently French, anxieties grew steadily over the course of the eighteenth century about exactly *what* type of masculinity they might produce. Increasingly after the American Wars of Independence there would be concerns about a state of national effeminacy that threatened Britain's identity as a global power. Effeminacy, Declan Kavannah argues, 'is interwoven with the Enlightenment's development of modern Western ideas of liberty and freedom.'²³ Effeminacy became problematic because it confused established gender roles, causing 'particular anxiety and hostility in the military context'²⁴. However the fears surrounding effeminacy or 'effeminophobia', Kavannah suggests, were not 'exclusively about

²⁰ Elaine McGirr, 'Manly Lessons: Sir Charles Grandison, The Rake and the Man of Sentiment', *Studies in the Novel* 39, 3 (fall 2007), 267-283' p269

²¹ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p13

²² Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p13

²³ Declan Kavannah, *Effeminate Years: Literature, Politics, and Aesthetics in Mid-Eighteenth Century Britain*, (Bucknell University Press: Maryland, 2017), pxiii

²⁴ Kavannah, pxviii

homoeroticism'²⁵ but about the patriotic spirit and national strength: 'popular caricature frequently equated effeminacy with cowardliness and, in turn, with the sodomitical'²⁶. Effeminacy contradicted the idea of the Briton as the inheritor of a glorious, courageous masculinity defined by the nation's military superiority. Though this construction of a British national masculinity had been founded in the ideals of chivalry, which permitted feelings and was centred around the protection of women, the fashioning of the gentleman largely lacked its militaristic elements. Instead of fashioning masculinity via an education in and the performance of martial arts, the gentleman of the mid to late eighteenth century was educated in politeness and etiquette through socialisation with women. The 'honnête' method of education gentleman was troubled by the loss of the American Wars, and concerns grew that in softening 'natural' masculine qualities to create gentleman it had instead created an effeminate generation.

Whilst society demanded men schooled in politeness, the nation demanded a manly vigour and fortitude to manage and defend it. If men were to be educated by women and politeness was to be gained in the conversation and pleasing of, it was feared, then men might become too invested in femininity. These concerns that the education of young men might produce feminised fops, too obsessed with fashion and female arts to be of any use to the nation, was levelled in particular against the Grand Tour. The Tour was intended to be the culmination of the gentleman's education; a journey across Europe that would introduce young men to the various courts, fashions and masters. The Tour was intended to be the last stage of refinement, available realistically by necessity of cost to only the wealthiest young men, imagined as the final stage of passing from adolescence to adulthood: the young man would return, enlightened by the elegance he had witnessed in Europe, to take his place amongst society. Hurd, however, saw the Grand Tour as a journey that corrupted rather than refined. Cohen suggests that such criticisms concerning the Tour arose 'not because [it] failed to fashion the gentleman but because they were alien to the manly English character'²⁷; the young men who returned from the Grand Tour may have been exemplary gentleman, but they were barely recognisable as Englishmen.

Hurd and his contemporaries feared that 'too many youths returned from the grand tour as effeminate fops' who 'might have been responsible for the failure of the American war.'²⁸ Though the fop was seen to be too invested in the pleasing of women, he also suggested the threat of sexual transgression and homosexual desire: in becoming so much like women, it was

²⁵ Kavannagh, pxvii

²⁶ Kavannagh, p53

²⁷ Michèle Cohen, "'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830', *Journal of British Studies*, 44, 2 (2005) 319-329, p322

²⁸ Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p322

feared, the fop would take on female desires as his own. Sexual deviance was arguably central to social concerns surrounding effeminacy and, as Gilbert notes, 'immoral acts performed by Englishmen were seen as a sign of social decay and the link between private behaviour and England's ability to withstand French threat was explicit.'²⁹ The literature of the Seven Years War, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, had imagined a French threat that was rapacious and sexually deviant; a transgressive threat that must be repelled by the British military to protect the nation's virtue and values. Effeminacy threatened the British character because sexual deviance had been closely connected with France and, as Kavannah suggests, with cowardice and immorality. With the rest of Europe preparing for war and Frenchification perceived as crippling British masculinity, an alternative method of constructing manliness, separate from excessive female influence, was crucial. Born of Britain's own ancient past, 'the chivalric system was a way of producing men, not Frenchified and effeminate fops.'³⁰ Britain had already begun to increasingly look inwards, back to its past glories, as a means of constructing and maintaining its ideological freedom and so 'the ancient Briton was configured as the antithesis of his polite, Frenchified eighteenth century heirs.'³¹ However, as Cohen states, 'ancient Britons, with their unpolished rudeness, were unlikely to provide an attractive model of manliness for the refined late-eighteenth century gentleman.'³² Cohen suggests that chivalry, as a concept associated with 'manliness, bravery, loyalty, courtesy, truthfulness, purity, honour, and a strong sense of protection toward the weak and oppressed'³³, was the mode by which this new British masculinity could be shaped. Yet chivalry was still intrinsically connected with the feudal system that birthed it, and to an age that had been long disregarded. To create a British masculinity that simultaneously fulfilled the ideals of sentimentality and husbandry whilst being independent of French corruption, required the chivalric knight errant to be seamlessly blended with the domestic gentleman and the man of feeling. Yet by 1791 it was not only Britain's internal morality that was under threat, but its physical boundaries. For the first time since the American Wars Britain would be required to defend itself on a large scale and 'if [it] could not prove morally superior to its enemies [...] then the country would expect to suffer defeat and disaster.'³⁴ More than ever Britain required a model of masculinity that could serve as a bastion of its national identity, capable of defending both its morals and borders: the soldier.

The early novels of Ann Radcliffe, amongst the most popular of the late eighteenth century, would embrace not only the conventions of the Gothic begun by Horace Walpole and Clara

²⁹ Gilbert, p101

³⁰ Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p323

³¹ Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p325

³² Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p325-6

³³ Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p326

³⁴ Gilbert, p101

Reeve but the figure of the soldier as heroic. Her first three novels – *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* in 1789, *A Sicilian Romance* in 1790 and *The Romance of the Forest* in 1791 – all feature, in some form, a soldier as their hero, seemingly responding to this desire for successful models of military masculinity. Radcliffe's significance in the creation of the early Gothic canon is well documented: the five novels published during her life time would enjoy considerable critical and financial success, with each receiving a number of editions and hosts of novelists who sought to either imitate or emulate her style. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, a Gothic romance set in medieval Scotland, Radcliffe engaged with and began to expand on the notions of feudalism, chivalry and masculinity begun by Walpole in *The Castle of Otranto* and embraced by Reeve in *The Old English Baron*: the novel not only takes clear cues from *The Castle of Otranto* but continues its exploration of models of feudalism and chivalry. Where Walpole's *Otranto* separated and contrasted feudalism and chivalry into two opposing masculinities with Manfred and Theodore, Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* offers two opposed physical structures and societies in its titular castles. The distinctions between the two castles are outlined in the novel's opening paragraph: at Athlin resides 'the still beautiful widow, and the children, of the noble Earl of Athlin, who was slain by the hand of Malcolm, a neighbouring chief, proud oppressive, revengeful;' who sits 'in the pomp of feudal greatness'³⁵ at the castle of Dunbayne. Though Athlin exists and functions within a period of feudalism, Radcliffe creates within it an analogue of an idealised eighteenth-century society. Athlin, 'as venerable from its antiquity, and from its Gothic structure; but more venerable from the virtues which it enclosed'³⁶, is implied as cultivating a harmonious and thriving community. Within the walls of the castle chivalry exists not only to soften and socialise feudalism, but to promote a culture of sensibility. Presided over by the widowed Countess Matilda, Athlin represents an ideal of polite society; the passion and tempers of the clansmen are tempered and softened by the presences of the Countess and her daughter Mary. As Cohen has observed, it was arguments such as Joseph Addison's that without women 'Men would be quite different creatures from what they are at present; their Endeavors to please the opposite Sex, polishes and refines them out of those Manners most natural to them'³⁷ that had popularised the French style of masculine refinement. These 'manners most natural' in men were generally considered to be qualities lacked by women: anger, boorishness and violent passions. These qualities separated the genders and implied manliness, yet could not be allowed to exist unchecked in a gentleman. In a subsequent essay, Cohen continues that 'the ideal of politeness as an "art of pleasing" implied that men should please women, but pleasing was not love; it was the instrument by means of which the

³⁵ Ann Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (United Kingdom: Alan Sutton Publishing Press, 1994), p1

³⁶ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p1

³⁷ Joseph Addison, cited in Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p13

gentleman was fashioned as polite.’³⁸ What is significant about Athlin is that the society is tempered by and respectful of its matriarch without the loss of masculine quality. We learn early in the novel that the ‘late Earl, who had governed with the real dignity of power, was adored by his clan’ and that ‘they were eager to revenge his injuries; but oppressed by the generous Countess, their murmurs sunk into silence.’³⁹ The clan’s willing submission to Matilda’s wishes implies the existence of ‘politeness’ without the loss of manliness and therefore proper gentlemanly behaviour.

The late Earl is succeeded by his son Osbert who, though untested, is valued with loyalty and regard equal to that of his father. The narrator describes the young Earl as follows:

Osbert was in his nineteenth year: nature had given him a mind ardent and susceptible, to which education had added refinement and expansion. The visions of genius were bright in his imagination; and his heart, unchilled by the touch of disappointment, glowed with the warmth of benevolence.⁴⁰

The education that refines Osbert is provided, we learn, primarily by his mother. Osbert ‘excelled in the martial exercises, for they were congenial to the nobility of his soul’ yet is able ‘by application to his favourite studies, to stifle the emotions which roused him to arms.’⁴¹ When the clan begins to clamour for ‘their young Lord [to] lead them on conquest and revenge’⁴² Osbert softens his military desires with poetry and nature: ‘His warm imagination directed him to poetry, and he followed where she lead. He loved to wander among the romantic scenes of the Highlands, where the wild variety of nature inspired him with all the enthusiasm of his favourite art.’⁴³ If ‘conversing with women was believed’ by eighteenth-century society ‘to enable men to acquire and develop appropriate conduct of the body and tongue, the politeness which fashioned them as gentlemen’⁴⁴, as Cohen argues, Osbert’s heroism is defined in part by his sensibility. His education in the art of feeling has not been at the cost of his natural masculine qualities, but has instead provided a means to channel and control them. Appropriately educated and refined by his mother – and, we may assume, his closeness to his sister Mary whose ‘graces of her person were inferior only to that of her mind’⁴⁵ – Osbert’s sensibility is equal to his martial passions. As JoEllen DeLucia has noted, in being ‘connected to a larger social and economic network’ Osbert ‘has time to tame his passions and refine his

³⁸ Cohen, ‘Manners’ Make the Man’ p320

³⁹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p2

⁴⁰ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p1

⁴¹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p3

⁴² Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p2

⁴³ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p3

⁴⁴ Michèle Cohen, ‘Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth Century England’, in *English Masculinities 1660-1800* ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (Essex: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 44-62, p44

⁴⁵ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p2

feelings, qualities that mark the later stages of human development.⁴⁶ Therefore, he is able to exist simultaneously as the noble military leader desired by his clansmen and the proper gentleman required by eighteenth-century ideals of both politeness and husbandry. If ‘under the genial influence of [Matilda’s] eye’ her children ‘had flourished and expanded into beauty and strength’⁴⁷, then so too must the society housed at Athlin.

The castle of Dunbayne, like Manfred to Theodore, exists in direct opposition to Athlin. ‘The edifice was built with Gothic magnificence upon a high and dangerous rock’ and ‘its lofty towers still frowned in proud sublimity, and the immensity of the pile stood a record of the ancient consequence of its possessors’⁴⁸, a description that foreshadows the Gothic sublimity of the castle Udolpho. Like Athlin, Dunbayne also houses a widow, the Baroness Louisa, and her daughter, Laura. However where Matilda and Mary occupy their rightful place in the castle’s hierarchy, valued and respected, Louisa and Laura are kept at Dunbayne as prisoners: ‘Misery yet dwelt in the castle of Dunbayne; for there the virtues were captive, while the vices reigned despotic.’⁴⁹ Though roughness and aggression were considered to be natural attributes of the male sex, they were unacceptable in the gentlemen of polite society. As Elizabeth Foyster notes, ‘when employed inappropriately or excessively, male aggression could be harmful or destructive to the social order.’⁵⁰ Unlike the young Osbert, Malcolm is ‘wholly occupied by schemes of avarice and ambition. His arrogance and boundless love of power embroiled him with neighbouring Chiefs, and engaged him in continual hostility.’⁵¹ With the shift towards husbandry ‘control of anger had become a sign of class and social distinction’⁵², Foyster argues: ‘Men should therefore be spirited, but also show that their reason was in control of the actions of their bodies by showing restraint, and by managing anger with decorum.’⁵³ Malcolm perceives the Baroness and her daughter as a threat to his own feudal power, and so separates them from the society at Dunbayne. The Baron’s ambition and avarice are allowed to exist unchecked, to almost disastrous consequence. Alleyn, the novel’s second protagonist and a noble peasant in the vein of Walpole’s Theodore, observes to Osbert the flaws of Malcolm’s rule:

Alleyn made observations on the bad policy of oppression in a chief, and produced as instance the Baron Malcom. ‘These lands’, said he, ‘are his and they are scarcely sufficient to support his wretched people, who, sinking under severe exactions, suffer to

⁴⁶ JoEllen De Lucia, ‘From the Female Gothic to a Feminist Theory of History: Ann Radcliffe and the Scottish Enlightenment’, *The Eighteenth Century*, 50, 1, (2009), 101–115, p102

⁴⁷ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p2

⁴⁸ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p8

⁴⁹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p30

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Foyster, ‘Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800’, in *English Masculinities 1660-1800* ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (Essex: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 151-166, p152

⁵¹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p50

⁵² Foyster, ‘Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800’, p162

⁵³ Foyster, ‘Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800’ p164

lie uncultivated, tracts which would otherwise yield riches to their Lord. His clan, oppressed by their burdens, threaten to rise, and do justice to themselves by force of arms. The Baron, in haughty confidence, laughs at their defiance, and is insensible to danger: for should an insurrection happen, there are other clans who would eagerly join in his destruction, and punish with the same weapon the tyrant and the murderer.⁵⁴

Alleyn's words act to reveal the extent to which Malcolm's shortcomings as chief of Dunbayne affect even the lowest levels of society, causing a dissent that will ultimately ruin him. Malcolm's failure to properly cultivate his lands and to support his people marks him as ungentlemanly by the laws of husbandry. His mistreatment of Laura and the Baroness Louisa marks him as a villain to the reader whilst simultaneously indicating a lack of sociability and refinement that would not, or indeed could not, be tolerated by eighteenth-century polite society.

As with Walpole's Manfred and Theodore, Malcolm's failings are amplified in contrast to Osbert's heroic qualities. Like Theodore, Osbert possesses a chivalric sensibility and is moved by the plight of the imprisoned women: 'His eyes were suffused with tears of pity. When he considered that so much beauty and dignity were the unresting victims of a tyrant, his heart swelled high with indignation, his prison became virtue, and the deliverer of oppressed innocence.'⁵⁵ Where Malcolm's 'soul seemed to attain its full enjoyment in the contemplation of revenge'⁵⁶, Osbert's 'soul burned with indignation against the Baron, whilst his heart gave to the sufferings of the fair mourners [Louisa and Laura] all that sympathy could ask.'⁵⁷ Unlike Malcolm, Osbert is able to properly control and curb his anger, redirecting it to more heroic (and therefore according to Foyster, more gentlemanly) passions. Just as Manfred's feudal masculinity, lacking in sensibility and chivalry, leads to his downfall, so too does Malcolm's. By focusing solely on his own violent passions and desires, failing to value the women of his household and to provide for his people, Malcolm is ultimately unable to maintain his position and power. But whilst Malcolm shares many common traits with Manfred, Radcliffe ascribes to him further damning qualities. 'Haughty and unaccustomed to control',⁵⁸ Malcolm's primary motives throughout the novel are jealousy, revenge and greed which contribute to his failings as Baron. Where Osbert easily commands loyalty and respect from his people, Malcolm's rule is oppressive and tyrannical: his lands yield little worth, his people fear but disrespect him, and his rule is maintained by paid mercenaries and cowardly schemes.

Malcolm's reliance on mercenary forces and guerrilla tactics to obtain martial superiority over Athlin marks his villainy as one of military and manly failing: unlike Osbert, Malcolm cannot rally a force in his name or succeed in fair combat. Following Osbert's escape from Dunbayne,

⁵⁴ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p4

⁵⁵ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p26

⁵⁶ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p27

⁵⁷ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p53

⁵⁸ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p1

Malcolm launches an assault on Athlin in which ‘certain of his victory, [he] congratulated himself on the success of the enterprise’⁵⁹ only to be overcome by the Earl’s forces almost immediately. Where the conflict highlights Osbert’s military genius, Malcolm’s leadership and power is entirely undone: ‘The fear of the Baron, which had principally operated on the minds of his people, was now overcome by surprise and fear of death; and on the first repulse, they deserted from the ranks in great numbers’⁶⁰. Rather than rally to Malcolm’s cries to continue the attack, the men ‘yielded to a stronger impulse than the menaces of their chief’ and ‘fled to the distant hills.’⁶¹ What defines Malcolm as villainous and Osbert as heroic in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* is not simply their behaviour and morality, but successes and failures as military leaders. Though it takes a number of its narrative cues from Walpole’s novel, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* is decidedly more militaristic than *The Castle of Otranto*, detailing a number of skirmishes and attacks as well as acts of individual bravery. Whilst the villain is condemned for his underhanded, cowardly tactics, the heroes are defined by their martial skill and selfless bravery. Whilst Radcliffe employs the same methods as Walpole to distinguish chivalry from feudalism and suggest a relevance to eighteenth-century sensibility, she also utilises them to create a new discourse about masculinity. Ian Duncan suggests that in her fiction ‘Radcliffe replenishes romance with sensibility.’⁶² However, I would argue that what occurs is in fact the reverse: that in this early fiction Radcliffe not only explores the notion that chivalry may not simply be complementary to sensibility but that it might serve as an institution to militarise and harden sentimental masculinity in the way that it once softened and tempered feudalism.

Although *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* continues the notion begun in *The Castle of Otranto* that chivalry may exist without feudalism as a mode of masculinity in keeping with sensibility, Radcliffe’s engagement with chivalry responds to other social concerns. Just as early eighteenth-century society’s ideals about manners and socialisation had aimed to produce a softer and more refined masculinity, so too had its literature. Novels such as Richardson’s *Clarissa* had encouraged an abandonment of the aggressive, hedonistic masculinity of the rakes in favour of a sentimental masculinity that aligned with the ideals of husbandry and politeness. As Peter L Thorslev has observed, the fiction of the early half of the eighteenth century had been dominated by the ‘Hero of Sensibility’, a figure whose ‘capacity for feeling, mostly for the tender emotions, gentle and tearful love, and a pervasive melancholy that ranges from autumnal

⁵⁹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p71

⁶⁰ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p72

⁶¹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p72

⁶² Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and the Transformation of the Novel* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1992), p13

musings to 'graveyard' moralising.⁶³ The Hero of Sensibility inspired a new mode of sentimental masculinity that valued feeling, domesticity and the feminine and opposed what Janet Todd identifies as 'the tyranny of ill-natured, aggressive men and noted the cruelty of old morality to women.'⁶⁴ Yet sentimentality and sensibility also problematised eighteenth-century gender roles and boundaries with its potential to 'Other' and effeminise⁶⁵ both men and women. In *Equivocal Beings* (1995) Claudia L. Johnson suggests that the presence of women 'in a sentimental public sphere is not to be confused with [their] empowerment there', rather that the rise of sentimental masculinity encroached too far into traditional female spaces and ultimately 'as Wollstonecraft, Burney and Radcliffe severally show, sentimental man, having taken over once-feminine attributes, leaves to women only two choices: either the equivocal or the hyperfeminine.'⁶⁶ A space for men to achieve politeness without Othering themselves was required. The Other, as Dale Townshend has noted, was a key aspect of Gothic fiction from its conception in the eighteenth century and a term that has been 'frequently invoked the category in order to account for and describe the revenants, monsters, freaks, aliens, wanderers, strangers and outsiders that traverse the Gothic mode.'⁶⁷ Otherness was threatening for its perceived difference, its creation of something that was not standard and therefore potentially monstrous or corrupting. To be Othered was to become different: to become that which was not the homogenous ideal of British masculinity, in this case. Furthermore, as Britain faced renewed conflict with France, concerns over the French model of fashioning gentlemanliness only increased. If in addition, as *The Soldier's Friend* implies, dissonance between society and the army had fractured British national identity, then Britain's ability to defend itself in conflict with France must have been questionable. As demonstrated earlier in this chapter, society grew increasingly concerned that if the processes of refinement was structured to erase those qualities that naturally formed masculinity, then the process of fashioning gentleman for politeness might cause them to become Other: 'If 'natural' manliness was, as many repeatedly noted, rough and brutal, ungracious and rugged, then in fashioning themselves as polite, men

⁶³ Peter L. Thorslev, *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962), p35

⁶⁴ Todd, p20

⁶⁵ This thesis uses the term 'effeminise', rather than 'feminise', to demonstrate a difference between the two concepts: as the work of both Declan Kavannah and Michele Cohen has shown, feminising did not always equal effeminacy. For the purposes of this argument, is it important to recognise the difference between the two and recognise that concerns surrounding effeminacy, as Kavannah argues, were not solely rooted into anxieties about feminising.

⁶⁶ Claudia L. Johnson, *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p12

⁶⁷ Dale Townshend, 'Gothic and the Question of Ethics: Otherness, Alterity, Violence.', in *The Gothic and Theory: An Edinburgh Companion*, ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle and Robert Miles (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019) pp 279–298, p281

became 'other' – softer and more refined, but not necessarily more manly.⁶⁸ By Othering themselves, men too risked becoming what Mary Wollstonecraft later termed 'equivocal beings'. Though eighteenth-century society demanded refined masculinity of gentlemen, it was also anxious 'that in desiring to please women' to fashion themselves as polite 'men might become *like* them.'⁶⁹ Cohen argues that 'as long as politeness was located in social spaces – i.e. where women were – it would endanger manliness,⁷⁰ suggesting that British society feared that the French model of politeness (being gained through pleasing and conversing with women) would promote effeminacy: 'if Addison and Steele's project of promoting 'a well mannered masculinity' was to be realised, what was required was the creation of a *British* politeness.'⁷¹ Cohen refers to David Fordyce's suggestion in the 1740's, that male spaces such as coffee houses and places of 'public Resort' might be the place to define and create a British politeness⁷². However if, as Elizabeth Foyster argues, a man was required to properly control his anger and his natural roughness to be considered a gentleman could a coffee shop have functioned as such a space? Arguably not.

Military success had been, since the Seven Years War, closely linked to Britain's imperial identity. Kathleen Wilson has argued that for eighteenth-century British society empire was 'conceptualized as an antidote to perceived national effeminacy and corruption, empire could be imagined as the territorial and mental space where an austere, forceful and martial manliness could restore national spirit and power.'⁷³ Considering Wilson's claim, the military – as the means by which empire was won and protected – appeared again by the late 1780s to be the force by which effeminacy could be driven from British masculinity and national identity restored. Yet, as discussed in the Introduction, national identity required the existence of a 'weft of collective narratives' in which individuals were able 'to identify themselves with the experiences that are shared through representation.'⁷⁴ As Stephen C. Behrendt has observed, 'England's military preparedness at the outbreak of war in 1793 was questionable at best... the

⁶⁸ Cohen, 'Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth Century England', p50

⁶⁹ Cohen, 'Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth Century England', p50

⁷⁰ Cohen, 'Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth Century England', p52

⁷¹ Cohen, 'Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth Century England', p52

⁷² Fordyce, a Scottish philosopher, suggested in his *Dialogues concerning Education* (1745-48) that 'after our Youth has spent some Time in the University, according to his Genius and Inclinations, he should come to Town to converse with Men of all Ranks and Characters, frequent Coffee-houses, and all Places of public Resort, where Men are to be seen and practiced.' The text suggested that socialisation and intellectual conversation with other men should be a key part of a young man's education.

<<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=xd4UAAAAQAAJ&rdid=book-xd4UAAAAQAAJ&rdot=1>>

⁷³ Wilson, p19

⁷⁴ Wilson, p19

army was in a sad shape.⁷⁵ In its discussion of the slight amendment to the private soldier's pay in 1792 (which, as mentioned previously, was in fact pay they had always been entitled to), *The Soldier's Friend* commented on the public's lack of interest somewhat scathingly: 'the pretended reduction of the foot forces is held out to the Public as an act of economy. The People, I am much afraid, are satisfied with this.'⁷⁶ The author observed that 'the enormous load of taxes [which]... ensures a favourable reception to every reduction, or pretended reduction, of public expence[sic]' coupled with 'the little knowledge that the People in general have of military affairs'⁷⁷ had led to an overwhelming lack of interest in the state of the British military. The author, in an overtly sarcastic tone, states that 'the situation of the Privates in our marching regiments of foot was really so miserable, that everyone, endued with the least compassion, must rejoice to find that *a morsel of bread* has been, by any means, added to their scanty meal.'⁷⁸ Unable or unwilling to comprehend the private soldier's situation in relation to their own, *The Soldiers Friend* speaks of a disconnect between society and the military; a fractured national identity and anxiety, that 'now it seems that [the soldiers] may be wanted'⁷⁹ there is no motivation to defend a country that has neglected them. 'The fiction of 1790s', according to Claudia L. Johnson, was 'a commanding, imaginative response to a world riven with crisis.'⁸⁰ Published in 1789, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* appeared as Britain was swept up in growing fear and concerns over the French Revolution and war with France was again on the horizon. The appearance of *The Soldier's Friend* three years later suggests that British national identity was still in a fractured state, with anxieties about the soldier's potential for violence still prevalent. With public opinion and understanding of the soldier so poor and the military in such sad shape, arguably, as Johnson observes, Britain in the years leading to the Revolutionary Wars was in a state of crisis. Society struggled to create a civilised masculinity that did not lead to effeminacy and Britain's ability to defend itself, both literally and ideologically, was questionable. It is to these anxieties *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* responds by engaging with the 'literary nationalism' begun by Hurd in *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, drawing on his defence of the Gothic and his identification of the form's Britishness and employing analogy to explore and, arguably, to offer a solution to the nation's crises.

Both Richard Hurd and Horace Walpole, in the 1760's, had recognised chivalry as an inherently masculine, militaristic code of conduct and system of values. Where Hurd had proposed the

⁷⁵ Stephen C. Behrendt, 'A Few Harmless Numbers' in *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793-1822*, ed. by Philip Shaw (United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), p15

⁷⁶ *The Soldiers Friend*, p2

⁷⁷ *The Soldiers Friend*, p4

⁷⁸ *The Soldier's Friend*, p3

⁷⁹ *The Soldier's Friend*, p20

⁸⁰ Claudia L Johnson, *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s* Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) p2

Gothic as an alternative to French neoclassicism and Walpole, in separating it from feudalism, suggested chivalry as a model of masculinity suited to eighteenth-century society's sentimental values, Radcliffe utilises the Gothic novel to present what Wilson terms 'martial manliness' as both the solution to the effeminacy of French style polite masculinity and, as a result, the means for restoring national identity. In the heroes of *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* Radcliffe utilises both Hurd's idealised chivalry and *The Castle of Otranto's* narrative on conflicting versions of masculinity to demonstrate how a sentimental masculinity, led by a chivalric code, may construct a unified society that values and is able to protect its ideologies and virtues. Athlin, as suggested previously, functions as an analogue for an idealised eighteenth-century polite society. The Countess Matilda and her daughter Mary sit at the centre of this society, valued and respected by both the young Earl Osbert and the clansman. In *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* Richard Hurd recognised that the protection of the female and the preservation of virtue was at the heart of chivalry: 'Violations of chastity being the most atrocious crime they had to charge on their enemies, they would pride themselves as in the glory of being its protectors.' Virtue, Hurd notes 'was, of all others, the fairest and strongest claim of the sex itself to such protection.'⁸¹ If we read Athlin as an analogy for an idealised society, then arguably we may also read Matilda and, in particular, Mary, as the embodiment of its values and virtue. Therefore, rather than the means by which the men of Athlin are refined, the women of the castle take on a symbolic function. As Walpole's Theodore demonstrates, the laws of chivalry complimented and indeed shared the values of sensibility, husbandry and sentimentality yet were inherently masculine. Hurd suggested that 'the proper origin of JUSTS and TURNAMENTS[sic]' existed as 'amusement of the knights, when their arms were employed on no serious occasion.'⁸² Masculinity in feudal tradition, *Letters* implies, did not require the company or influence of women to temper its natural roughness and violence but rather proper masculine employment. Though Osbert, and by extension his clansmen, is influenced by his mother as the provider of his education, his masculinity is defined not by his interaction with her but by his chivalric desire to protect her and the values that she and Mary represent. *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* embraces *Letters on Chivalry and Romance's* theory that chivalry served as the code of conduct and honour that civilised feudalism to suggest that a masculinity constructed on military principles offers a proper channel for natural masculine passions.

What both 'The Soldier' in 1763 and *The Soldier's Friend* in 1792 indicate is that society's distrust (which arguably bordered upon fear) of the soldier arose primarily from his capacity for violence. As noted in Chapter One, the poverty in which many private soldiers found themselves after the Seven Years War saw a number turn to criminality and vagrancy to support

⁸¹ Hurd, p12

⁸² Hurd, p7

themselves. The decommissioned soldier was perceived as a threat to the safety of polite society for the very reasons they had been championed as their defender during wartime: he had been trained for violence. As Walpole observed in his letter to Dalrymple, those who had been heroes during the Seven Years War had become highwayman. The soldier's violence, without the guidance of a commanding officer or the moral code of the army, had become increasingly troubling as more soldiers became disillusioned with the government's treatment of them. Britain, as Tim Fulford has noted, had historically been fearful of a standing army: the army existed for society but, many felt, should remain firmly outside of it to avoid the risk of social disruption.⁸³ The appearance of the soldier after 1763, starving in his tattered red coat (as depicted in 'The Soldier') was an unwelcome reminder of how military victories were won and, after the American Wars of Independence, how they were lost. Britain struggled to reconcile the realities of military violence with the perception of itself as a civilised, enlightened empire; a reality that became more fraught as war became a concern again after 1789. The depiction of chivalric violence in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, clearly defined against the immoral violence of Malcolm, arguably responds to these growing tensions. In Osbert, Alleyne, and the clansmen of Athlin, Radcliffe presents a martial masculinity that blended the values of chivalry with the ideals of sensibility. Osbert pursues his campaign against Malcolm not to fulfil his own desire for vengeance, but in the name of justice: though conscious of the injustice of Malcolm's attack on the old Earl, Osbert is only spurred to arms after witnessing the oppression and wretchedness inflicted by the Baron on his people. After he is captured by Malcolm after the first skirmish, Osbert makes clear the difference in their moral codes:

'Weak tyrant,' returned Osbert, his countenance impressed with the firm dignity of virtue, 'to insult the vanquished, is congenial to the cruel meanness of the murderer; nor do I expect, that the man who slew the father will spare the son; but know, that the son is nerved against your wrath, and welcomes all that your fears or your cruelty can impose.'⁸⁴

Unlike Malcolm, who commits violence for personal gain, Osbert's violence is characterised as heroic as it serves a purpose greater than his own. For Osbert, his martial pursuits – though inspired by his desire for revenge against his father's murder – are inspired by filial duty and honour. Unlike Malcom – who indulges in his violent passions – the young Earl is able to 'stifle the emotions which roused him to arms'⁸⁵ through nature and art, only engaging in violence when needed. Radcliffe's language during the scene of the first skirmish, in which Athlin's forces find themselves surrounded, recalls the pro-war literature of the Seven Years War: 'Surprised,

⁸³ Tim Fulford, 'Sighing for a Soldier: Jane Austen and Military Pride and Prejudice' in *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 57.2, (2002), 153–178, p163

⁸⁴ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p12

⁸⁵ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p3

but not daunted, the Earl rushed forward sword in hand, and fought with a desperate valour.’⁸⁶ By defining Osbert’s violence in the terms of valour, recalling the depiction of the soldier in texts such as *The Soldier’s Catechism*, the novel frames it as noble and chivalric. By fighting for the oppressed people of Dunbayne, on behalf of his sister, or for the imprisoned Louisa and Laura, Osbert’s violence serves his chivalric code of honour rather than his own desires, thus becoming an extension of his heroic identity. This ‘valour’ in Osbert’s pursuit of combat arguably rehabilitates the soldier by re-ascribing chivalry as the code within which he performs violence, allowing him to again be considered heroic. In the depiction of Athlin as a society that values both chivalry and sensibility, therefore, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* presents a model of masculinity suited to eighteenth-century ideals that refined rather than eradicated natural manly qualities.

In the final paragraph of the pamphlet, the author of *The Soldier’s Friend* speaks directly to the private soldier: ‘I would have you consider the nature of your situation, I would have you know that you are not the servant of *one man* only; a British soldier never can be that. You are a servant of the whole nation, of your countrymen.’⁸⁷ The declaration of *The Soldier’s Friend* that the British soldier is the servant of the nation, not the ‘Kings, Queens or Princes’ who rule him, indicates the need for a united nation in the face of conflict. In her reclamation of the soldier as a hero, I would argue that Radcliffe’s fiction participates in a broader movement which sought to restore the soldier to public favour in the wake of The Seven Years War and the American War of Independence. Yet, considering Kathleen Wilson’s argument that national identity required society ‘to identify themselves with the experiences that are shared through representation’, arguably Britain needed not simply to rediscover its respect for the soldier, but to understand and relate to him. In addition to Osbert, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* provides us with a second hero: Alleyn. Though later revealed as the true heir to Dunbayne, the novel introduces Alleyn as a Highland peasant. Upon their meeting, Osbert is struck by ‘a dignity of thought and a course of sentiment similar to his own’⁸⁸ in Alleyn, who in turn on realising ‘he beheld the son of the Lord whom he had been taught to love... sunk at his feet and embraced his knees with romantic ardour.’⁸⁹ *The Soldier’s Friend* reveals a discord not only between the army and society, but increasingly between the private soldier and the officer: a discord that contradicts the sentiments of Henry Seymour Conway’s perception of the officer’s duties in the early 1760s. In its advice to the private soldier, *The Private Soldier’s and the Militia Man’s Friend* declares that ‘You must pay the strictest attention to the order of your superiors, you are not to consider who

⁸⁶ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p9

⁸⁷ *The Soldier’s Friend*, p21

⁸⁸ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p4

⁸⁹ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p4

gives the order, but that order is given; whether they come from the mouth of a General or Corporal, they are orders, and you must obey them.’⁹⁰ The author of *The Soldier’s Friend* claims that the reduction of the private soldier’s pay was, at least in part, the fault of the gentlemen who served as their officers, who so valued appearance that they obliged the soldier to ‘supply himself with brushes, combs, powder bag, puff and all the nonsensical apparatus of foppery.’⁹¹ *The Private Soldier and Militia Man’s Friend*, though unintentionally, confirms this; Trenchard details the number of ‘arms and accoutrements’ the soldier was required to own and maintain, stating that ‘Possibly you may think I have dwelt too long on the head of dress; but I will once more assure you that cleanliness, added to sobriety and obedience to your superiors, is the basis of your future happiness as soldier.’⁹² *The Soldier’s Friend*, like ‘The Soldier’ thirty years earlier, suggests a lack of shared values, experience and understanding between officers and their men that led to a disharmony within the army that must be reconciled. Alleyn’s function within the analogy of *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* is arguably as the private soldier to Osbert’s officer and, in turn, the revelation of his nobility can be read as an attempt at rehabilitation for the private soldier. Alleyn, moved by ‘the sad story [of the old Earl] that had been impressed upon his heart since the early days of his childhood’⁹³, rallies to Osbert’s campaign for justice against Malcolm with considerable vigour. Though offered no financial or social reward, Alleyn readily volunteers his service to the young Earl:

In the meantime, Alleyn was strenuous in exciting his friends to the cause, and so successful in his undertaking, as to have collected, in a few days, a number of no inconsiderable consequence. To the warm enthusiasm of virtue, was now added a new motive of exertion. It was no longer simply an attachment to the cause of justice, which roused him to action; the pride of distinguishing himself in the eyes of his mistress, and of deserving her esteem by his zealous services, gave combined force to the first impulse of benevolence.⁹⁴

As a clansman Alleyn values Osbert’s cause as his own, but his martial passions are roused further by his admiration of Mary. Though Alleyn recognises that the difference in their social stations cannot permit him to court her, his desire to be valued by her ‘added a new motive of exertion.’ If Mary represents Athlin’s values and virtues, then in Alleyn’s chivalric desire to fight in her honour *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* demonstrates the need for the lower ranks of the military to believe in the justness of their cause but to desire (and subsequently be rewarded) recognition from the society it fights to defend. In the initial conflict with Malcolm’s forces at Dunbayne ‘the soul of Alleyn seemed to acquire new vigour’ as he fights alongside Osbert: ‘he fought like a man panting for honour and certain of victory; wherever he rushed,

⁹⁰ *The Private Soldier’s and the Militia Man’s Friend*, p5

⁹¹ *The Soldiers Friend*, p15

⁹² *The Private Soldier’s and the Militia Man’s Friend*, p31

⁹³ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p4

⁹⁴ Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p7

conquest flew before him.’⁹⁵ ‘The Soldier’ implies that the Seven Years War had significantly shaken the faith of the private soldier in their commanding officers, the ruling class and their national cause. Were Britain to be successful in any renewed conflict with France, a restoration of faith would be required. In Alleyn’s loyalty to Osbert and his passion for Athlin’s cause, I would argue that Radcliffe demonstrates not only the need for the private soldier to believe in the cause he fights for but also for a strong relationship between the soldier and his officer. Osbert both recognises the loyalty and skill of Alleyn and the clansman, valuing their lives as equal (if not greater) than his own. Alleyn, meanwhile, gains the admiration of Mary, rallies Osbert’s forces and is ultimately crucial in the triumph over Malcolm.

In its conclusion, *The Castles of the Athlin and Dunbayne* echoes *The Castle of Otranto*: the feudal tyrant is overthrown, and the true heir is restored to his rightful seat and title. Not only is the virtue of Athlin protected, it is (through the marriage of Mary to Alleyn/Phillip) also installed at Dunbayne. *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* offers a template for the creation of a martial manliness founded in the values of chivalry, offering the army as the solution to society’s concerns about effeminacy. Consequently, in its endorsement of military masculinity the novel recasts the soldier as a literary hero and, in its creation of an idealised society united behind its military, *Athlin and Dunbayne* encourages a re-evaluation of the British military in response to the growing disruption in Europe and the threat of war. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, the Gothic novel is offered as a unifier between the military and the British public: through the Gothic novel, the act of readership provided a method by which that gap could be closed. Though the soldier’s military code made him the ideal candidate for an eighteenth-century reclamation of chivalry, texts such as *The Soldier’s Friend* demonstrate that even by 1791 a discord existed between society and the military. For the soldier to take his place as the defender of the nation, the wounds of the Seven Years War and the American Wars of Independence would need to be healed. Arguably fiction, and in particular the Gothic novel, offered the necessary tools to recapture the national fervour of the 1759 and present the soldier as a heroic, masculine ideal. According to Maggie Kilgour, the Gothic ‘was seen as encouraging a particularly intimate and insidious relationship between text and reader, by making the reader identify with what he or she had read.’⁹⁶ ‘In general,’ Kilgour argues, ‘the Gothic has been associated with a rebellion against a constraining neoclassical aesthetic ideal of order and unity, in order to recover a suppressed primitive and barbaric imaginative freedom.’⁹⁷ If, as previously suggested, neoclassicism was increasingly regarded by eighteenth century Britain as a French model, then the ‘primitive and barbaric’ ideal the Gothic sought to reclaim was a British national

⁹⁵Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p9

⁹⁶ Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p6

⁹⁷ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, p3

identity rooted solely in its past, perceived as separated from French influence. The Gothic redefined and rewrote Britain's 'primitive' past as its ancient glory, presenting values of the age of chivalry and the so called Gothic 'constitution' as the tools by which such freedom could be maintained and therefore positioning French neoclassical values as the opposition, as 'barbaric'. Kilgour suggests that the Gothic focused 'on recovering a *native* English literary tradition' and that 'the gothic revival thus played an important part in the development of both political and literary nationalism.'⁹⁸ 'Gothic,' Kilgour continues, 'that is, Anglo-Saxon, political freedom is contrasted with classical (especially Roman, and later French neoclassical) tyranny to create a myth of continuous British inheritance of freedom.'⁹⁹ Within the Gothic, then, lay both the method and the means to defend Britain, and its values, from both literal and ideological invasion.

This redefining of British national identity via the Gothic mode is continued in Ann Radcliffe's second novel, *A Sicilian Romance*, which appeared anonymously in 1790, the year after *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. The novel transplanted Radcliffe's Gothic setting from the ancient Scotland of *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* to Europe, where it would stay until her final work, the posthumously published novel *Gaston de Blondville*. Like *Castles*, *A Sicilian Romance* is largely a family drama: the Mazzinis are a wealthy, aristocratic family, who reside in the splendour of the hereditary castle. The novel's heroines, Emilia and Julia, are largely distant from their father the Marquis di Mazzini and his second wife Maria di Vellorno, and are instead dedicated to the care of the friend of their presumed dead mother, Madame de Menon. The novel begins with the return of their brother, Ferdinand, from his education and follows the siblings as they attempt to resist the designs of their father and step-mother, who attempt to force Julia to marry the Duke de Luovo rather than her beloved Hippolitus. As the events of the novel unfold, so too do the Mazzini family secrets. Fleeing her father through the abandoned chambers and corridors of the castle, Julia discovers that their mother is not dead but has been imprisoned by their father beneath the castle for a number of years. Whilst the title aligns it with what Richard Hurd deemed the 'Gothic romances' of ages past, Radcliffe places *A Sicilian Romance* firmly in the new conventions of Gothic novels by presenting the text as an ancient tale, passed down through generations of the Mazzini family to a monk of an unnamed order who leaves a record in the monastery library. The narrative itself is third hand: it belongs to the unnamed 'editor', whose 'sentiments pleased' the order's Superior and so 'was permitted to take abstracts of the history before me, which, with some further particulars obtained in conversation with the abate, I have arranged in the following pages.'¹⁰⁰ This meta-textuality is

⁹⁸ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, p13

⁹⁹ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, p14

¹⁰⁰ Ann Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) p2

itself a familiar Gothic convention, one begun by Walpole in presenting *The Castle of Otranto* as a translation of an ancient text also recorded by a monk. *A Sicilian Romance* opens not with an account of the Mazzini home as it was for the novel's heroines, but how the text's anonymous editor finds it some decades later:

On the northern shore of Sicily are still to be seen the magnificent remains of a castle, which formerly belonged to the noble house of Mazzini. It stands in the centre of a small bay, and upon a gentle acclivity, which, on one side, slopes towards the sea, and on the other rises into an eminence crowned by dark woods. The situation is admirably beautiful and picturesque, and the ruins have an air of ancient grandeur, which, contrasted with the present solitude of the scene, impresses the traveller with awe and curiosity.¹⁰¹

The sublimity of the Mazzini household – now a Gothic ruin – is noted by the ‘editor’, whose ‘heart swelled with reflection’ and who comments that ‘Thus [...] shall the present generation – he who now swims in pleasure, alike pass away and be forgotten.’¹⁰² The editor’s emotional reaction to the ancient grandeur of the Mazzini castle echoes those of the Gothic heroes and heroines, and signifies to the reader a suitable narrator able to capture and express the necessary sentiment. Yet it also reinforces the Gothic as an analogy, a form of expression by which the concerns and anxieties of the present can be explored through the past. The editor, gazing upon the castle’s ruins, ‘recurred, by a natural association of ideas, to the times when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour [...] when they resounded with the voices of those whom death had long since swept from the earth.’¹⁰³ The reverie is interrupted by the appearance of a friar who, upon noticing the editor’s emotional response, ‘shook his head and pointed to the ruin. ‘These walls,’ said he, ‘were once the seat of luxury and vice. They exhibited a singular instance of the retribution of Heaven, and were from that period forsaken, and abandoned to decay.’¹⁰⁴ Like Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* and Reeve’s *The Old English Baron*, *A Sicilian Romance* is presented as the reclamation of a forgotten tale, the lost words of a former age providing a space in which the anxieties of the present may be examined. However in its preface *A Sicilian Romance* looks forwards, as well as back, employing the past not only as an allegory but as a reminder that actions have lasting consequence. The friar’s words are recalled in the closing pages of the novel: ‘From this period the castle Mazzini, which had been the theatre of a dreadful catastrophe; and whose scene would have revived in the minds of the chief personages connected with it, painful and shocking reflections – was abandoned.’¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p1

¹⁰² Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p1

¹⁰³ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p1

¹⁰⁴ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p1

¹⁰⁵ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p198

The Gothic novel's main concern, Kilgour suggests, 'is not to depict character but to create a feeling or effect in its readers by placing them in a state of thrilling suspense and uncertainty.'¹⁰⁶ By revealing the ultimate fate of the castle Mazzini in its preface, *A Sicilian Romance* engages the reader instantly with the promise of a 'thrilling' tale. It is the nameless editor that controls the narrative. Where in the preface the editor speaks in the first person, at the novel's close they employ the collective 'we':

Here the manuscript annals conclude. In reviewing this story, we perceive a singular and striking instance of moral retribution. We learn, also, that those who do only THAT WHICH IS RIGHT, endure nothing in misfortune but a trial of their virtue, and from trials well endured derive the surest claim to the protection of heaven.¹⁰⁷

Acting as the compiler, rather than the originator of the narrative, the existence of the editor in the text frames the act of reading as a shared experience that joins them with the reader. In consuming the narrative, readers are aligned with both the characters and with one another, and the novel's overarching moral message is one experienced and earned via this shared connection. Arguably in this structuring of *A Sicilian Romance* Radcliffe not only creates a space in which mutual understanding can be created amongst readers, but also outlines the importance of preserving the connection between past and present and immortalising those long dead voices: for the present to acknowledge the past, as a means of protecting the future.

Although, unlike its predecessor, *A Sicilian Romance* features no large scale martial action, the figure of the soldier is still an important presence within the novel. Much like the deceased Earl of Athlin, the person and fate of Madam de Menon's brother, Orlando, figures crucially in the situation and events of *A Sicilian Romance*. In the early pages of the novel Madam de Menon recounts to Julia and Emilia Mazzini the tale of her shared history with Louisa de Bernini, their mother whom they presume to be dead. Madam de Menon recalls how she and her brother came to be under the care of their grandfather, a distant relative, and that in adulthood her brother was sent by the Count de Bernini 'with fatherly yet manly tenderness'¹⁰⁸ to join the Sicilian regiment. Though his absence is sorely felt by the household, in particular by Louisa, the positive influence of his profession upon his person is evident upon his return:

We had the pleasure to hear from time to time that he was well: and though his own modesty threw a veil over his conduct, we could collect from other accounts that he had performed with great bravery. At length, the time of his return approached, and the enlivened spirits of Louisa declared the influence he retained in her heart. He returned, bearing public testimony of his valour in the honours which has been conferred upon him. He was received with universal joy; the count welcomed him with the pride and fondness of a father, and the villa became again the seat of happiness. His person and manners were much improved; the elegant beauty of the youth was now exchanged for

¹⁰⁶ Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, p6

¹⁰⁷ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

¹⁰⁸ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p29

the graceful dignity of manhood, and some knowledge of the world was added to that of the sciences.¹⁰⁹

Like the red coats of 'Honest Dan' and 'A Soldier for me', in donning the mantle of a soldier Orlando is vastly improved in the eyes of his surrogate father, his sister, and Louisa, the object of his affections. Orlando's transformation also recalls the improvements in Charles Dyer Smith, regretfully acknowledged in his mother's letters after his injury, indicating that the soldier's education was one that refined pleasing manly traits. Orlando, like Smith and the young men of the pamphlets, achieves maturity in his military training, equating his entrance into the military with his transition from boy to man.

As discussed previously, violence and aggression were perceived as inherent aspects of masculinity. As Elizabeth Foyster has noted 'models of male aggression from which boys could learn were plentiful'¹¹⁰ in eighteenth-century Britain, but not always positive: 'when employed inappropriately or excessively, male aggression could be harmful and destructive to the social order.'¹¹¹ As Foyster identifies, contemporary prescriptive and conduct literature suggested a harshness in the education of boys as the proper method for channelling natural masculine aggression and constructing proper, functional masculinity. As anger was believed to be 'a natural passion' in men, Foyster suggests that 'eradication of all anger' was considered impossible but that 'by teaching men to put their superior reason to good use, men could learn to exert mental control over their bodies, releasing anger and behaving aggressively only in appropriate circumstances.'¹¹² Where *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* employed the Gothic allegory to suggest the military and martial activity as the method by which the values of sensibility could be positively aligned with masculinity via chivalry, *A Sicilian Romance* presents the notion explicitly. From Madam de Menon's brief history, we may conclude that for Orlando suffering as a means of 'training [him] to endure physical hardships'¹¹³ was not a fundamental part of his boyhood. Instead it is his experiences and identity as a soldier that shapes Orlando's masculinity, transforming 'the beauty of youth for the graceful dignity of manhood.'¹¹⁴ Orlando is joined in his return home by the chevalier de Menon, 'a young Frenchman, a brother officer, who had rescued him from imminent danger.'¹¹⁵ A second son of a 'French gentleman of large estates' whose 'manners were singularly pleasing, and [whose] understanding was cultivated and refined' is welcomed openly into the household with 'gratitude and distinction'¹¹⁶ thanks

¹⁰⁹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p30

¹¹⁰ Foyster, 'Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800', p151

¹¹¹ Foyster, 'Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800', p151

¹¹² Foyster, 'Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800', p159

¹¹³ Foyster, 'Boys will be Boys? Manhood and Aggression, 1660-1800', p153

¹¹⁴ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p30

¹¹⁵ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p31

¹¹⁶ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p31

both to his manner and his heroic deeds. Madame de Menon acknowledges that 'gratitude for the life he had preserved, was perhaps the groundwork of an esteem which soon increased into the most affectionate love'¹¹⁷, leading to their marriage. Though eventually both men are called back to service, preventing any union between Louisa and Orlando and leading ultimately to tragedy for all parties (as is required by the novel's plot) the positive portrayal of the soldier remains intact. Despite a disagreement between Orlando and de Menon that results in a duel and the death of the former, Radcliffe continues to depict the chevalier as a man of honour and noble sentiment. Madame de Menon's resentment over her brother's death 'was done away, when [she] observed his pale and altered countenance, and perceived the melancholy which preyed upon his heart' and the chevalier is 'devoured by unavailing grief and remorse.'¹¹⁸ Racked by guilt, de Menon takes no pleasure in his own violence and ultimately, 'weary of existence, rushed into the head of battle, and there obtained an honourable death.'¹¹⁹ The chevalier's remorse and intensity of feeling not only reiterates the soldier's ability to be both a man of action and feeling, but contests the social fear concerning the soldier's capacity for violence. De Menon's death in battle allows him to maintain both his honour and his masculinity, as he is able to channel his emotions into a selfless sacrifice in the name of his adopted country.

However, Orlando and de Menon are not the only soldiers within *A Sicilian Romance*. Upon restoring his mother, ensuring the safety of his sisters, and acquiring his rightful title as the sixth Marquis, Ferdinand de Mazzini enters into military service: 'Ferdinand soon after accepted a command in the Neapolitan army; and amidst the many heroes of that warlike age, distinguished himself for his valour and his ability.'¹²⁰ Like the young Earl Osbert of *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, 'the occupations of war engaged his mind, while his heart was solicitous in promoting the happiness of his family.'¹²¹ Unlike Orlando and de Menon, both gentlemen without independent title or fortune, Ferdinand does not require a profession to support himself. As a man of land and title, sanctioned by the King upon the family's arrival in Naples, Ferdinand is arguably already in possession of the means necessary to maintain his family's happiness. Yet the 'happy ending' Radcliffe ascribes him is as a soldier. When the novel begins Ferdinand is on the border between boyhood and adulthood, observed by Julia as 'tall and majestic; he had a very noble and spirited carriage; and his countenance expressed at once sweetness and dignity.'¹²² Upon learning of the strange occurrences within the castle, Ferdinand reacts with boyish glee as 'his imagination seized with avidity each appearance of mystery, and

¹¹⁷ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p31

¹¹⁸ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p33

¹¹⁹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p33

¹²⁰ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

¹²¹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

¹²² Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p16

inspired him with an irresistible desire to penetrate the secrets of this desolate part of the fabric.¹²³ Despite being raised largely apart – the sisters are unable to identify Ferdinand when he initially returns to the castle – Ferdinand embodies the ideals of husbandry by displaying proper brotherly affection to Emilia and Julia, taking on the role of Julia’s protector after the Marquis engages her to the Duke de Luovo. Risking both his inheritance and his life, Ferdinand valiantly faces the many dangers encountered by the siblings over the course of the novel, placing his sisters’ lives above his own: ‘Julia trembled with terror, and Ferdinand drew his sword, determined to protect her to the last.’¹²⁴ In both his actions and his person, Ferdinand serves as the antithesis of his father, ‘a man of voluptuous and imperious character’ and an ‘arrogant and impetuous’¹²⁵ temper ‘whose heart was dead to paternal tenderness.’¹²⁶ Ferdinand recognises that his duty to his sisters, who cannot protect themselves, must overrule his duty to his father. In his defence of Julia as she becomes a victim of patriarchal tyranny, Ferdinand embodies and exemplifies the eighteenth-century masculine ideals of both husbandry and sensibility, as well as those of chivalry: he is both a man of feeling and a man of action.

Michèle Cohen has argued that the publication of *Letters on Romance and Chivalry* ‘marked a shift in attitude to chivalry’ that ‘contributed to the end of politeness as an ideal for the fashioning of gentlemanliness.’¹²⁷ Ferdinand de Mazzini begins the novel as a youth on the verge of majority, genteel and sensible but inexperienced and untested. It is the trials and challenges faced during the events of *A Sicilian Romance* that shape his identity and deliver him into adulthood. In the wake of Julia’s unwanted betrothal to the Duke, Ferdinand assumes the patriarchal responsibilities that his father has neglected, encouraging his sister’s flight and offering his blessing to Hippolitus as her suitor:

Ferdinand seconded the proposal of the count ‘It is unnecessary, my sister,’ said he, ‘to point out the misery which awaits you here. I love you too well tamely to suffer you to be sacrificed to ambition, and to a passion still more hateful. I now glory in calling Hippolitus my friend – let me ere long receive him as a brother. I can give no stronger testimony of my esteem for his character, than in the wish I now express. Believe me he has a heart worthy of acceptance – a heart noble and expansive as your own.’¹²⁸

With no romantic interest or personal gain at stake, the physical and emotional well-being of Julia and Emilia is Ferdinand’s sole motivation throughout the novel. Ferdinand’s ready assumption of the role as protector and his chivalric behaviour towards his sisters define his

¹²³ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p37

¹²⁴ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p149

¹²⁵ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p3

¹²⁶ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p3

¹²⁷ Cohen ‘Manners Make the Man’, p314

¹²⁸ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p61

identity to the reader, positioning him as the text's hero. His bravery and willingness to sacrifice himself for his sister mark him as heroic, and the events of the novel provide the foundations for his transition from boy to man. Following the deaths of the Marquis and Maria de Vellorno, Ferdinand continues his quest to secure the safety of his mother and sisters with 'manly fortitude'¹²⁹ against 'a heavy rain, and the wind, which howled mournfully among the rocks.'¹³⁰ Unable to find shelter 'his attendants offered him their cloaks, but he refused to expose a servant to the hardship he would not himself endure.'¹³¹ In his respectful treatment of his servants and prioritisation of the well-being of his family above his own, Ferdinand proves himself worthy of his title and household. Ferdinand's qualities are refined and matured by his experiences which, as they promote bravery and self-sacrifice, can be read as allegory for the army: as Smith's comments regarding her son after enlistment suggest and as Catriona Kennedy has demonstrated, the regimental space was perceived as one in which masculinity could be enhanced by military training fraternity. Ferdinand's maturity and chivalric identity are fashioned by the trials he has faced, reflecting the construction of the soldier's heroic identity through his military education and experiences at war. Ferdinand's moral code and his unwillingness to force his servants to suffer conditions he would not face himself recall the military correspondence of Henry Seymour Conway: Conway, like Ferdinand, recognised that to be respected by his men and lead them well he would need to be conscious of their difficulties and mitigate them where possible. With Ferdinand, then, Radcliffe further develops the heroic image of the soldier she had begun in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. The ranks of the British military were predominantly populated by men who required a wage, be they second sons of noble families like the Chevalier de Menon, gentlemen of no fortune such as Orlando or the common men seeking a steady living the poet speaks of in 'The Soldier'. To properly serve as a replacement for the French methods of masculine refinement and to avoid repeating the losses of the American Wars, the military would need soldiers that fought for more than money. Though he does not require a profession, 'the occupations of war engaged his mind'¹³² and provide Ferdinand with a channel for his masculine passions that allows him to distinguish himself within society and ultimately ensure the continued safety of his family. Ferdinand becomes a soldier not for wealth but because it is a suitable outlet for his masculine passions, worthy of his superior qualities and, as the novel's final lines dictate, because it is 'that which is right.'¹³³

¹²⁹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p193

¹³⁰ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p196

¹³¹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p196

¹³² Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

¹³³ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

In these early Gothic novels, written contemporaneously with the unfolding events of the French Revolution, Radcliffe employs the Gothic novel to create an analogy for contemporary eighteenth-century anxieties surrounding masculinity and national identity. In the Radcliffean Gothic, masculinity might be fashioned as both sensible and heroic through the application of chivalry. Chivalry, as the supposed natural inheritance of the British, operates as a model of masculine education separate from the French manner of refinement through socialisation. An adherence to chivalry, as a code of conduct that valued female virtue and held the defence of female honour at its very core, could fashion a gentleman that was polite without being Other. Descended from a culture of knighthood, chivalry's inherent militarism suggested that the martial training and military discipline of the army might place it as the space in which British masculinity could be successfully produced. In the following chapter, I will explore how ideas of excess shaped the concept of effeminacy and how Radcliffe continued to explore masculinity and concepts of chivalry and heroism as the threat of war escalated in *The Romance of the Forest*.

Chapter Three

Effeminacy, chivalry and heroism: the rise and fall of the soldier in *The Romance of the Forest* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

'I am no traitor,' said Theodore, with a firm voice, and the dignity of conscious worth, 'but a defender of innocence, of one whom the treacherous Marquis de Montalt would destroy.'

Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*¹

This chapter continues the discussion of Radcliffe's employment of chivalry in narratives of military heroism, to demonstrate how *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) can be read as a rejection of both foppishness and manly excess. The novel's hero, Theodore, is arguably the culmination of Radcliffe's rehabilitation of the soldier: a hero who is both brave and sensitive, whose military code is informed by his sensibility and sense of justice rather than by his commanding officer. This chapter outlines the significance of *The Romance of the Forest's* construction of military masculinity as an idealised mode of fashioning during a period of increasing turmoil between the European monarchies and the French Revolutionaries, as war on the continent became inevitable. The outbreak of the War of the First Coalition, however, complicated and disrupted this imagining of the soldier as a hero capable of both martial brilliance and sensibility: as demonstrated by *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* (1794) response to the violent realities of war time.

By the summer of 1791, tensions in Europe were high: Louis XVI and his family had attempted to flee to Varennes and had been forcibly returned to Paris, whilst the political centre struggled to maintain its control of the Revolution. In July, after the National Assembly had decreed that the King would remain head of state under a constitutional monarchy 'crowds petitioning for a republic were fired on by National Guards in the Champs de Mars'² (known as the Champ de Mars Massacre) under the orders of the Marquis de Lafayette. Louis XVI's forced return, according to Nigel Aston, was perceived as 'a humiliating insult to monarchist dignity'³ and in August Frederick William II of Prussia and Emperor Leopold II – the brother of Louis XVI's queen, Marie Antoinette – issued the Declaration of Pillnitz. Though not actively a declaration of war, the Declaration of Pillnitz 'stated bluntly that the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Prussia, having listened to the representation of Louis XVI's brothers, regarded the current situation of

¹ Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p195

² Nigel Aston, *The French Revolution, 1789-1804: Authority, Liberty and the Search for Stability*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p28

³ Aston, p28

the Kings of France to be a matter of common interest to all sovereigns of Europe.⁴ Though considered by many critics to be an ‘empty gesture’⁵, as a number of monarchs were still hesitant to take up arms against the Revolutionaries and the ‘expectation that [Frederick II and Leopold II] would have to turn words to actions was low’⁶, the Declaration was regarded by the Revolutionaries as declaration of war. With the announcement that Louis XVI would remain King, despite cries for the monarchy to be completely abandoned in favour of a Republic, the purpose of the Revolution had become fractured. As Aston notes ‘ambitious and frustrated men began to look outside France.’⁷ It had been two years since the storming of the Bastille, and for many in France war seemed to be the ideal tool by which they might ‘confirm their personal supremacy, dislodge their opponents and either halt the Revolution entirely or deflect it into new courses.’⁸

As Europe stood poised on the edge of war, Britain remained wary of the prospect of conflict with Revolutionary France. British opinions on the Revolution still continued to be split; the publication of the first part of Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man* in March of 1791, which rejected the sentiments and fears of Burke’s *Reflections* and celebrated the egalitarian principles of the Revolution, had been widely discussed and well received. Clive Emsley argues that to many in British society ‘it appeared the French were now taking steps to reject absolutism and to establish both the kind of constitutional monarchy and the forms of personal “liberty” which freeborn Englishmen had boasted as their birthright since the exile of the Stuart dynasty.’⁹ To its opponents, however, the Revolution’s potential for a complete rejection of monarchy was dangerous. Amongst more conservative and loyalist leaning members of society, the Revolution was viewed as a folly that would lead to vice, immorality and social turmoil. In Anglican loyalist circles and amongst religious zealots, meanwhile, grew the notion ‘that the French Revolution was an awful warning of divine punishments to come’¹⁰ as evidenced in sermons and pamphlets distributed after 1789¹¹. Yet conflicting opinions on the Revolution and its potential to launch Europe into new, large scale conflict were not the only problems that France currently presented to Britain.

⁴ TCW. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (Harlow: Longman, 1987), p86

⁵ Blanning, p87

⁶ Blanning, p87

⁷ Aston. P29

⁸ Aston, p29

⁹ Clive Emsley, *Britain and the French Revolution*, (New York: Longman, 2000), p9

¹⁰ Aston, p86

¹¹ An anonymous pamphlet in 1790, *The first fruits of the French Revolution*, warned that Revolution had already produced ‘miserable consequences’ on ‘the *morals* of the inhabitants of that great kingdom. These sentiments grew as time passed, evidenced notably in the pamphlets of J Bicheno, *A Sign of the Times* (1794) and *A Word in Season* (1795), which saw the French Revolution and the resulting wars an apocalyptic sign.

The crisis surrounding masculinity still prevailed, exacerbated by the losses of the American Wars of Independence. Aristocratic and gentlemanly masculinity was modelled on and moulded by French styles of politeness and refinement, which for decades now many had feared caused a 'loss of traditional male qualities: physical health, hardiness, courage, rational thought, sense, public duty and political and financial independence.'¹² As discussed in Chapter Two, the growing anxieties about French corruption and the potential for French political dominance in Europe continued to complicate the fashioning of British masculinity. Effeminacy amongst the men of the upper classes remained a pressing concern, one that Philip Carter has suggested is evident in the ongoing prevalence of the fop as a figure of satire on the British stage. Carter argues that 'the variety of styles of normative and deviant manhood' the fop embodied suggests the 'mutability'¹³ of his character. The fop, 'in whom effeminacy and French manners are indissolubly linked'¹⁴, was at the heart of anxieties about the ineffectiveness of genteel British masculinity. The military, too, was subject to such apprehensions: in its criticisms of the private soldier's treatment *The Soldier's Friend* placed particular blame on the officer class for their failure to properly care and provide for the men in their command. The officers, the author claims, 'have not been content with their men dressing according to their rank and ability; they have obliged them to purchase articles of dress unheard of in former Armies, all of them far too expensive, and most of them totally useless.'¹⁵ This, according to the author, had served 'to answer the very worst of ends: to make a Soldier a fop, to deform him, to render his person as much unlike anything as possible.'¹⁶ The accusations of *The Soldier's Friend* suggest that the weaknesses of the 'Gentleman of the Army', whose preference for society, gambling and fashion had made them 'senseless, idle, hearty'¹⁷ men, had in turn corrupted the masculinity of the private soldiers of their regiments. These failings in the officer class, which echo the concerns of Henry Seymour Conway in his military correspondence during the Seven Years War and his criticisms of Beckwith, indicate the notion that British masculinity's inability to resist the influence of French manners had subsequently affected its ability to withstand its military force: France's support of the colonies in the American Wars of Independence had been a crucial factor in Britain's defeat, one that the nation had not forgotten by 1791. However the potential for a soldier to be a fop – or at least, to be made foppish – indicates a stark difference between the overt, easily identifiable ridiculousness of the theatrical fop and the reality of the fop in society. What this difference in the distance between the imagined model effeminate

¹² Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800*, (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), p131

¹³ Carter, p139

¹⁴ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p37

¹⁵ *The Soldier's Friend*, p12

¹⁶ *The Soldier's Friend*, p12

¹⁷ *The Soldier's Friend*, p15

masculinity and the reality implies is that part of the anxiety concerning the fop lay in the difficulty of distinguishing him from the gentleman.

It is this anxiety about polite masculinity and the dangers of its corruption to the moral integrity and stability of the nation, that Ann Radcliffe explores in the villain of her third novel, *The Romance of the Forest*, Phillipe, Marquis de Montalt. *The Romance of the Forest* appeared sometime in the latter half of 1791 and, for the first edition, was published anonymously; its frontispiece, bearing an epigraph from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, declared the novel as by the author of *A Sicilian Romance*. The epigraph, taken from Act 3, Scene 2, foreshadows the novel's secrets: of the unlawful assumption of power, achieved by betrayal and murder. As suggested in Chapter One, Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* had demonstrated the way in which medieval romances had employed the supernatural to explore and resolve the anxieties of the period. The Gothic novel, as its successor, created 'an idealised myth' of the past 'constructed in order to deconstruct a degenerate modernity.'¹⁸ *The Romance of the Forest*, set predominantly in the south of France under the ancien régime, functions as a Gothic allegory for the state of contemporary European and British anxieties about morality, masculinity and national stability. Within this allegory it is Adeline, the novel's heroine, who represents Britain's values and virtues. Women of eighteenth-century Britain, Kathleen Wilson suggests, were 'the bearers of national virtue' who provided 'the examples of domestic virtue that complimented and invoked masculine patriotism.'¹⁹ Just as Britannia served as the nation's ideological figurehead, a symbol for the soldier to rally behind, women embodied the virtues and values they fought to protect. Unlike in earlier Gothic texts, the displaced heir of *The Romance of the Forest* is not the novel's hero, Theodore, but Adeline, whose misfortunes lead her into the path of the disgraced Pierre de La Motte as he flees Paris for the countryside. This would become a recurring theme for Radcliffe, in which the city – in particular Paris – became analogous for vices of the modern world whilst the countryside offered both idyllic refuge and enabled Gothic threats. Within the Radcliffean Gothic, in and after *The Romance of the Forest*, the countryside would become a space in which modernity could be rejected; in the countryside, patriarchs such as *Romance's* La Luc and *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* St. Aubert could safely educate their children away from the corruptions of metropolitan cities. But the rural rejection of modernity would also allow for the Gothic villain to operate: the removal from society of the Marquis de Montalt's chateau, of Montoni at the castle of Udolpho, or the secluded cottage in which *The Italian's* Schedoni takes the heroine Ellena facilitate the crimes that occur (or would occur) there. This Gothic duality of rural settings, in which the heroine's virtues may be safely cultivated but also placed under

¹⁸ Kilgour, p15

¹⁹ Wilson, *This Island Race*, p108

threat by that same distance, is made evident at the opening of *The Romance of the Forest*: the countryside offers the La Mottes a safe escape from Paris whilst simultaneously endangering Adeline until they discover her. La Motte, 'a gentleman, descended from an ancient house of France,'²⁰ 'was a man whose passions often overcame his reason, and, for a time, silenced his conscience.'²¹ La Motte's masculinity, despite his noble birth, is a failed one. Although not inherently 'bad' or without commendable qualities, La Motte is brought to the brink of ruin by his inability to resist the temptations and luxuries of Paris: 'he was a man, infirm in purpose and visionary in virtue: in a word, his conduct was suggested by feeling, rather than principle and his virtue, such as it was, could not stand the pressure of occasion.'²² Caught in a storm, La Motte seeks shelter in 'a small and ancient house'²³ where he discovers Adeline, 'a beautiful girl, who appeared to be about eighteen. Her features were bathed in tears, and she seemed to suffer the utmost distress.'²⁴ Despite his weakness of character and lack of 'manly fortitude' La Motte 'found it impossible to contemplate the beauty and distress of the object before him with indifference. Her youth, her apparent innocence – the artless energy of her manner forcibly assailed his heart.'²⁵ So remarkable is Adeline's natural grace and beauty that upon witnessing her distress even La Motte, 'a weak, and sometimes vicious' man, is moved to aid her: 'the beauty and seeming innocence of Adeline, united with the pleadings of humanity in her favour, and he determined to protect her.'²⁶

If women were the bearers of national virtue then Adeline, whose eyes possess 'a penetrating sweetness' that 'indicated an intelligent and amiable mind'²⁷, exists within the novel as symbol for British values. Wilson argues that 'the moral standing and superiority of Englishness came itself to rest in no small part on English women's capacity for, and exhibition of, domestic virtue and refinement.'²⁸ Adeline's beauty and manner are unaffected and so remarkable that she is able to ignite chivalric sentiment even in the decidedly unchivalric La Motte:

The observations and general behaviour of Adeline already bespoke a good understanding and an amiable heart, but she had yet more – she had genius. She was now in her nineteenth year; her figure of the middling size, and turned to the most exquisite proportion; her hair was dark auburn, her eyes blue, and whether they sparkled with intelligence, or melted with tenderness, they were equally attractive: her form had the airy lightness of a nymph, and, when she smiled, her countenance might

²⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p2

²¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p2

²² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p2

²³ Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p4

²⁴ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p5

²⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p6

²⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p8

²⁷ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p9

²⁸ Wilson, *This Island Race*, p21

have been drawn for the younger sister of Hebe: the captivations of her beauty were heightened by the grace and simplicity of her manners, and confirmed the intrinsic value of a heart.²⁹

Adeline, when perceived by others, epitomises eighteenth-century British femininity; beautiful but not vain, intelligent but modest, and worthy of the classical, mythological and poetic language that Radcliffe employs in describing her. After settling in the ruins of the Abbey St. Clair, Adeline recounts the unfortunate tale of her life to Madame La Motte. Unaware of her true origins, Adeline recalls that her 'father' left her to the care of a convent, telling the La Mottes that 'I learned my father intended I should take the veil. I will not attempt to express my surprize and grief on this occasion.'³⁰ Although considering the novel's historical and geographical setting we may assume Adeline to be Catholic, she rejects the convent: 'Too long had I been immured in the walls of a cloister, and too much had I seen of the sullen misery of its votaries, not to feel horror and disgust at the prospect of being added to their number.'³¹ Adeline is preyed upon by the Lady Abbess, 'a woman of rigid decorum and severe devotion'³² whose method was to 'denounce and terrify rather than persuade or allure'³³ those she wished to convert. Despite the 'numberless stratagems' of the Abbess, Adeline recounts that she 'saw too many forms of real terror' to allow her to be convinced to take the veil, and so 'passed several years of miserable resistance against cruelty and superstition.'³⁴ In both her rejection and resistance of the abbess' designs on her, *The Romance of the Forest* aligns Adeline with British, Protestant values. Adeline therefore is both a feminine ideal, designed to encourage masculine patriotism as Wilson suggests, and as a Britannia-like vessel for national values.

The threat to Adeline's virtue and the source of the disruption to her person and position both prior to and during the events of the novel, is the Marquis de Montalt. In the final volume of *The Romance of the Forest* it is revealed that d'Aunoy, the man whom Adeline had believed to be her father, had seized and murdered Henry, Marquis de Montalt on the orders of his half-brother, Phillipe, in a bid to claim his lands and title. Adeline herself is revealed as the true daughter of the murdered Marquis, ordered by the usurper, her uncle, to be taken by d'Aunoy and raised ignorant of her true parentage. The Marquis' crimes, the reader learns, were motivated by greed and vice without care for order:

The passions which had tempted him to the commission of a crime so horrid as that of murder – and what, if possible, heightened its atrocity, the murder of one connected with him by the ties of blood, and by habits of even infantine association – the passions

²⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p49

³⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p36

³¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p36

³² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p36

³³ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p36

³⁴ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p36

which had stimulated him to so monstrous a deed were ambition, and the love of pleasure. The first was more immediately gratified by the title of his brother; the latter by the riches which would enable him to indulge his voluptuous inclinations.³⁵

Yet in his first appearance, upon discovering that the La Mottes and Adeline have taken residence in the ruins of the Abbey, the Marquis de Montalt appears to be the epitome of the polite gentleman:

The person, to whom he spoke this, wore the star of one of the first orders of France, and had an air of dignity, which declared him to be of superior rank. He appeared to be about forty, but, perhaps, the spirit and fire of his countenance made the impression of time on his features less perceptible.³⁶

The 'polite man' of the eighteenth century, Philip Carter argues, 'was by definition an exponent of a behavioural style which, in theory at least, placed greater emphasis on explicitly interactive qualities such as benevolence, altruism and accommodation.'³⁷ In his first encounters with the La Mottes and Adeline, the Marquis appears to embody all of these qualities: he shows visible concern for Adeline after she has fainted, is considerate to the distress of Madam de La Motte and allows the family to remain in the abbey rather than turning them out or reporting La Motte. Yet despite his 'softened aspect and insinuating manners'³⁸ the Marquis' 'stately politeness'³⁹ fails to win over Adeline and, by extension, the reader. The Marquis' politeness stems not from genuine feeling but from affected refinement, a matter that was of great concern to contemporary society. According to Carter 'fear of actual or imminent social ruin' was a 'popular and enduring theme in the eighteenth century social commentaries' and many feared that the loss of manliness through the pursuit of politeness had caused 'a series of British domestic and international set-backs.'⁴⁰ Michèle Cohen has argued that by the late eighteenth century 'politeness can be considered to have broken down [...] the development of the culture of sensibility had highlighted the shortcomings of politeness, in particular its vulnerability to the charge of hypocrisy and insincerity.'⁴¹ Politeness, Cohen suggests, was incompatible with the ideals of a masculine national character; polite masculinity was inherently performative, relying on manners and appearance rather than genuine sensibility and feeling. The Marquis' performed politeness casts him as the gentleman his rank and title suggest him to be, and serve to mask his 'voluptuous inclinations': 'The Marquis was polite, affable, and attentive: to manners most easy and elegant, was added the last refinement of polished life.'⁴² Even Adeline, whose natural sensibilities are far superior to those of either La Motte or his wife, is initially charmed

³⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p342-3

³⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p87

³⁷ Carter, p60

³⁸ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p87

³⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p94

⁴⁰ Carter, p129

⁴¹ Cohen, 'Manners Make the Man', p314

⁴² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p99

by the Marquis' act of politeness. 'So insinuating and affable' is his conversation 'that her reserve insensibly gave way before it, and her natural vivacity resumed its long lost empire.'⁴³

The Romance of the Forest is a complex and often inconsistent novel. Though critics have observed an admiration for France and the French style in Radcliffe's prose, there exists also a degree of patriotism: sentiments that favour 'British' values and its Constitution. Though these two elements seem at odds with one another, this duality suggests that the novel's most intimate concern is in the differences between the two nations and how excess – both personal and political – may result in chaos and corruption. With his fashionable, charismatic visage and his artfully constructed pleasure palace of a home, the Marquis de Montalt has often been viewed – as E.J Clery has demonstrated⁴⁴ – as a Sadean character; dangerous and disruptive. By Erin Mackie's definition of the libertine mode, in his performative behaviours the Marquis' aristocracy, his criminality and his pursuit of Adeline cast him as a rake. However, as Mackie has observed, 'while both the fop and the rake are often presented as competitive figures, the modes in which this competition is staged point to their shared reliance on performative, socially contingent claims to status.'⁴⁵ Both the fop and the rake 'stand paired together' as problematic, performative modes of masculinity 'in contrast to the modern polite gentleman.'⁴⁶ Performance is at the heart of both the fop and the rake; the unnatural extremes to which they shape masculinity and their reliance on being seen ultimately cause them to become Other. By this notion, whilst the Marquis may be cast as in the role of the rake, in his performative politeness he arguably also inhabits the role of a fop. 'Two of [the fop's] defining traits', according to Cohen, 'were that he was a favourite with the ladies, whom he charmed with his empty chatter and his 'Pretences to Wit and Judgement', and that he was 'Frenchified': having succumbed to the seduction of the French, he displayed French fashions, French manners and French smatterings.'⁴⁷ Both traits can be applied to the Marquis: though Phillipe de Montalt is a French man by birth, he exists also as an allegorical one.

The Marquis' person, dress, and deportments are all constructed to be pleasing to the French court and 'the elegance of his manners had so veiled the depravity of his heart, that he was a favourite with his Sovereign.'⁴⁸ The narration, in the scene of his first formal interaction with Adeline and the La Mottes, states that his 'conversation was lively, amusing, sometimes even witty' but that despite appearing to have 'great knowledge of the world', he in fact possessed

⁴³ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p100

⁴⁴ E. J Clery, 'Ann Radcliffe and D. A. F. de Sade: thoughts on heroinism', *Women's Writing*, 1, 2 (1994), 203-214

⁴⁵ Erin Mackie, 'Boys Will Be Boys: Masculinity, Criminality, and the Restoration Rake', *The Eighteenth Century*, 46, 2 (2005), 129-149, p136

⁴⁶ Mackie, 'Boys Will Be Boys' p136

⁴⁷ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p9

⁴⁸ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p338

only 'what is often mistaken for it.'⁴⁹ The hollowness of the Marquis' politeness is indicated by Radcliffe as narrator again moments later, during a conversation between the La Mottes following the Marquis' departure. La Motte remarks to his wife that he is surprised that a man 'of such agreeable talents, and such an excellent heart' could 'suffer this abbey to fall into ruins.'⁵⁰ Though La Motte lacks the sense or feelings to fully consider the implications of his statement, Radcliffe's intended reader does not. Whilst the Marquis is able to perform the part of polite gentleman, his lack of interest in the abbey and his failure to properly maintain it – a failure in the art of husbandry, as discussed in previous chapters – suggest a lack of genuine sensibility. The performative nature of the Marquis's gentlemanly demeanour is revealed again later in the text, when he makes his suit to Adeline: 'While he was declaring the ardour of his passion in such terms, as but too often make vehemence pass for sincerity.'⁵¹ Although the Marquis' false politeness and lack of sincerity function to mask his rakish intentions, their performance suggests an element of foppishness. The fop, as an affected, performed mode of male politeness is 'an empty shell, lacking the inner virtue that constitutes the gentleman.'⁵² Though Carter notes that 'by the third quarter of the [eighteenth century] many commentators [...] defined effeminacy in terms of an excess of feeling'⁵³, Cohen argues that 'excess positioned the gentleman as effeminate, 'self-control' positioned him as manly.'⁵⁴ Cohen states that effeminacy occurred not only when men were refined by and behaved like women, but when they desired them too. In his indulgence in excess and pleasure, and his relentless pursuit to possess Adeline sexually despite already being married, the Marquis becomes effeminised. Though not physically infirm or indeed at all sentimental, the Marquis abuses conventions of politeness to mask his villainy, thus becoming a monstrous, effeminised hybrid of both the fop and the rake. The full terror of the disruption and degeneration caused by the Marquis' effeminacy is revealed only at the novel's climax, when the murder of Henry de Montalt and Adeline's true parentage are exposed.

In the novel's final chapters, Radcliffe reveals that it was soon after the death of Henry de Montalt's wife, who 'was amiable and beautiful'⁵⁵, following the birth of their daughter that 'the present Marquis formed the diabolical design of destroying his brother.'⁵⁶ Despite Philippe's own comfortable status, having married 'a lady, who, by the death of her brother, inherited considerable estates' (including the Abbey St. Clair, in which the La Mottes and Adeline take

⁴⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p99

⁵⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p100

⁵¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p122

⁵² Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p156

⁵³ Carter, p131-132

⁵⁴ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, p5

⁵⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁵⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

refuge), 'his passion for magnificence and dissipation, however, soon involved him in difficulties.'⁵⁷ The character of Henry de Montalt is confirmed to have been 'benevolent, mild and contemplative.'⁵⁸ Unlike his brother⁵⁹, 'in his heart reigned the love of virtue; in his manners the strictness of justness was tempered, not weakened by mercy; his mind was enlarged by science, and adorned by elegant literature.'⁶⁰ Henry's death is not immediate: he is waylaid on the road by d'Aunoy and two others, robbed, his servant is tied to a tree, and the Marquis himself conveyed and confined to the Abbey St. Clair. Henry is kept imprisoned in the abbey for three weeks – the account of which is discovered by Adeline earlier in the novel, in a moment of near supernatural empathetic experience – before the order is received to end his life. Adeline, whom Radcliffe suggests 'was suffered to live as an instrument to punish the murderer of her parent'⁶¹, is left parentless, denied her birth-rights and thrown into a series 'of vicissitudes and dangers.'⁶² In *Imagining the King's Death*, John Barrell suggests that the illnesses of George III and the Regency Crisis of 1789 had given rise to 'newly affective descriptions of the king to his people.'⁶³ The king's illness gave 'a newly immediate power to the rhetorical figures by which the nation, the constitution, and the king could be conflated within the image of a mild, tender, and above all a vulnerable father.'⁶⁴ If, as Barrell states, there was an ideal in late-eighteenth century Britain of the king as father, then arguably in the analogy of *The Romance of The Forest* we may read the father as king. The horrors faced by Adeline throughout the course of the novel – poverty, Catholicisation, sexual assault and, most shockingly, incest – all stem from the murder of her father. If we may read the father as an allegory for a king, then arguably the Marquis' usurpation of his brother, driven by his greed and excess, and the misfortunes which follow it represent the potential threat faced by Britain, and by extension Europe, from both effeminacy and Revolutionary France. The Marquis as a villain explores a number of anxieties but, most significantly for this thesis, serves to highlight and warn against the dangers of a military corrupted by greed, vice and effeminacy.

In the early decades of the eighteenth century the British Army had been regarded 'as the last bastion of manliness in a degenerate society.'⁶⁵ Yet since the end of the Seven Years War, the social perception and reputation of the military had suffered. Chapter Two discussed the way in which the Gothic novel might redeem the soldier as a hero and present him as a way in which to

⁵⁷ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁵⁸ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁵⁹ It should be noted that Henry and Phillipe are not in fact full, but half-brothers.

⁶⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁶¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁶² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p343

⁶³ John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793-1796* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2000), p50

⁶⁴ Barrell, p54

⁶⁵ Carter, p133

combat national effeminacy. *The Romance of the Forest*, however, suggests that by 1791 concerns had arisen about effeminacy *within* the army. The Marquis de Montalt is a decorated soldier, one who 'wore the star of one of the first orders of France'⁶⁶, with several young men under his command. But the Marquis is neither a good soldier or commander; the Marquis is a highly decorated officer, but Radcliffe provides no detail of his military merit. Rather, his status as a favourite with the King suggests the honour to be one granted, not won. This complicates the validity of his military identity: 'officers who shirked their duties', Kennedy argues, 'were often dismissed as effeminate, lured by the glamour and spectacle of the military but unwilling to endure its hardships.'⁶⁷ It is the Marquis' duty as an officer to uphold national values and virtues as an example to his men, whose masculinity it is his responsibility to nurture. The Marquis, however, acts not as a defender of chivalry but in direct opposition to its ideals. He misuses the men under his command, abuses his power to imprison and condemn Theodore, and is unmoved, despite early pretences, by the distress of Adeline. Despite having pleased the actual King, the Marquis' act of fratricide functions within the novel as an ideological regicide that completely upsets and unbalances the natural social order but also betrays the core aspect of the soldier's code. A reply to the claims of the 1791 *The Soldier's Friend*, a pamphlet titled *The Soldier's Answer* (date unknown) demonstrates that the soldier's code dictated not only honourable and chivalric behaviour, but a strong allegiance to the King. 'We have one Heart', the pamphlet declares, 'and that is to be Loyal to our King.'⁶⁸ As evidenced in *The Soldier's Answer* the soldier, above all else, answers to his King; his actions are an extension of his King's, his might is his nation's and his violence occurs only as a means of their protection. The soldier is the King's man, and to him he must display unwavering loyalty. Indeed, ultimately, the soldier's purpose is to serve and protect his monarch. Therefore, in his murder of his brother, the Marquis betrays the soldier's code and perverts its purpose. So violent is his perversion, that the abuses of his power for the means of his excesses eventually lead him to even greater sin: incest. Though the act is never realised, the Marquis' coveting of Adeline and his machinations to possess her are no less condemning. Though the Marquis' pursuit mirrors the scheme of Manfred to wed Isabella in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, Radcliffe further complicates the situation to amplify the terror: there is the addition of a blood relation between heroine and pursuer, and no purpose but that of selfishness and desire. As the embodiment of national virtue and value, the Marquis' desire to defile Adeline rather than protect her works as a

⁶⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p87

⁶⁷ Kennedy, p45

⁶⁸ 'John Trueheart', *The soldier's answer to the pamphlet entitled "the soldier's friend," written by a subaltern*, (Publication details unknown), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3303857574&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE [accessed 1st February 2017], p3

warning about the potential of an army both corrupted by effeminacy and not commanded by a sovereign. The Marquis' imprisonment and murder of his brother function as an allegory for both the forceful return of Louis XVI to Paris and the cries for a French Republic, and the potential for the Revolution, or its future Republic, to violently disrupt the British constitution. This fear is not necessarily one of anti-Revolutionary sentiment, but of a concern that the true purpose and strength of the Revolution may be misused or led astray. With no virtuous and kind father/king to protect Adeline, the Marquis is able to command the military against its true purpose; it is their violence and might that forces Adeline first to flee the abbey, then strips her of her protector and returns her to the Marquis. Not only are the Marquis' desires incestuous, his plot to fulfil them is to abuse the law by binding Adeline to him through a false marriage so that 'the bonds of the church shall remove every obstacle.'⁶⁹ Were the Marquis to be successful, Adeline would be ruined and the national values she represents destroyed.

However the Marquis is not successful in his designs upon Adeline, in part because of the efforts of the heroine herself but also due to the chivalric sentiments that she is able to inspire. Chief among Adeline's protectors are Peter, La Motte's servant who escorts Adeline to Savoy, and the young chevalier, Theodore de Peyrou (or, as we learn later, de La Luc). Theodore's first appearance occurs almost a month prior to the Marquis' discovery of the pseudo-family in the Abbey St. Clair, in a chance meeting with Adeline in the surrounding forests. Adeline, having 'wandered without noticing the distance, and, following the windings of the river, came to a dewy glade' that 'formed a scene so sweetly romantic, that she seated herself at the foot of a tree, to contemplate its beauty.'⁷⁰ Soothed to 'pleasing melancholy' by her surroundings, Adeline begins to sing a sonnet (titled 'To The Lily') when she is 'answered by a voice almost as tender'⁷¹ as her own: 'she looked round in surprise, and saw a young man in a hunter's dress, leaning against a tree, and gazing on her with that deep attention, which marks an enraptured mind.'⁷² Despite immediately fleeing and returning to the abbey, Adeline recalls the 'dignified air and manner which so much distinguished the youth she had seen' and resolves it would be 'impossible that a person of his appearance should be engaged in a stratagem to betray a fellow creature.'⁷³ Whereas the Marquis performs a model of gentlemanly politeness reliant on his dress and manners, Adeline is convinced of the honest and genuine nature of Theodore's character based on a single, fleeting encounter. Theodore serves as the Marquis' foil, both in actions and ideology. Where the Marquis' manners are learned through false refinement,

⁶⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p159

⁷⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p75

⁷¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p76

⁷² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p76

⁷³ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p76

Theodore's are shown to be inspired by his sensibility and natural chivalry. His official 'introduction' to the text occurs moments after that of the Marquis':

He was of a person, in which elegance was happily blended with strength, and had a countenance animated, but not haughty; noble, yet expressive of particular sweetness. What rendered it at present interesting, was the compassion he seemed to feel of Adeline, who now revived and saw him, the first object that met her eyes, bending over her in silent anxiety.⁷⁴

Whilst the Marquis concern for and interest in Adeline is explicitly sexual – 'the negligence of her dress, loosened for the purpose of freer respiration, discovered those glowing charms, which her auburn tresses, that in profusion over her bosom, shaded, but could not conceal'⁷⁵ – Theodore's compassion is undeniably genuine. The contrast between the two men's behaviours is stark, as Radcliffe employs Theodore's earnest, honest 'manners' to highlight the feigned, performative nature of the Marquis' politeness. The Marquis de Montalt uses his politeness to force his desires onto Adeline, manipulating social conventions in an attempt to trap her. His affections are framed during his speeches as Adeline's own doing, figuring them as sufferings that she has caused and that therefore would make her rude or unfeeling in denying them: 'if compassion for my sufferings will not interest you in my favour, allow a consideration of your own dangers to do so.'⁷⁶ Though the Marquis repeatedly professes to love and admire Adeline, his speeches prey upon the insecurity of her position as a young woman without paternal protection. Theodore, in contrast, is sensitive and alert to the precarious nature of Adeline's situation. Overhearing Adeline again by chance, this time lamenting that as 'an orphan in this wide world' she is unable to defend or support herself, Theodore 'having learned [her] sorrows' declares 'how can I help feeling them myself? would that my sympathy, or my suffering rescue you from them!'⁷⁷ Unlike the Marquis, Theodore does not force his presence upon Adeline despite his honest intentions: 'Would that I could deserve the title of your friend, and be thought worthy of it for yourself!'⁷⁸ Theodore's character, in his sympathy for Adeline and his respect for her, recalls the closing lines of *A Sicilian Romance* and the significance placed by Radcliffe on 'those who do only THAT WHICH IS RIGHT.'⁷⁹ Throughout *The Romance of the Forest* Theodore acts not for his sake or in his own interest but, as she lacks the means to do so herself, in Adeline's.

⁷⁴ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p87-88

⁷⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p87

⁷⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p122

⁷⁷ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p101

⁷⁸ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p101

⁷⁹ Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p199

'Fear nothing, lovely Adeline' Theodore declares, following his rescue of the heroine from the Marquis, 'fear nothing: you are in the arms of a friend, who will encounter any hazard for your sake; who will protect you with his life.'⁸⁰ Although his assistance in her flight means that he must abandon his regiment and disobey the orders of his commanding officer, thereby breaking martial law, Theodore offers himself as a friend and protector to Adeline without hesitation. Nor does he expect or request a reward of her: as she is a 'damsel in distress' Theodore recognises that it is his duty as a soldier to offer Adeline his protection, in adherence with the rules of chivalry. Theodore loves Adeline, which moves him in her favour – "Ah! call it not generosity," he replied, 'it was love.'⁸¹ – but it is ultimately the endangerment of her virtue that influences him: 'a knowledge of her destitute condition, and of the dangers with which she was environed, had awakened in his heart the tenderest touch of pity, and assisted the change of admiration into love.'⁸² If the Marquis' pursuit of women and lack of control lead him to excess, thereby effeminising him, then Theodore's self-regulation is key to his manliness. 'A male who is incapable of self-regulation' in the eighteenth century, Cohen suggests, 'is a male who is therefore not a man.'⁸³ The Marquis' inability to control his passions undermines his masculinity, which is contrasted by Theodore's ability to control his desires and emotions:

'But pardon this abrupt declaration; yet why do I call it abrupt, since my actions have already disclosed what my lips have never, till this instant, ventured to acknowledge.' He paused again. Adeline was still silent. 'Yet do me the justice to believe, that I am sensible to the impropriety of pleading my love at present, and have been surprized [sic] into this confession. I promise also to forbear from a renewal of the subject, till you are placed in a situation, where you may freely accept or refuse, the sincere regards I offer you.'⁸⁴

Theodore is able, both during the initial escape and later during his imprisonment, to temper his own distresses to offer strength and comfort to those around him. Theodore draws strength from his identity as soldier, the code and duties of his profession refining the natural sensibilities of his person to construct a manliness capable of foiling the designs of the Marquis. Despite his desertion and disobedience, Theodore's masculinity remains a martial one throughout the novel. By demonstrating the way in which Theodore's sensibility informs his soldiering, Radcliffe navigates the anxiety surrounding the soldier's violence. He considers all possible potential legal avenues by which he might deliver Adeline safely, but recognises that the Marquis' power makes this impossible. When faced with arrest Theodore resists only for the sake of Adeline, and resorts to violence only for her protection: 'he drew his sword, and swore

⁸⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p167

⁸¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p171

⁸² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p172

⁸³ Cohen, p53

⁸⁴ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p171

no power on earth should force him away before the lady recovered.’⁸⁵ If, as suggested, Adeline is an allegorical embodiment of British national values then Theodore may be read as an ideal British soldier. His ‘graceful form, the noble, intelligent countenance, and the engaging manners’ which Adeline admires in Theodore are heightened by ‘his conduct [...] and the danger which he had now encountered in her behalf.’⁸⁶ Whereas the Marquis is implied to be a soldier made – in that he has been granted his command based on his social status and not his military capabilities – Theodore can arguably be read as a soldier formed: it is his martial training and chivalric code of conduct that provides Theodore with the means to self-regulate, therefore refining his masculinity whilst avoiding effeminacy.

In Britain of the eighteenth century, ‘only in the company of men could masculinity be produced’⁸⁷: a masculinity that maintained ideals of manliness without roughness, and that avoided effeminacy without becoming unfeeling. Though women may have been at the heart of chivalric values and considered the bearers of national virtues, the creation of a strong, national masculinity would require refinement through a masculine space. Whilst the ranks of the British military appear to have fallen sway to the corruption of officers who had allowed themselves and their men to become Frenchified and foppish, *The Romance of the Forest* continues the ideas first raised in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* to suggest that the fraternity of ‘brother officers’ was the means by which a strong national masculinity may be nurtured. Like *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, *The Romance of the Forest* presents two potential heroes in two soldiers: Theodore and Louis de La Motte. Unlike the noble peasant Alleyn, however, Louis de La Motte begins the novel flawed; whilst not so lacking as his father, Louis is without the natural inclination to the chivalry and self-control of Theodore. Pierre de La Motte, in his weakness of character, fails to provide his son with a strong, masculine role model by which to model himself. Louis’ considerate treatment of Adeline is ‘the result of something more than well-bred gallantry’⁸⁸ and he is unable to control his feelings for her, though ‘he had hitherto armed himself with resolution to forbear a direct avowal of attachment.’⁸⁹ Louis, unlike his father or the Marquis, possesses the potential for refinement but lacks the means or education. Whereas the Marquis’ professions to Adeline artfully perform politeness to encroach on her boundaries and force her to address his desire for her, Louis’ confession is well intentioned but jumbled and fails to consider or understand Adeline’s feelings. Disappointed in his ‘unhappy attachment’⁹⁰, Louis departs the Abbey St. Clair for his regiment and is absent for a considerable portion of the

⁸⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p176

⁸⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p178

⁸⁷ Cohen, p41

⁸⁸ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p85

⁸⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p104

⁹⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p106

novel. We meet him next in Volume Three; in Vaceau where the court martial for Theodore Peyrou, ‘universally lamented, for Theodore was much beloved in his regiment; and the occasion of the Marquis’ personal resentment towards him being known’⁹¹, is sitting. Louis, ‘happening at this time to be stationed in the same town’⁹², having heard Theodore’s story and deducing him to be the same chevalier he had met at the abbey ‘was induced partly from compassion, and partly with a hope of hearing of his parents to visit him.’⁹³ A friendship is struck between the two young chevaliers, through which Louis’ masculinity is transformed: ‘He soon perceived that Theodore was his favoured rival; but he generously suppressed the jealous pang this discovery occasioned, and determined that no prejudice of passion should withdraw him from the duties of humanity and friendship.’⁹⁴ Through his affection for Theodore and his regard for his bearing of his hardships in prison, Louis is able to learn to self-regulate. Though ‘it was with the utmost difficulty he preserved his resolution, and forbore to express the sentiments she inspired’⁹⁵, Louis is sensible of both Adeline’s love for Theodore and her distress at their present situation. In his martial fraternity with Theodore, his brother officer, Louis is able to recover from the impulsiveness and lack of self-control learned from his father. This alteration in Louis de la Motte recalls the transformations of Osbert and Ferdinand de Mazzini, who are matured by their experiences of terror and by their military educations. At the novel’s close Louis, having finally ‘relinquished even the faint hope which he had hitherto unconsciously cherished’ of Adeline’s affections, ‘resolved [...] to seek in absence the tranquillity he had lost, and to place his future happiness on that of two persons so deservedly dear to him.’⁹⁶ Whilst his father leaves for England, Louis returns to his regiment ‘eager to fly from [Adeline’s] charms.’⁹⁷ Just as his friendship with Theodore and his admiration for him both as a friend and a soldier allow Louis to refine his masculinity, the masculine space of his regiment provide a means by which he may work through and move on from his love for Adeline without endangering his masculinity.

Both the resolution and the central mysteries of *The Romance of the Forest* occur in a legal setting: the truth of the Marquis’ multiple crimes is revealed through a series of confessions from various parties, resulting in the restoration of Adeline to her rightful title and properties.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p307

⁹² Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p307

⁹³ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p307

⁹⁴ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p308

⁹⁵ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p315

⁹⁶ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p354

⁹⁷ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p354

⁹⁸ The Marquis, ‘convinced he had nothing to hope from his trial’, commits suicide by poison. The implications of this are undeniably significant when considering his masculinity, but deviate from the focus of this thesis.

Immediately after she is 'formally acknowledged as the daughter and heiress of Henry, Marquis de Montalt' Adeline 'threw herself at the feet of the king in behalf of Theodore and La Motte.'⁹⁹ That the novel concludes in a situation in which a fair, legal process is combined with the rule of a monarch is significant. The situation of Theodore is so unjust that 'it is more than probable the monarch would have granted his pardon to a pleader less irresistible than Adeline de Montalt.'¹⁰⁰ This resolution arguably functions as an allegory for a constitutional monarchy, in which excess is punished and chivalry rewarded, and where the rule of law is informed by both sense and sensibility. Theodore, the pinnacle of this heroic masculinity, is not only pardoned but 'in consideration of his gallant conduct towards Adeline' – the very same actions that had originally resulted in his arrest – 'was soon after raised to a considerable rank in the army'¹⁰¹. Eventually he and Adeline are married and, like *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* and *A Sicilian Romance*, *The Romance of the Forest* ends with the restoration of order and well-earned tranquillity for its protagonists. Though the novel explores the anxiety that the soldier could be misused by the corrupt commander, in Theodore an idealised, heroic soldierly masculinity is fully realised. The military provides Theodore not only with the framework to refine his own masculinity, but to allow others to do the same by his example. However, the publication of Radcliffe's fourth - and arguably most popular novel - *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in 1794 would begin to complicate and deconstruct this notion of heroic masculinity.

The Mysteries of Udolpho opens 'on the pleasant banks of the Garonne, in the province of Gascony'¹⁰² in the year 1584, placing the events of the novel some two centuries before its publication. Though as Richard Albright, amongst other scholars, has noted, Radcliffe 'ignores references to particular historical events'¹⁰³ and included anachronisms such as the drinking of coffee and the use of dinner forks 'nearly a century before either practice was introduced to Western Europe'¹⁰⁴ throughout the novel, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* employed the past much in the same way as her earlier works: as a means by which to explore contemporary anxieties. Yet *Udolpho* is a far darker novel than Radcliffe's previous works. Though it begins in the idyllic tranquillity of La Vallée the action is set predominantly against the backdrop of a sprawling, feudal castle and the threats faced by its heroine, Emily St. Aubert, are more fully realised: it is no wonder that this is the novel that captured the attention of Jane Austen's Catherine Morland

⁹⁹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p353

¹⁰⁰ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p353

¹⁰¹ Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p353

¹⁰² Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. by Bonamy Dobree (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.1

¹⁰³ Richard S. Albright, 'No Time like the Present: The Mysteries of Udolpho', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 5.1, (2005), 49-75, p50

¹⁰⁴ Albright, p50

and that Henry Tilney finished it within two days with his 'hair standing on end the entire time.'¹⁰⁵ The landscape of *Udolpho* is dangerous and disrupted, as Emily is removed from her beloved home at La Vallée and moved forcibly across a Europe marred by conflict and turmoil. As Claudia L Johnson notes, 'although set in 1584, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is pervasively absorbed in the crisis of its present.'¹⁰⁶ Much had changed in Europe between the publication of *The Romance of the Forest* in 1791 and *Udolpho* in the May of 1794. 'No spectator of the revolution would have predicted in 1789 that Louis XVI would lose his head in 1793'¹⁰⁷: the declaration of war on Britain from the French on 1st of February 1793 'seemed to many on both sides to be the inevitable outcome of the increasing tension and hostility.'¹⁰⁸ The overthrow of the French monarchy, culminating in the execution of Louis XVI in the January, had thoroughly shaken Britain's resolution of neutrality. The execution of the French queen Marie Antoinette in the October of 1793 and the beginnings of what would become known as the Reign of Terror saw growing turmoil across Europe, and Britain was once again a nation consumed by war. By the early months of 1794 the outlook was far from positive: despite a strong naval presence Britain and her allies had suffered a number of losses and as the year progressed France would continue to emerge victorious. Manoeuvres on land had frequently fallen apart and 'the attempts to put small forces ashore in France so as to assist counter Revolutionaries were disastrous'.¹⁰⁹ Though there had been some early successes, 'by the end of 1793 the French has begun gaining ground.'¹¹⁰ If, as the previous chapter has suggested, Radcliffe employed the Gothic past as method of exploring the state of the present then the increasingly tumultuous state of Europe is evident in the pages of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. As Angela Wright has argued, 'the combined military and literary hostilities towards France in the 1790's undoubtedly took its toll upon [Radcliffe's] optimism in justice.'¹¹¹

The Mysteries of Udolpho begins with a journey: recovering somewhat from the illness that claims his wife in the novel's opening pages, St. Aubert and his daughter depart 'for the air of Languedoc and Provence' as prescribed by his physician and subsequently 'to travel leisurely along the shores of the Mediterranean'¹¹². Yet despite the sublimity of the scenes the St. Auberts enjoy, the landscape is often far from idyllic: at the small village through which they pass on the on the way to Rousillon the 'scent of spirits' is 'generally perceptible enough' as 'the travelling

¹⁰⁵ Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watson and Sanditon*, ed. by James Kinsley and John Davie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p98

¹⁰⁷ Jennifer Mori, *Britain in the Age of the French Revolution, 1785 - 1820* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p188

¹⁰⁸ Emsley, p54

¹⁰⁹ Emsley, p55

¹¹⁰ Emsley, p55

¹¹¹ Wright, p105

¹¹² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p25

smugglers, who haunted the Pyrenees, had made this rude people familiar with the use of liquors'¹¹³. Later, travelling by the 'evening twilight' and 'ignorant of how far they might yet be from Beaujeu'¹¹⁴, the dangerous nature of their journey is acknowledged by St. Aubert:

On turning the angle of a mountain, a light appeared at a great distance, that illuminated the rocks, and the horizon to a great extent. It was evidentially a large fire, but whether accidental, or otherwise, there were no means of knowing. St. Aubert thought it was probably kindled by some of the banditti, that infested the Pyrenees, and he became watchful and anxious to know whether this road passed near this fire. He had arms with him, which, on an emergency, may afford some protection, though certainly a very unequal one, against a band of robbers, so desperate too as those who haunted these wild regions.¹¹⁵

In the midst of this anxiety about the dangers ahead of them, the sounds of a rider approaching the carriage from behind are heard. The muleteer is ordered to 'proceed as fast as possible – and therefore towards the fire on the horizon – as St. Aubert 'was with difficulty able to prepare a pistol for his defence'¹¹⁶. The rider St Aubert shoots, however, is revealed not to be a villain attempting highway robbery but the young chevalier Valancourt. The chaos and confusion of this moment is significant: the St. Auberts are seemingly trapped between two dangers, unable to properly ascertain either and the attempt to defend themselves results in the would-be hero 'bleeding profusely, and appearing to be in great pain.'¹¹⁷ This incident sets the tone for the rest of the text: the Europe of *Udolpho* is one littered with dangers, where the intentions and morals of martial men cannot easily be determined. The boundaries between hero and villain are blurred in *Udolpho* and unlike the heroines of Radcliffe's early works, Emily St. Aubert is largely without a masculine hero to protect her and assist in her escape from tyranny. If, as has been previously suggested, the Gothic heroine represented national virtues, then the fraught nature of Emily's situation and the dangerous, ravaged Europe that she is forced to travel through demonstrate a growing concern about the lasting effects of large scale conflict.

'The farther Emily journeys from La Vallée,' Johnson suggests, 'the more conspicuous the violence exacted upon women, and the more difficult it becomes to discredit their suffering as imaginary.'¹¹⁸ Having been denied a union with Valancourt and suffering both heartbreak and embarrassment from Valancourt's exploits in Paris, Emily is forced to leave France for Venice as a member of Montoni's party. Passing through the Alps into Italy, Emily is awestruck by the 'billowy surges rolling below' and the 'solitary grandeur' of the scenery whilst Montoni and Cavigini debate the chosen route of the 2nd century Carthaginian general, Hannibal. As the two

¹¹³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p33

¹¹⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p37

¹¹⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹¹⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹¹⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹¹⁸ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p102

men argue the details, ‘the subject brought to Emily’s mind the disasters he had suffered in this bold and perilous adventure’ which induces a vision-like moment in the heroine: ‘She saw his vast armies winding among the defiles, and over the tremendous cliffs of the mountains, which at night were lighted up by his fires, or by the torches which he caused to be carried when he pursued his infatigable march.’¹¹⁹ The power of Emily’s imagination conjures ‘the gleam of arms through the duskiness of night, the glitter of spears and helmets, and the banners floating dimly on the twilight; while now and then the blast of a distant trumpet echoed along the defile, and the signal was answered by a momentary clash of arms’ to seemingly appear in the valley before her, whilst ‘she looked with horror upon the mountaineers, perched on the higher cliffs, assailing the troops below with broken fragments of the mountain; on soldiers and elephants tumbling headlong down the lower precipices; and, as she listened to the rebounding rocks, that followed their fall.’¹²⁰ Emily’s response to this imagined conflict is visceral, even as ‘the terrors of fancy yielded to those of reality, and she shuddered to behold herself on the dizzy height, whence she had pictured the descent of others.’¹²¹ For Emily this scene of infamous military might – discussed with such fervour by Montoni and Cavigini – is one of terror; once her imagined scene is begun, Emily is unable to look away despite her fear and the display of military splendour quickly gives way to one of death and destruction. Whilst Radcliffe’s earlier novels did not necessarily glorify war or combat, the military exists in them as a space of male refinement and glory in the name of one’s country. Apart from a few duels or skirmishes, the military action occurs off the page where neither the heroine nor the reader can witness it. The heroines are never in danger from these conflicts: they function solely as a place for the hero to exert and hone his manliness or to improve his fortune and status nobly. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* however, conflict is a real, tangible and visible concern.

As the party continues their journey ‘over the beautiful plains’ of Italy ‘the devastations of war were frequently visible.’¹²² The scars of warfare are evident across the Italian countryside: ‘Where the lands had not been suffered to lie uncultivated, they were often tracked with the steps of the spoiler; the vines were torn down from the branches that had supported them, the olives trampled upon the ground, and even the groves of mulberry trees had been hewed by the enemy to light the fires that destroyed the hamlets and villages of their owners.’¹²³ The scenes of natural sublimity which appeal to Emily’s heightened sensibility, capable of inspiring awe and intense reflection, have been ravaged by the conflicts that have taken place within them. War, these moments in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* make clear, has no respect for the beautiful and the

¹¹⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p166

¹²⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p166

¹²¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p166

¹²² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

¹²³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

sublime. As the journey continues past Milan, the narrator observes that ‘the country wore the aspect of a ruder devastation; and though every thing seemed now quiet, the repose was that of death, spread over features, which retain the impression of the last convulsions.’¹²⁴ Yet it is not only Italy, whose political state results in almost constant warfare, that betrays an anxiety about the lasting effects of conflict. As Claudia Johnson notes ‘such disintegration is not limited to the other world of Italy.’¹²⁵ Within France too ‘anarchy is discernible beneath the cozy houses of sweet gentlemen’¹²⁶. In the not so distant past, even the province where La Vallée is situated ‘was over-run by troops of men, who took advantage of the tumults, and became plunderers’, necessitating the construction of hidden compartments beneath floorboards to secrete riches and documents.¹²⁷ The grotesque terror of war reaches a climax within the castle of Udolpho itself when Emily, fearing her aunt has been murdered by Montoni, attempts to navigate the corridors in search of her. Gero Bauer has suggested that within the castle ‘Emily’s lack of power is repeated on several levels: Udolpho in its entirety, with its maze like corridors and locked doors, simultaneously locks Emily in, and shuts her out from finding out more about what goes on behind the doors she cannot open.’¹²⁸ Udolpho, in both its ancientness and the society Montoni creates there, is inherently feudal and Emily’s time within the castle is fraught with the same danger and uncertainty witnessed earlier in the war torn countrysides. What Emily discovers in her search, however, is not the body of her aunt (though she at first believes it to be so) but the grotesque figure of a wounded soldier:

‘It seemed to conceal a recess of the chamber; she wished, yet dreaded to lift it, and to discover what it veiled: twice she was withheld by a recollection of the terrible spectacle her daring hand had formerly unveiled in an apartment of the castle, till, suddenly conjecturing, that it concealed the body of her murdered aunt, she seized it, in a fit of desperation, and drew it aside. Beyond, appeared a corpse, stretched on a kind of low couch, which was crimsoned with human blood, as was the floor beneath. The features, deformed by death, were ghastly and horrible, and more than one livid wound appeared in the face. Emily, bending over the body, gazed, for a moment, with an eager, frenzied eye; but, in the next, the lamp dropped from her hand, and she fell senseless at the foot of the couch.’¹²⁹

Though the spectacle is ultimately too much for Emily to bear, for a moment she is entranced by the ‘ghastly and horrible’ figure laid out before her. Recovering after she has fainted, Emily is almost immediately subjected to an attempted abduction that is foiled by Montoni, Cavigini and their band of men ‘to whom she no longer looked with terror, but with hope’¹³⁰. Emily’s situation at Udolpho is arguably far more precarious than that of Adeline’s within the Marquis’

¹²⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

¹²⁵ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p114

¹²⁶ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p114

¹²⁷ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p114

¹²⁸ Bauer, p60

¹²⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p348

¹³⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p349

manor: within the castle Emily is beholden to the feudal rule of Montoni, which subjects her to terror in various forms, yet the world outside the castle is of equal, if not greater, danger to her as a young woman alone. This chaotic episode is followed by a moment that echoes the 'madness' of Samuel Richardson's heroine Clarissa following her rape by the rake Lovelace. Returned to her apartments after convincing Montoni of her innocence in the attempted abduction 'again, the dead form, which the curtain in the portal chamber had disclosed, came to her fancy, and she uttered a groan, which terrified Annette'.¹³¹ Concerned with Annette's inability to keep her secret, Emily is 'compelled to bear within her own mind the whole horror of the secret, that oppressed it' resulting in an episode of near madness:

Her reason seemed to totter under the intolerable weight. She often fixed a wild and vacant look on Annette, and, when she spoke, either did not hear her, or answered from the purpose. Long fits of abstraction succeeded; Annette spoke repeatedly, but her voice seemed not to make any impression on the sense of the long agitated Emily, who sat fixed and silent, except, now and then she heaved a heavy sigh, but without tears.¹³²

If Emily, as the novel's heroine, functions as the vessel for national virtue then this moment of mental strife resulting in physical distress represents the strain placed upon a nation by conflict.

In its darker, more severe tone, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* departs from *The Romance of the Forest* not only by exploring and demonstrating the negative consequence of war on the nation both spiritually and physically, but by abandoning the idealised, heroic soldier. There is no equivalent of Theodore de La Luc to be found in the pages of *Udolpho*. Rather, the soldier in *Udolpho* is a figure frequently either half formed or absent; the heroine cannot trust in either his ability to protect nor the purpose of his violence, which implies a significant shift in Radcliffe's treatment of masculinity. However the shift from potential to actual warfare between the two novels is perhaps not the only reason for this change. 'I presume that *rational* men will excuse me,' declared Mary Wollstonecraft in the introduction to her transformative 1792 work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects* 'for endeavouring to persuade them to become more masculine and respectable.'¹³³ *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* continued the discourse of Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, published two years earlier in response to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in criticising not only the gender disparity – in particular women's access to education and the value placed on women's intelligence – present in late eighteenth century British society but what Wollstonecraft perceived to be the failings of sentimental masculinity. According to Claudia L Johnson, *Rights of Woman* is a 'militantly unsentimental work' in which Wollstonecraft

¹³¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p351

¹³² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p351

¹³³ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, (London: Penguin, 2004), p15

demonstrates that ‘the problem undermining society’ is ‘feminised men.’¹³⁴ *Rights of Woman*, Johnson argues, ‘is preoccupied with championing a kind of masculinity into which women can be invited rather than with enlarging or inventing a positive discourse on femininity.’¹³⁵ Central to the arguments of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is the fashioning of masculinity, and the dangers of becoming Other: ‘Society, therefore, as it becomes more enlightened, should be very careful not to establish bodies of men who must necessarily be made foolish or vicious by the very constitution of their profession.’¹³⁶ Wollstonecraft ‘posits rationality, independence, and productive bodily vigour’ as the natural, ‘true’ qualities of men ‘which culture has perverted into trifling sentimentality, dependence, and weakness’, and she ‘heaps abuse upon “unsexed” males’¹³⁷.

The military, for Wollstonecraft, was one such group of men. In the section ‘The Prevailing Opinion of a Sexual Character Discussed’ the military is presented as evidence of the problematic nature of female education:

As a proof that education gives this appearance of weakness to females, we may instance the example of military men, who are, like them, sent into the world before their minds have been stored with knowledge, or fortified by principles. The consequences are similar; soldiers acquire a little superficial knowledge, snatched from the muddy current of conversation, and from continually mixing with society, they gain what is termed a knowledge of the world; and this acquaintance with manners and customs has frequently been confounded with a knowledge of the human heart. But can the crude fruit of casual observation, never brought to the test of judgment, formed by comparing speculations and experience, deserve such a distinction? Soldiers, as well as women, practice the minor virtues with punctilious politeness.¹³⁸

The education of the soldier, Wollstonecraft argued, meant that manners were learned before morals and that a knowledge of the world was attained without experience, thus resulting in their becoming ‘a prey to prejudices, and taking all their opinions on credit’ and therefore ‘blindly [submitting] to authority.’¹³⁹ Though in its third section *Vindication* argued against the perceived weakness of the sentimental eighteenth-century gentleman – ‘bodily strength from being the distinction of heroes is now sunk into such merited contempt that men, as well as women, seem to think it unnecessary’¹⁴⁰ – to Wollstonecraft the military’s method of fashioning masculinity was far from ideal. Wollstonecraft condemned the soldier’s insufficient education and lack of autonomy from the ruling classes, perceiving him as puppet rather than a heroic defender of national constitution and virtue: ‘educated in slavish dependence, and enervated by

¹³⁴ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p23

¹³⁵ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p24

¹³⁶ Wollstonecraft, p26

¹³⁷ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p24

¹³⁸ Wollstonecraft, p33

¹³⁹ Wollstonecraft, p34

¹⁴⁰ Wollstonecraft, p51

luxury and sloth, where shall we find men who stand forth to assert the rights of men.’¹⁴¹ By suggesting that a ‘stunting education’ has made both women and soldiers ‘idle and frivolous’¹⁴² – that officers, like women, ‘are fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures and ridicule’¹⁴³ – the soldier is effeminised by *Rights of Woman*. In the frame of Wollstonecraft’s argument, these excesses are the product of effeminacy rather than the cause; the deficiency of the soldier’s education leads to the vanity and over indulgence criticised in women. The effeminising force then is the lack and absence of understanding and education, leading to the perversion of natural masculine qualities.

‘Standing armies’, Wollstonecraft claimed, ‘can never consist of resolute, robust men; they may be well disciplined machines, but they will seldom contain men under the influences of strong passions, or with very vigorous faculties.’¹⁴⁴ Though the author of *The Soldier’s Answer* may have presented the soldiers’ unwavering allegiance to King and country as proof of the valour of their profession, *Rights of Woman* questions the soldiers being ‘men endowed with rational understanding’¹⁴⁵ and laments the lack of virile, heroic masculinity. Whilst there can be no definitive proof that Ann Radcliffe read Wollstonecraft’s work, the popularity of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* suggests that Radcliffe must have at least been aware of the text and scholars such as Rictor Norton¹⁴⁶ have identified connections between their works. If the Gothic of the period leading up to the War of the First Coalition reflected an anxiety about the loss of chivalry, the stability of British national identity and masculinity, and the poor state of the army in an increasingly tumultuous Europe, then arguably *The Mysteries of the Udolpho* reflects not only the concerns of a nation still conflicted about the principles of the war it now found itself embroiled in but the nature of those men sent out to fight it. Johnson notes that though *Rights of Woman* rejected the soldier, it still sought to encourage a heroic national masculinity: ‘Wollstonecraft must thus persuade men to cultivate the heroic, parental body rather than the enervated and unproductively sensual body, because political corruption results from that degeneration.’¹⁴⁷ For Wollstonecraft, the soldier’s education makes him not only effeminised but a false hero. His reasons are too obscure, informed not by his own moral code but by an ingrained obedience to a ruling class that makes him too easily manipulated. Wollstonecraft ‘consistently presumes that manliness and liberty are virtually synonymous. Women and men both are kept in subjection by effeminacy. Real men, unlike courtly fops, would tolerate neither

¹⁴¹ Wollstonecraft, p59

¹⁴² Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p33

¹⁴³ Wollstonecraft, p34

¹⁴⁴ Wollstonecraft, p33-34

¹⁴⁵ *The Soldiers Answer*, p2

¹⁴⁶ Rictor Norton, *Ann Radcliffe: The Mistress of Udolpho*, (London: Leicester University Press, 1999)

¹⁴⁷ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p42

the indignity of absolute monarchy nor the frivolity of prettified chivalric codes.¹⁴⁸ In *Udolpho* the line between soldier and villain is frequently blurred. In the journey through the Pyrenees in the first volume, St. Aubert observes ‘a numerous train, consisting of men horses and loaded mules, winding down the steps of an opposite mountain, appearing and disappearing at intervals among the woods so that its numbers could not be judged of. Something bright, like arms, glanced in the setting ray, and the military dress was distinguishable upon the men that followed.’¹⁴⁹ Though after watching them, ‘he had no doubt that the train before him consisted of smugglers, who, in conveying prohibited goods over the Pyrenees, had been encountered, and conquered by a party of troops’¹⁵⁰ there is nonetheless an anxiety to the purpose and identity of these men. There is little to reassure the reader of St. Aubert’s certainty regarding the identity of these men and as such the soldier’s identity is thrown into question. Similarly during the journey to Italy ‘the travellers frequently distinguished troops of soldiers moving at a distance; and they experienced, at the little inns on the road, the scarcity of provisions and other inconveniences, which are a part of the consequences of intestine war.’¹⁵¹ Though the party ‘never had reason to be much alarmed for their immediate safety’¹⁵² the distance and ambiguity of the soldiers, coupled with the difficulties that they leave behind them, creates a sense of anxiety. Once soldiers are seen, they produce terror (in the Radcliffean sense, as defined in her posthumous ‘On the Supernatural in Poetry’ in 1826) rather than comfort for Emily, who ‘observed with admiration, tintured with awe, their high martial air, mingled with the haughtiness of the noblesse of those days, and heightened by the gallantry of their dress, by the plumes towering on their caps, the armorial coat, Persian sash, and ancient Spanish cloak.’¹⁵³

This anxiety surrounding the soldier is fully realised within the walls of Udolpho, in Montoni’s ‘condottieri’. Though not banditti, as the ladies initially fear, these men are a product of the Italian feudal system and their origins hark back to those concerns raised about the army in the period following the Seven Years War: ‘of all the soldiers, disbanded at the end of every war, few returned to the safe, but unprofitable occupations, then usual in peace.’¹⁵⁴ Rather they turn either to the militaries of other countries or ‘formed themselves into bands of robbers, and occupied remote fortresses, where their desperate character, the weakness of the governments which they offended, and the certainty that they could be recalled to the armies, when their presence should be again wanted’¹⁵⁵ sustains them. The condottieri therefore exist in a liminal

¹⁴⁸ Johnson, *Equivocal Beings*, p31

¹⁴⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p44

¹⁵⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p44

¹⁵¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

¹⁵² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

¹⁵³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p173-4

¹⁵⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p358

¹⁵⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p358

space between soldier and villain, unable to return to civilian life having been awakened to violence. The duality of their nature is recognised by Emily as she observes them at Udolpho, at once entranced and repulsed by the assembled men:

Early on the following morning, as Emily crossed the hall to the ramparts, she heard a noisy bustle in the court-yard, and the clatter of horses' hoofs. Such unusual sounds excited her curiosity; and, instead of going to the ramparts, she went to an upper casement, from whence she saw, in the court below, a large party of horsemen, dressed in a singular, but uniform, habit, and completely, though variously, armed. They wore a kind of short jacket, composed of black and scarlet, and several of them had a cloak, of plain black, which, covering the person entirely, hung down to the stirrups. As one of these cloaks glanced aside, she saw, beneath, daggers, apparently of different sizes, tucked into the horseman's belt. She further observed, that these were carried, in the same manner, by many of the horsemen without cloaks, most of whom bore also pikes, or javelins. On their heads, were the small Italian caps, some of which were distinguished by black feathers. Whether these caps gave a fierce air to the countenance, or that the countenances they surmounted had naturally such an appearance, Emily thought she had never, till then, seen an assemblage of faces so savage and terrific.¹⁵⁶

The condottieri are ambiguous in both their nature and purpose; despite their perceived savageness, Emily is able to identify pleasingly masculine traits amongst the men at Udolpho too. Equally, whilst their presence at the castle endangers Emily (particularly after the death of Madame Montoni) it also protects her from the threats outside the castle walls. Arguably then, in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the heroic nature of the soldier crafted by *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, *A Sicilian Romance* and *The Romance of the Forest* is problematised and deconstructed. The certainty provided the heroine in the chivalry of the hero is absent in *Udolpho*, as is evidenced by the heightened stakes of Emily's suffering. As the Revolutionary Wars shifted from hypothetical threats on the horizon to real and present dangers, the soldier's position within the Gothic novel began to unravel. The masculinity depicted in *Udolpho*, as the next chapter will discuss, was one less defined by martial heroism than by masculine failures.

¹⁵⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p301

Chapter Four

'He is just what a young man ought [not] to be': Anxiety, conflict and failed masculinity in Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell*

Beware, my love, I conjure you, of that self-delusion, which has been fatal to the peace of many persons; beware of priding yourself on the gracefulness of sensibility; if you yield to this vanity, your happiness is lost for ever. Always remember how much more valuable is the strength of fortitude, than the grace of sensibility. Do not, however, confound fortitude with apathy; apathy cannot know the virtue. Remember, too, that one act of beneficence, one act of real usefulness, is worth all the abstract sentiment in the world. Sentiment is a disgrace, instead of an ornament, unless it lead us to good actions.

Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*¹

Remaining with the *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, this chapter more closely interrogates the novel's complex depictions of martial masculinities and their continued failure to fulfil their responsibilities. This masculine failure, this chapter argues, is fundamentally linked to the insufficiency and unsustainability of military masculinities and the military sphere. This argument is continued to Francis Lathom's 1798 novel *The Midnight Bell*, exploring how the chivalric heroism of the Gothic pre-1793 is disrupted by the actual violence and uncertainty of war time.

War, in the scenes sketched by Ann Radcliffe in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, is a far from glorious state for a nation to exist in; the otherwise sublime landscapes of Italy are marred by feudal warfare which, rather than protecting, disrupts and endangers the lives of those that occupy it. Conflict in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is a Gothic monstrosity in and of itself, an unruly force that consumes and corrupts: it is warfare that forces Valancourt to separate from Emily (as he is required to return to his regiment), that makes the lands outside the walls of Udolpho too dangerous for Emily to risk escape alone, and which places both her life and her virtue in frequent danger whilst she resides within them. The conflicts that Radcliffe portrays in the pages of *Udolpho* are a stark departure from those of her first novel *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. Though Osbert's attack on Dunbayne is unsuccessful and 'the slaughter without was great and dreadful'² the martial arts are used to paint both the young Earl and Alleyn as brave, heroic and manly: on Alleyn's first entrance to the castle of Athlin the Countess Matilda and

¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p80

² *The Castles of the Athlin and Dunbayne*, p9

Mary find 'their attention was engaged, and their curiosity excited, by the appearance of a stranger who managed the lance and the bow with such exquisite dexterity, as to bear off each prize of chivalry.'³ Yet whilst the finer qualities and heroic aspects of both Osbert and Alleyn are brought to life by conflict in *Athlin and Dunbayne*, the scenes of battle in *Udolpho* are confused and fraught. In *Udolpho* the perspective is shifted away from the narrator and onto the heroine, thus forcing the reader to experience the chaos and danger alongside Emily. In her journeys outside the tranquil safety of La Vallée Emily encounters French soldiers, Italian condottieri, and banditti, but Radcliffe offers little distinction between them: they are all far from heroic. Montoni and the condottieri captains he admires engage in combat for financial gain and personal glory, whilst the soldiers of Valancourt's regiment revel in the vices of Paris and behave without the chivalry of Radcliffe's earlier soldiers or chevaliers. Nor does she offer clear reason for the battles that have so scarred the countrysides. Rather the reader is made to share in Emily's anxiety about the intentions of the martial men whom she encounters and the purpose of their violence; there is no narrative of glory or chivalry, of battles hard fought and won in the name of national safety. The conflicts which occur at Udolpho, from the duel between Count Morano and Montoni to the full-scale attack on the castle, are sudden and chaotic bursts of violence un beholden to the rules of so called civilised warfare that threaten to engulf Emily rather than protect her. In Emily's distress, Radcliffe places conflict in direct opposition with the values of sensibility and virtue that her heroine represents. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* war is the antithesis of the chivalric values demonstrated by her earlier heroes: conflict is the source of the heroine's distress, with the potential to destroy rather than protect the virtue she embodies.

What is critical here is to consider *The Mysteries of Udolpho* within the context of 1794, as a wartime Gothic text. If, as Ramsay and Russel argue, 'culture was also a forum in which war could be contested'⁴ then it is crucial to consider *Udolpho's* treatment of conflict. The novel enjoyed widespread and considerable success, yet little scholarly attention has been paid to the fractured, war torn landscapes that it presents: Emily's distress is intrinsically linked to soldiers and to war. As one of the most influential Gothic works of the late eighteenth century, it is important to consider how *The Mysteries of Udolpho* used the conventions of the Gothic to respond to increasing anxieties about war. But Radcliffe was not the only writer concerned with the destructive nature of war and its potential to wreak havoc on British society, after the nation began its first campaigns against the Revolutionary armies. To understand *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as a reactive text, and its response in particular to the impact of the War of the First Coalition on society, we must consider the social climate in 1794. In the early weeks of 1793 an Edinburgh print house published a pamphlet by an anonymous author titled *The Crisis Stated; or,*

³ *The Castles of the Athlin and Dunbayne*, p5

⁴ Ramsay and Russell, *Tracing War*

*serious and seasonable hints upon the consequences of a war with France*⁵. Its frontispiece bore a quote from Edmund Burke's *Appeal From the New Whigs to the Old* (1791) and a notice that declared 'the Author deems no apology necessary: His intention was to recommend caution, and thus to preserve internal as well as external tranquillity.'⁶ With the new year had come new murmurings of war with France – the Revolutionaries had proven their military prowess by successfully rebuffing the Duke of Brunswick's invasion effort at the Battle of Valmy (September 1792) whilst the rest of Europe had become increasingly concerned following the arrest of Louis XVI, the September Massacres, and the beginnings of what would later become known as the Reign of Terror. In Britain, war with France was again a topic of much conversation; as *The Crisis Stated* reveals, 'a war with France' was 'a measure which at present the nation is loudly called upon to approve'⁷. Yet despite the early opinions of the Revolution, as discussed previously, the pamphlet suggests a lack of debate or resistance amongst the British public regarding a potential war. 'It is wonderful' the author comments 'with what indifference and unconcern, a crisis, so serious as the present is beheld'⁸. Far from 'the innocent, amusing nor honourable pastime, which Ministers [...] often represent it to be'⁹, a war, *The Crisis Stated* argues, is an issue that should be of concern to all members of society and pursued only as a last resort. The pamphlet suggests - with, according to *The Monthly Review*, 'perspicuity and elegance'¹⁰ – that the government and the aristocracy employ 'mean and despicable artifices'¹¹ to blind the public and create a false fervour for war. Those same spectacles of 'armaments, reviews, drums, flags, crowds and acclamations' that once drew great crowds to the military training camps in 1778¹² 'are the hacknied [sic] stage tricks employed to cover a measure which will not bear a cool examination.'¹³ War, *The Crisis Stated* reminds its reader, is a costly and consuming pursuit, and not a prospect that should be welcomed without serious consideration:

It destroys commerce, suspends agriculture, ruins manufactures; and makes the poorest man much poorer, by augmenting the taxes, and by rendering every article of his own

⁵ The pamphlet gives the 4th of January, 1793 as the date, however we may assume this is the date on which it was completed and not the date of publication.

⁶ *The Crisis Stated; or, serious and seasonable hints upon the consequences of a war with France* (Edinburgh, 1793), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.gale.com/ecco/start.do?prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk> [accessed January 2019], p2

⁷ *The Crisis Stated*, p3

⁸ *The Crisis Stated*, p3

⁹ *The Crisis Stated*, p4

¹⁰ *The Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal: Volume 10* (London, 1793), p465,

<<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=ezyoAAAAYAAJ&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA1>> [accessed 1st November 2018]

¹¹ *The Crisis Stated*, p4

¹² The militia camp at Coxheath in 1778, raised in response to the French involvement in the American Wars of Independence, under the Duke of Devonshire became a popular spectacle for its display of aristocratic wealth as well its military pomp and splendour.

¹³ *The Crisis Stated*, p4

consumption, every article he buys for the use of his little household, twice as dear as it was before.¹⁴

Although it was unlikely that any potential campaigns would be fought on native soil, their material cost would nonetheless be felt by the British public. But, as the author notes, the significant financial strain on the nation would still serve to benefit those of the ruling classes as ‘whatever impoverishes the people, strengthens the hands of the executive government.’¹⁵ *The Crisis Stated* argues that ‘poverty is the source of political dependence, as ignorance is the cause of spiritual subjection’ and that in forcing the high cost of war onto the masses, the upper classes would be able to maintain social control: an anxiety Radcliffe would echo the following year in *Udolpho*’s Italian scenes, which bear ‘the aspect of a ruder devastation’¹⁶ of war.

‘Twenty years ago’ *The Crisis Stated* claims, ‘the suspicion I recommend would have prevented the American war, which cost us upwards of one hundred thousand lives, and one hundred and forty millions of money’¹⁷. Though Richard Hurd attributed the loss of the American Wars of Independence to a weak and inept national masculinity, softened by sensibility, the author of the *Crisis* suggests that the ‘indelible disgrace of our returning defeated, injured and pursued’¹⁸ might have been prevented had Britain not been ‘cajoled’ by the notions of patriotic glory: ‘This prospect was too bright, not to dazzle and allure; we rushed into war headlong – a ten years mad experience proved every assertion to be *directly false*.’¹⁹ However the pamphlet suggests that though the charms of patriotism may have wooed the country into conflict without proper consideration, the true cause of Britain’s losses were the purpose which they concealed. ‘In that unfortunate contest,’ the author notes ‘our troops, for the first time, bore arms against a nation *contending for liberty*.’²⁰ How, the pamphlet questions, could the British Army – a force sworn to protect the values of the Glorious Revolution and the British Constitution – raise arms against a people fighting for liberty and freedom? ‘The sacred spirit of *liberty* supplied every want of every other resource’ to the American forces and so the British troops ‘were, for the first time, beaten and disgraced.’²¹ ‘Mark this attentively’ *The Crisis Stated* warns, ‘those who are desperate, are for the most part invincible.’²² If Revolutionary France was a nation making war solely to claim and defend its right to freedom then to declare war was to act in direct opposition to the central values and principles of the British Army, particularly as the Revolutionaries had not yet

¹⁴ *The Crisis Stated*, p2

¹⁵ *The Crisis Stated*, p 5

¹⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p172

¹⁷ *The Crisis Stated*, p8

¹⁸ *The Crisis Stated*, p8

¹⁹ *The Crisis Stated*, p9

²⁰ *The Crisis Stated*, p9

²¹ *The Crisis Stated*, p9

²² *The Crisis Stated*, p9

threatened national safety. And if so, the author suggests, then any such conflict must be doomed to suffer the same fate as the American Wars of Independence.

The concerns of *The Crisis Stated* are echoed in a further pamphlet from the same author in the February of 1793 entitled *Considerations Preliminary to the Commencement of a War, with Remarks upon a Late Melancholy Event*. This second pamphlet responded to the execution of Louis XVI and the subsequent expulsion of the French ambassador from the English court, the act that would lead to the declaration of war upon Britain by the Revolutionaries, as did another pamphlet published by James Ridgway: *War with France! Or, Who Pays the Reckoning? In an Appeal to the People of England*.²³ Though no exact date is given to *Who Pays the Reckoning* – the title page gives only 1793 – in its references to the execution of French king and the declaration of war we might presume it to have appeared sometime between February and March, alongside *Considerations*. Like *The Crisis Stated* and *Considerations*, *Who Pays the Reckoning?* questions the need for Britain to pursue war and warns of its potential for devastation to all levels of society: ‘What then! Are nations to be involved in war – are millions to be made miserable, the poor to be stinted of wholesome food, by the excessive price; the middle class to be deprived of conveniences; all classes of men to suffer the agonising loss of parents, husbands, brothers, butchered in the field of battle’²³. War, these pamphlets suggest, had no place in the society of polite, cultured eighteenth-century Britain. ‘In times of ignorance and barbarism’, the author of *Who Pays the Reckoning?* Argues, ‘wars were indeed inevitable. In those times, men, ignorant of the Arts and Sciences, and without an idea of the sweets of social life, could not enjoy, could not feel the blessings of peace.’²⁴ Such statements are reminiscent of Hurd’s arguments in *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*: conflict may have been a necessary tool to maintain order and enforce justice in a feudal system, but was at odds with the values of eighteenth-century British polite society. But what both pamphlets go on to suggest is that war has the potential to corrupt and ruin not only a nation’s morality and economy, but also its men. Thus, rather than a tool by which a strong, non-effeminate masculinity could be constructed, military training and active service is figured here as a force which fundamentally alters and perverts it. ‘In what war are not the innocent slaughtered, and involved with the guilty indiscriminate ruin?’ asks *Who Pays the Reckoning?*, noting that ‘old soldiers, who have been in ‘many a well-fought field’ and are

²³ *War with France! Or, Who Pays the Reckoning? In an Appeal to the People of England* (London: J. Ridgway, 1793), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/sheffield.idm.oclc.org/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CB3326423503&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 14th January 2019], p12

²⁴ *Who Pays the Reckoning*, p29

men of apparent humanity, press forward with their service, on the rumour of war, and solicit to be employed in it.’²⁵

The Crisis Stated’s criticism of the making of men into soldiers focuses on ‘the evils’ of the enlistment drives during times of conflict, inevitably resulting in a large disbanded army (as was the case, as Chapter One discussed, following the Seven Years War). The pamphlet argues that the disbanded soldier is ‘without the power of regaining their former stations in society, their morals corrupted, their health impaired, their hopes defeated.’²⁶ War, the author suggests, not only takes men from their professions but makes them unable to return to them as ‘their habits of industry [are] broken, their skill in their ancient occupations diminished by disuse.’²⁷ *Who Pays the Reckoning?* echoes the same concerns, as well as Wollstonecraft’s criticisms of the soldiers’ education in *Vindications of the Rights of Woman*. The pamphlet declares that:

War is reduced to a system, – men are educated for it, as for a liberal profession, – they are formed into bodies, and maintained for this very purpose. – At first, they probably engage without feeling more than the brightside – a life of conviviality – the honor attached to the profession, and the friendly welcome they experience in all parts of the country, confirm their predilection; and soon the habit of indolence renders them unfit for any other employ, – the die is cast! – And though they are afterwards shocked at the horrors of war, yet looking upon it as inevitable, necessity teaches them to steel their hearts! They resolve, and wisely resolve, not to think of the evils which they cannot prevent. – A state of idleness too, to those whose educations do not enable them to avoid, or their fortunes to enliven it by dissipation, is so irksome, that the miseries of war, which are expected to be but temporary, may often be preferable.²⁸

Whilst both texts are referring primarily here to the hundreds of men enlisted as private soldiers during times of conflict – being lower-class men who were taken away from trade professions and most likely to be at the forefront of any combat – arguably these criticisms apply also to the officer classes. Whilst the vast majority of officers were young men of the middle and upper classes whose commissions had been purchased – and who were therefore educated and most often financially stable – officers were too moulded for military life, responsible for the training and maintaining of the standards of their regiments. What both authors express here is a fear that Britain’s engagement in renewed, and likely long term, conflict with France would cause lasting disruption and devastation across the country. According to Linda Colley, by 1793 ‘the danger of a massive French invasion was [so] great’ that the British government had no choice but to rely on the patriotism of its people,²⁹ yet the concerns of these pamphlets (and those discussed in the previous chapters) suggest that confidence in the abilities of the ruling elite was shaken by the defeat in America. The

²⁵ *Who Pays the Reckoning*, p28

²⁶ *The Crisis Stated*, p19

²⁷ *The Crisis Stated*, p19

²⁸ *Who Pays the Reckoning*, p28

²⁹ Colley, p284

Revolution, Colley claims, had called ‘into question the very legitimacy of the power elite’³⁰ and with it, arguably, the British military. The officer class - responsible for both the management of men and the execution of campaigns - was staffed predominantly by members of that very elite: indeed the same class of men who had been educated in a model of masculinity that had drawn criticisms and concerns regarding excess and effeminacy. The military again, then, becomes a source of anxiety: in their devotion to the King, both *The Crisis Stated* and *Who Pays the Reckoning* suggest, the British army was too open to corruption and misuse. If conflict with France was to be pursued, would an entire generation of men again be perverted by the pursuit of war, by the whims of their officers and the aristocracy’s desire for power and wealth? But invasion, regardless of these fears, remained an increasingly worrying possibility. Despite its protestations about the destructive powers of war, the author of *The Crisis Stated* and *Considerations* is far from absolute in their pacifism: ‘if our enemies have refused to negotiate, and menace us with instant and unprovoked hostilities; then [...] let us join in vigorous preparations for a successful campaign.’³¹ Whilst all three paragraphs echo the notion that war ‘commenced to a contrary reason, contrary to justice’ can lead only to ‘calamity’³², they also acknowledge not only that war may be an inescapable reality but also that the Englishman’s passionate answer to the call to arms is a natural response. (again, though addressed to the British public, these pamphlets speak more directly of English rather than British characteristics). Here *Considerations* reveals a crucial anxiety, one that would permeate the Wars of the First Coalition, about the paradoxical nature of British national identity and patriotism. Whilst it would be against the British constitution to pursue a war that opposed another nation’s freedom from absolute monarchy for the purposes of aristocratic greed and gain, to refuse the call to arms would be inherently ‘un-British’; not least when a failure to rise to the French declaration of war might result in invasion.

Therefore while both authors decry the barbarity of war and its devastation – ‘What then! Are nations to be involved in war – are millions to be made miserable, the poor to be stinted of wholesome food’³³ – they also acknowledge that conflict, and importantly the willingness to answer the call to arms, form a crucial part of Englishness and more broadly, Britishness. What these pamphlets reveal, therefore, is a paradox at the centre of British national identity and – by consequence – masculinity. To pursue war was archaic and barbarous, an inherently feudal relic of a bygone age at odds with the ideals of sensibility and husbandry. The Seven Years and the American Wars had proven that the army was too easily led astray by their commanding

³⁰ Colley, p152

³¹ *Considerations Preliminary to the Commencement of a War, with Remarks upon a Late Melancholy Event* (London: J. Ridgway, 1793), p23

³² *Considerations*, p23

³³ *Who Pays the Reckoning*, p12

officers, the private soldier rendered other by his military training and his patriotism misused for greed and gain benefiting only the ruling elite. Yet the imagining of an idealised British identity, of a gentleman descended from the age of chivalry, was rooted around notions of a national martial prowess and fearless bravery. It is these conflicting ideologies and their resulting anxieties, this chapter will suggest, that problematize the masculinities found in the Gothic novels published during the War of the First Coalition: chiefly, Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. As Angela Wright notes, 'the combined escalation of military and literary hostilities towards France in the 1790's undoubtedly took its toll upon [Radcliffe's] optimism in justice and integration'³⁴ but arguably also in masculinity. Unlike its predecessors, the masculinities of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* are all fundamentally lacking; there is no Ferdinand or Theodore, nor is there a happy ending glorified by military service. Rather *Udolpho* is a novel of masculinity in a crisis of excess: an excess, however, that leads not just to effeminacy but to monstrosity.

In *Strange Fits of Passion* (1996) Adela Pinch characterised *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as a novel of nostalgia. 'It is easy to imagine', Pinch claims, 'what a popular novel of the 1790's might be nostalgic for: a landscape different from the changing countryside of agrarian capitalism; a landscape in which peasants danced, rather than a countryside in which relations between classes displaced and threatened many; a world in which one could travel freely.'³⁵ However, whilst *Udolpho* might yearn for a time of 'idealized, unanxious leisure' untouched by war, Pinch notes that it is crucial to read the novel's nostalgia 'not simply as a conservative, Burkean sentiment'³⁶. Rather 'nostalgia poses a circular relationship between event and emotion' that allows for, or creates, a radical exploration of feeling: 'It looks back to a lost object in order to generate desire, inventing contexts for its own emotions. At the same time, the nostalgic mode uses the feelings it generates in looking back as evidence with which to canonize the lost object or event as an origin.'³⁷ The narrative of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is permeated by both physical and emotional loss: lives, lands, fortunes, and reputations are all lost, as well as innocence, fortitude, and affection. In Radcliffe's previous novels, the sufferings and losses endured by the heroes and heroines are eventually rewarded; in the resolutions of these texts, more than a return to stability is gained. Property and birth rights are restored, lost relatives are uncovered, and happy marriages are made. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, *A Sicilian Romance*, and *The Romance of the Forest* the situation of the characters at the end of the novel is superior to that at the start: the protagonists are blessed with happy endings for withstanding the terror experience. In *Athlin and Dunbayne*, for example, Laura and her mother are released from their

³⁴ Wright, p105

³⁵ Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p118

³⁶ Pinch, p118

³⁷ Pinch, p119

imprisonment within Dunbayne, Alleyn is elevated from peasant to Baron and the murder of the old Earl is revenged. In *A Sicilian Romance* Louisa de Mazzini is happily restored to her children and Ferdinand is gloried by military service, whilst in *The Romance of The Forest* Adeline uncovers her true heritage, thus providing her not only with land and title to appease her orphan status but with the family (both by blood and marriage) she has desired. In *Udolpho*, however, Emily St. Aubert's return to the stability and comfort of La Vallée is bittersweet, ultimately failing to outweigh the losses she has suffered during the course of the novel. Though Emily is able to return to La Vallée, she is unable to truly restore it.

As Maggie Kilgour notes, La Vallée at the start of the novel 'is a sheltered and highly sentimental world, a version of a Rousseauian ideal community, presided over by the wise and benevolent St Aubert.'³⁸ While the novel's final page tells that 'the bowers of La Vallée became, once more, the retreat of goodness, wisdom and domestic bliss'³⁹, La Vallée can never be returned to the idyll it once was: Emily's return is coloured by her traumatic experiences at Udolpho, by St. Aubert's death, and by Valancourt's transgressions in Paris. Though Jenny DiPlacidi has argued that unlike earlier heroines 'Emily can return to La Vallée without it being a restoration of conservative values because it represents a family structure removed from the cycle of violence, imprisonment and male ownership'⁴⁰ she can never truly recover what has been lost. La Vallée may again become a sanctuary from the vices of the outside world, but it can never again be the idyllic Eden of her childhood: in her return, Emily brings with her the terror she has experienced outside. At the root of Emily's suffering is not solely loss, then, but absence and lack, specifically in the masculinities that surround her. Emily is repeatedly failed by those who would or should be her protectors, terrorised by not only the 'villains' but also the supposed heroes. The men of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* are all in some way fundamentally without, leaving them unable to properly fulfil their masculine roles and thus forcing Emily to do so in their stead. Made to embody both the position of hero and heroine, Emily is sacrificing her femininity in order to survive and thus at risk of Othering herself: if the fashioning of men into gentleman could render them as Other by encouraging them to become too feminine, then Emily's need to take on masculine qualities places her in danger of the same. Whilst Maggie Kilgour has noted that the narrative functions in many ways as *Bildungsroman*⁴¹; the terror experienced by Emily at the hands of the men who seek to control or possess her serves as an analogy for both the chaotic consequences of war and the dangers of failed masculinity.

³⁸ Kilgour, p114

³⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p672

⁴⁰ Jenny DiPlacidi, *Gothic Incest: Gender, sexuality and transgression* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), p168

⁴¹ Kilgour, p136

'All excess is vicious'⁴² Monsieur St. Aubert cautions his daughter in the early pages of the novel. St. Aubert's warning to Emily, delivered in response to her grief on the death of Madame St. Aubert, is echoed again on his death bed five chapters later: 'Above all, my dear Emily, do not indulge in the pride of fine feeling, the romantic error of amiable minds.'⁴³ 'Our sense of evil is, I fear, more acute than our sense of good', St. Aubert advises Emily, and 'we become the victims of our feelings, unless we can in some degree command them.'⁴⁴ St. Aubert's warnings frame the events that follow: Emily, denied control of her own destiny, is moved across Europe by those unable to regulate and control their passions, vices, and emotions. However for all his wisdom, St. Aubert fails to properly fulfil his role as patriarch: descended 'from the younger branch of an illustrious family' St. Aubert is burdened by 'a deficiency of his patrimonial wealth', yet possesses 'too nice a sense of honour' and 'too small a portion of ambition' to 'sacrifice what he called happiness' in the pursuit of wealth through marriage or social climbing⁴⁵. Inheriting his father's financial debts, St. Aubert is forced first to 'dispose of a part of the family domain' and later to sell the remaining to Monsieur Quesnel. Gero Bauer argues that 'of all the male characters in Radcliffe's novel', St. Aubert is 'the least traditionally masculine of them all'.⁴⁶ And yet he is the most significant cause of anxiety for Emily: it is due to his secretive behaviour regarding the portrait of (as we later learn) his sister, the Marchioness de Villeroi, and his instruction that she must never sell the chateau that Emily experiences such distress. Similarly, whilst St. Aubert's situation is framed by the novel as misfortune and his actions admirable – his retirement to La Vallée is a place 'where conjugal felicity, and parental duties, divided his attention with the treasure of knowledge and the illumination of genius'⁴⁷ – his refusal to secure his fortunes and his retreat from society leave Emily with little to no protection after his death. Without significant connections or relations, St. Aubert must leave Emily to the care of his sister, Madame Cheron, with whom they have 'had little intercourse for some years'. Though St. Aubert professes that Madame Cheron 'is not exactly the person, to whom I would have committed my Emily'⁴⁸ he has little choice but to make her his daughter's guardian: she is Emily's closest female relative, with they have no other friendships to call on. Though her 'native genius' had been 'assisted by the instructions of Monsieur and Madame St. Aubert, making her an early proficient' in those 'elegant arts' which were 'congenial to her taste'⁴⁹, Emily's education is deficient when it comes to society. Whilst St. Aubert's retirement from society and his education

⁴² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p20

⁴³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p79

⁴⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p80

⁴⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p2

⁴⁶ Gero Bauer, *Houses, Secrets, and the Closet: Locating Masculinities from the Gothic Novel to Henry James* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2016), p76

⁴⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p2

⁴⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p117

⁴⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p3

of Emily allow her natural talents and sensibilities to flourish within La Vallée, upon his death she is left inexperienced and relatively unprotected. Though he cautions frequently of the dangers of great cities, 'where selfish dissipation, and insincerity supply the place of tenderness, simplicity and truth', St. Aubert neglects to consider that Emily might be forced into them despite his warnings, thus leaving her unprepared for either their schemes or social etiquettes. Unable to navigate the aristocratic society into which she is brought by Madam Cheron and without the means to exercise her own will, Emily is forced to resign herself to those who would control and possess her for their own gains. In failing to properly provide for Emily, St. Aubert, despite his many fine qualities, ultimately fails to fulfil the ideals of eighteenth-century husbandry. As Claudia L. Johnson argues, 'St. Aubert is remarkable for his insufficiency: he cannot prosecute his sister's murder, he cannot keep possession of his paternal estate [...] he cannot manage his affairs, and he cannot control his tears.'⁵⁰ Nor, arguably, can he properly support or protect his daughter. St. Aubert's paradoxical status as both an ideal and failed father, sets the tone for the rest of the masculinities in the novel: the men of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* all exist within a paradox, and are never quite what they ought to be.

Just as the landscapes witnessed by Emily in her journeys to Venice and later Udolpho are marked by warfare and conflict, so too is her narrative following the death of her father. Though infringed upon by other suitors – the Count Morano in Venice and Du Pont on her escape from Udolpho – it is the young Valancourt, Emily's lover, and the Count Montoni, her uncle by marriage, who dominate the majority of her story. Both are, ostensibly, martial men: Valancourt is a Chevalier in the French military, and Montoni forms a band of condottieri at Udolpho, establishing himself as a military leader. Though 'Valancourt had been educated in all the accomplishments of his age, and had an ardour of spirit, and a certain grandeur of mind, that gave him particular excellence in the exercises then thought heroic'⁵¹ he is a somewhat unwilling soldier: his duty to his regiment forces him away from both his Romantic pursuits and, later, from Emily. By contrast Montoni, whose eyes 'at the mention of any daring exploit, [...] lost their sullenness, and seemed to gleam with fire'⁵², desires military might and splendour, having met the commanders of the condottieri 'at the gaming parties of Venice and Padua, [and] conceived a desire to emulate their characters.'⁵³ Ultimately however it is money, or the lack of money, that drives both Valancourt and Montoni into military service. It is Montoni's ruined fortunes and his continued greed that eventually 'tempted him to adapt [the condottieri's] practices'⁵⁴. Valancourt, as a chevalier, may be a 'legitimate' soldier but he is only so by necessity:

⁵⁰ Johnson, p99

⁵¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p116

⁵² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p171

⁵³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p359

⁵⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p358

as a second son he requires employment to supplement his limited inheritance, and the military was 'almost the only [profession] in which a gentleman could engage without incurring a stain on his name; and La Valancourt was of course enrolled in the army.'⁵⁵ For both men, therefore, conflict exists not as a noble pursuit in the defence of national virtues but as the means for financial gain. Valancourt's elder brother encourages his military career, hoping that 'his genius and accomplishments would amply supply the deficiency of his inheritance' as they 'offered flattering hopes of promotion in the military profession'⁵⁶ whilst Montoni uses the turbulent state of Italy to amass wealth with his band of condottieri. This notion of conflict for the purposes of material gain echoes the concerns of *The Crisis Stated* and *Who Pays the Reckoning*, complicating the military heroism of Radcliffe's earlier novels. In *the Mysteries of Udolpho*, the figure of the soldier is problematised by both the hero and the villain's failings. Valancourt is a reluctant soldier, forced by necessity and eventually led into criminality rather than glory by his profession. Montoni is a skilled swordsman who, in his leadership of the condottieri, demonstrates 'how capable he was of adding to its strength all the advantages, which could be derived from the skill of a commander'⁵⁷, yet his military pursuits serve a selfish purpose and lead eventually to his downfall. Both Montoni and Valancourt, it is implied, have the potential to be brilliant but are perverted by their societies and employments. *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Johnson claims, 'dramatizes the polarization within masculinity characteristic of the 1790s.'⁵⁸ Though Valancourt and Montoni exist in opposition within the text, as sentimental hero and rational villain, they are nonetheless frequently aligned. Both men are guilty of excess, caused by the lack or absence of the opposite quality, which their martial identities fuel rather than regulate or refine.

For Montoni and Valancourt, excess does not corrupt by effeminising but by making them monstrous, as both become figures of terror to Emily. Whilst Valancourt possesses 'a frank and generous nature' and fine sensibility, he is also 'highly susceptible to what is grand and beautiful, but impetuous, wild and somewhat romantic.'⁵⁹ Over the course of the novel Valancourt is frequently in a state of emotional excess, overcome by his feeling and unable to see sense or reason, which not only causes Emily distress but forces her to suppress her own emotions to soothe his. Though Montoni does not indulge in emotional excesses like Valancourt, firmly dismissing feeling and sentimentality in favour of rationality and reason, his desire for wealth and power ultimately drives him too to excess. Crucially, the excess of both men leads to the same avarice: gambling. Separated from Emily and unable to regulate his emotion, Valancourt is

⁵⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p117

⁵⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p117

⁵⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p521

⁵⁸ Johnson, p98

⁵⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p41

swayed by the glamour of Paris (and by the behaviour of his regiment) and succumbs to vice at the gaming table. Gambling, as Maggie Kilgour notes, is 'a vice also associated with Montoni, suggesting again the proximity between even the most sentimental hero and the mercenary self-interested individual.'⁶⁰ Like Montoni, Valancourt's loss of fortune and reputation through gambling criminalises him and results twice in his imprisonment (though the second is later revealed to be for noble cause). As a result, for both men Emily - or more specifically the possession of Emily - becomes the means by which they may restore and redeem themselves. Emily's inheritance offers both hero and villain the financial stability that they require, although Valancourt also desires Emily's affection and rationality to serve as the regulator he lacks. Emily, refusing to sign over Madame Cheron's estates after her death, is subjected to the full force of Montoni's violent temper: 'Montoni turned pale with anger, while his quivering lip and lurking eye made her almost repent the boldness of her speech.'⁶¹ Montoni attempts to use Emily's virtues to manipulate and control her, and is made monstrous by his lack of chivalry or compassion when faced with her distress. Yet during their reunion at the Chateau-Le-Blanc, Valancourt's attempts to maintain Emily's affections after she learns of his ruin prevent her from speaking and cause terror:

'You are not going?' said he, wildly interrupting her - 'You will not leave me thus - you will not abandon me even before my mind has suggested any possibility of compromise between the last indulgence of my despair and the endurance of my loss!' Emily was terrified by the sternness of his look.⁶²

Valancourt and Montoni are thus aligned in their criminality and resulting behaviour, blurring the line between hero and villain as they each become a source of fear for the heroine. If, as the previous chapter suggested, the heroine was symbolic of national virtue, then this distortion of the boundaries between heroic and villainous masculinity speaks to an anxiety not only about the forging of national masculinity, but its effects on the nation at large. Both Valancourt and Montoni are perverted by their excess, rendered Other not by effeminacy but by an unrestrained masculinity that threatens to destroy the heroine. Both men encroach upon Emily's mental and physical state: their pursuits cause her significant psychological distress (twice resulting in illness). Though Valancourt does not attempt to possess Emily's estates as Montoni does, he cannot resist trespassing within them. As Adela Pinch suggests, Valancourt, in the scene where he is mistaken for a trespasser on Emily's estate and shot in the final volume of the novel, 'can be seen as threatening Emily with territorial encroachment [which] makes the

⁶⁰ Kilgour, p136

⁶¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p394

⁶² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p515

lover's approaches seem dangerously close to those of her persecutor, Montoni, who pursues Emily chiefly for her estates.'⁶³

Valancourt and Montoni, then, are at once contrasted and conflated throughout the novel. Their excessive passions terrorise the heroine and are therefore in direct opposition to the values of chivalry; rather than remove the damsel from distress, they become the root cause of it and are thus framed as monstrous. Yet what further complicates these modes of masculinity is that, although they are rendered excessive through a lack of balance, both Valancourt and Montoni are at turns presented as attractive and ideal models of manliness. Discussing *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* anachronisms, Johnson argues that Radcliffe 'reached far back to the hypermachismo of the *condottieri* to represent a historically actual, as opposed to purely imaginary, version of masculinity unencumbered by sentimental inhibitions of any sort without evoking the French Revolution in its particularity.'⁶⁴ It is the novel's anachronisms, Johnson claims, that allowed 'Radcliffe to juxtapose "modern" sentimental man with an affectively untrammelled avatar'⁶⁵ and create her Gothic allegory. 'Montoni's warlike virility' and his aggressive hypermasculinity 'brings the manoeuvres of sentimental masculinity into clear focus', revealing that the crisis of masculinity in 1794 arose not just from anxieties over the effect of women on masculinity but from the tensions 'between men and men.'⁶⁶ At the heart of *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* masculine crisis therefore are two factors: firstly, the failure of military societies to properly forge and form masculinities, and secondly, that whilst both the hero and villain become monstrous through excess, terrorising the heroine and threatening her virtue, they are *both* attractive to her.

Emily's time at both Venice and Udolpho is marked by the absence of Valancourt and the presence of Montoni. Introduced following the funeral of Madame St. Aubert as 'a man of about forty', the Signor Montoni is 'of an uncommonly handsome person, with features manly and expressive, but whose countenance exhibited, upon the whole, more the haughtiness of command and the quickness of discernment, than any other character'⁶⁷. Meeting again whilst at Thoulouse with her aunt, Emily observes that 'Montoni had an air of conscious superiority, animated by spirits, and strengthened by talents, to which every person seemed involuntarily to yield.'⁶⁸ Despite his earlier description, Emily perceives that Montoni's handsomeness comes not from his features but from 'the spirit and vigour of his soul, sparkling through'⁶⁹ them. Emily

⁶³ Pinch, p126

⁶⁴ Johnson, p98

⁶⁵ Johnson, p98-99

⁶⁶ Johnson, p99

⁶⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p23

⁶⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p122

⁶⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p122

immediately senses a tension in Montoni's masculinity, between the heroic and the villainous: 'Emily felt admiration, but the admiration that leads to esteem for it was mixed with a degree of fear she knew not exactly wherefore.'⁷⁰ The conflict in Emily's initial response to Montoni foreshadows not only his ability to threaten and terrify her, but her troubling admiration for – or even attraction to – his aggressive model of manliness. As Johnson has noted, 'one of the most problematic ironies of *Udolpho* is that Emily's training in self-control favourably disposes her towards Montoni'⁷¹. Unlike the Marquis de Montalt, whose fine qualities are learnt arts to conceal the devious nature of person, Montoni's superior, almost heroic, qualities are natural; they exist in spite of his flaws, to complicate rather than conceal his status as the novel's villain. Montoni's speeches frequently echo those of St. Aubert, in his warnings against excess: 'If you will not release yourself from the slavery of these fears,' said Montoni, sternly, 'at least forbear to torment others by the mention of them. Conquer such whims, and endeavour to strengthen your mind. No existence is more contemptible than that, which is embittered by fear.'⁷²

The villain of the Radcliffean Gothic creates terror in the heroine and reader by the suggestion – be it through threats, current schemes or past actions – that he will transgress the laws of chivalry and sensibility. 'What makes the character of Montoni so threateningly powerful to Emily and to the reader', Gero Bauer argues, is 'his capacity to mystify'⁷³. In his mystery, the novel renders Montoni (whilst Emily is in Italy) as sublime. Watching Montoni during their time in Venice, Emily becomes conscious of Montoni's plotting but is unable to discern its reason or purpose and watches him 'with deep interest, and not without some degree of awe'⁷⁴. It is during these moments, too, that Emily becomes aware that she 'was entirely in his power'⁷⁵. Both Emily and the reader are, for much of the novel, unable to ascertain the reason or motives for Montoni's actions, a mystery which 'both fascinates and scares Emily'⁷⁶. Regarding him at Thoulouse, Emily becomes increasingly aware of Montoni's intentions to court her aunt, yet cannot determine the reason for such an ill-suited match: 'That Madame Cheron at her years should elect a second husband was ridiculous, though her vanity made it not impossible; but that Montoni, with his discernment, his figure and pretensions. should make a choice of Madame Cheron - appeared most wonderful.'⁷⁷ The eventual wedding of Madame Cheron and Montoni not only supplants and prevents her own to Valancourt, but, as his marriage thus makes him the patriarchal head of her family, places Emily directly in the power of Montoni. Despite

⁷⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p122

⁷¹ Johnson, p104

⁷² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p244

⁷³ Bauer, p66

⁷⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p192

⁷⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p192

⁷⁶ Bauer, p66

⁷⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p133

Valancourt's discovery that 'Montoni was a man of desperate fortune and character'⁷⁸, Emily – not yet of age – has no choice but to submit to the will of her new patriarch. Though the events that pass in Venice (as Montoni attempts to marry Emily to the Count Morano for financial gain) confirm both Valancourt's warnings regarding his status and the dangerous lack of sentiment or chivalry in his character, the sublimity of Montoni's masculinity continues to complicate his role as villain. Emily is repeatedly in awe of Montoni, struck less by his physicality or appearance than by the hints of his interior intelligence and the passions she witnesses. Although Montoni is physically threatening – we witness his superiority to other men in his demeanour and his swordsmanship – it is these mysterious motives and hidden passions that at once intrigue and terrify.

Emily, we are told, has 'never liked Montoni': even at their earliest acquaintance she observes 'the fire and keenness of his eye, its proud exultation, its bold fierceness, its sullen watchfulness, as occasion, and even slight occasion, had called forth the latent soul'⁷⁹ and is troubled by his demeanour and his possible motives. Yet Emily is also frequently, despite herself, in awe of Montoni's masculinity. The feudal sublimity of the Italian landscapes enhances the superiority of Montoni's masculinity, in a way that is unsettling to both Emily and the reader. Johnson remarks that Emily 'never beholds Montoni without marking the sublimity of his maleness'⁸⁰ and that, in her predisposition toward sense and reason, she 'is spellbound by Montoni's masculine mystique'⁸¹. Despite his haughty pride and cold demeanour, it is suggested that Montoni, like Valancourt, possess qualities naturally suited to the heroic. Observing his delight in the discussion of military exploits, Emily notes that whilst the fire in Montoni's eyes 'partook more of the glare of malice than the brightness of valour' that 'the latter would well have harmonised with the high chivalric air of his figure, in which Cavigni, with all his gay and gallant manners, was his inferior.'⁸² Though 'for Montoni, chivalric love is emasculating, invaluating the hierarchy that dictates the submission of women to men, obscuring a man's 'discernment''⁸³, in his manliness Emily nonetheless perceives the potential for the heroic. As such, Montoni stands apart from the Gothic villains of previous texts. Unlike the Marquis de Montalt or Walpole's Manfred 'Montoni is not a creature of high passion'⁸⁴, nor is he moved by a lust for sex and pleasure. Rather 'two contradictory imperatives pull at his characterization: as a gothic villain, he must be cruel, but as an exemplar of nonsentimental manhood, he must champion the values

⁷⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p156

⁷⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p157

⁸⁰ Johnson, p104

⁸¹ Johnson, p104

⁸² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p171-72

⁸³ Johnson, p103

⁸⁴ Johnson, p103

of reason and moderation.⁸⁵ This paradox in Montoni's identity is further highlighted by the sublimity he commands whilst at the castle of Udolpho. Kilgour suggests that Udolpho's 'sublime rule over the natural world mirrors Montoni's total authority over Emily within it.'⁸⁶ Montoni, according to Kilgour, 'is the human version of the mountains' surrounding the castle 'whose impenetrability reveals to Emily her lack of power over her own fate and keeps her in the dark'.⁸⁷ Just as Emily beholds the mountains with a mixture of fear and pleasure, so too does she behold Montoni. Thus, once transported to Udolpho, the sublimity of Montoni's masculinity is heightened by the landscape he commands.

Unlike her affections for Valancourt, Emily's attraction to the sense and reason, illuminated by manly vigour and prowess, of Montoni is never realised within the text: though in his fortifications at Udolpho, Montoni's masculinity may initially succeed where St. Aubert and Valancourt fail, the inherently feudal nature of his character is unsustainable. Whilst Montoni is initially implied to be able to control his temper by his devotion to sense and reason, his lack of chivalry or sentiment force Montoni into excess. During the duel with Count Morano following his attempted kidnap of Emily at Udolpho, Montoni is overcome by his unregulated passion for violence in a scene that renders him literally monstrous: 'But Montoni, who had seldom listened to pity, now seemed rapacious of vengeance, and, with a monster's cruelty, ordered his defeated enemy to be taken from the castle, in his present state, though there were only the woods, or a solitary neighbouring cottage, to shelter him from the night.'⁸⁸ Montoni's downfall, consequently, is that for all his speeches in favour of rational reason and manly restraint, he too is unable to regulate his avarice. Despite his martial prowess and skill as a commander, Montoni's condottieri exist not as a legitimate martial society but as a tool by which he seeks to satisfy his greed. The condottieri, as discussed in the previous chapter, complicate the idea of the military as chivalric force because they function for profit and to serve a greater good. Their presence both at the castle and in the novel raises the question of how military bodies were regulated and whether the public could trust them. Whilst it is the chaos caused by the unregulated military society under Montoni's command that so terrifies Emily whilst at Udolpho, forcing her to submit to Montoni's will in a vain attempt to protect herself, it also provides her with the opportunity to escape after discovering Du Pont. Indeed, once Emily is able to escape the confines of Udolpho, the threat posed by Montoni is largely diminished. As the mysteries of the novel begin to unravel, so too does Montoni's power: Emily discovers that Montoni has not acquired the castle from the Signora Laurentini through nefarious or violent means, but rather

⁸⁵ Johnson, p103

⁸⁶ Kilgour, p119

⁸⁷ Kilgour, p119

⁸⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p267

that he has assumed ownership of it in her absence. Despite his earlier capacity to inspire awe and terror, Montoni's excess undercuts the success of his masculinity: so swift and simple is the campaign to overthrow Udolpho that it 'prevented it from attracting curiosity, or even from obtaining a place in any of the published records of that time; so that Emily, who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and signal humiliation of her late persecutor.'⁸⁹ Yet despite the ultimate failure of his masculinity and his anti-climatic death off page, 'Montoni, too, often rose to [Emily's] fancy, such as she had seen him in his days of triumph bold, spirited and commanding'.⁹⁰ Though Emily's recollections of Montoni are scarred by his crimes against her, her contemplation that 'he had no longer the power, or the will to afflict; - had become a clod of earth, and his life was vanished like a shadow!'⁹¹, arguably indicates a sense of loss; not at the loss of life, necessarily, but at the loss of potential.

Valancourt's introduction to *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is reminiscent of that of Theodore in *The Romance of the Forest*: finding themselves on a desolate road with 'no human being to assist or direct them'⁹², the St. Auberts' carriage is disturbed by the sound of firearms and a hunting horn 'that made the mountains ring'⁹³. Alarmed, 'St Aubert drew forth a pistol, and ordered Michael to proceed as fast as possible'⁹⁴ yet the origin of the noise is revealed a moment later to be a 'a young man [...] followed by a couple of dogs': 'The stranger was in a hunter's dress. His gun was slung across his shoulders, the hunters horn hung from his belt, and in his hand was a small pike, which, as he held it, added to the manly grace of his figure, and assisted the agility of his steps.'⁹⁵ Like Theodore's first appearance to Adeline, Valancourt at first poses a potential threat to Emily and her father; the scene is somewhat repeated, later in their journey, when Valancourt is mistakenly shot whilst attempting to catch up to the St. Auberts. Whereas Adeline initially flees from Theodore, St. Aubert pauses to ask the stranger for directions and 'pleased with his chevalier-like air and open countenance'⁹⁶ offers him a seat in their carriage. Just as Adeline later decides that a man of Theodore's countenance could not possibly pose a threat to her, Valancourt's initial appearance signals both to the St. Auberts and the reader his heroic qualities. Enquiring after his success at the hunt, Valancourt informs St. Aubert that 'I am pleased with the country, and mean to saunter away a few weeks among its scenes. My dogs I take with me more for companionship than for game. This dress, too, gives me an ostensible business, and procures

⁸⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p 552

⁹⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p580

⁹¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p580

⁹² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p31

⁹³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p31

⁹⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p31

⁹⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p31

⁹⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p31

me a respect from the people'⁹⁷. St. Aubert is impressed with the young man's interest in nature over the hyper machismo of the hunt, which indicates to the reader in turn Valancourt's preference for the sentimental over the traditionally masculine. St. Aubert is 'much pleased' by Valancourt's 'manly frankness, simplicity, and keen susceptibility to the grandeur of nature'⁹⁸, but also observes in him 'the real ingenuousness and ardour of youth.'⁹⁹ Watching Valancourt's interactions with both the surrounding landscapes and other passing travellers, St. Aubert remarks to himself – and therefore also the reader – that 'this young man has never been to Paris.'¹⁰⁰ Whilst St. Aubert's remark is intended to signal that Valancourt's is a brilliance untouched by the vices and corruption of the city, it also reveals his naivety. Valancourt, it becomes clear, 'had known little of this world': 'His perceptions were clear, and his feelings just; his indignation of an unworthy, or his admiration of a generous action, were expressed in terms of equal vehemence.'¹⁰¹ Like Emily, Valancourt's mind is 'unbiased by intercourse with the world [...] his opinions were formed, rather than imbibed; were more the result of thought, than of learning.'¹⁰²

The mutual attraction between Emily and Valancourt is signalled early to the reader, as St. Aubert observes Valancourt 'look with an earnest and pensive eye at Emily' as they first take their leave of him and Emily's returning bow 'with a countenance full of timid sweetness.'¹⁰³ On being invited to continue with them upon their journey, the young couple bond over their appreciation of the sublime landscape and are joined in the eyes of St. Aubert by their innocent, unaffected sensibilities:

St. Aubert, as he sometimes lingered to examine the wild plants in his path, often looked forward with pleasure to Emily and Valancourt, as they strolled on together; he, with a countenance of animated delight, pointing to her attention some grand feature of the scene; and she, listening and observing with a look of tender seriousness, that spoke the elevation of her mind. They appeared like two lovers who had never strayed beyond these their native mountains; whose situation had secluded them from the frivolities of common life, whose ideas were simple and grand, like the landscapes among which they moved, and who knew no other happiness, than in the union of pure and affectionate hearts. St. Aubert smiled, and sighed at the romantic picture of felicity his fancy drew; and sighed again to think, that nature and simplicity were so little known to the world, as that their pleasures were thought romantic.¹⁰⁴

The scenes between Valancourt and Emily demonstrate not only their growing affection, but Valancourt's worthiness as Emily's suitor. Influenced by both St. Aubert and the splendour of

⁹⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p32

⁹⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p34

⁹⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p36

¹⁰⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p36

¹⁰¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p41

¹⁰² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p49

¹⁰³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p36

¹⁰⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p49

the landscape, Valancourt is attentive and conscientious to Emily's needs and desires; the quality of his mind complements hers, suggesting to the reader an ideal match. However, though St. Aubert happily observes the increasing tenderness between the couple and professes himself pleased with the young man's open nature, the reader cannot avoid Valancourt's rashness. Though the 'fire and simplicity of his manners'¹⁰⁵ is in harmony with the sublime landscapes surrounding them, Valancourt's actions demonstrate even early in the text an inability to weight his emotional responses with reason. The suggestion of Valancourt's 'fire', of an unchecked passion that informs his manners, also places him curiously close to Montoni, suggesting a troubling tempestuousness that has been neither refined or softened by his education. Having parted with the St. Auberts after their first meeting at the roadside, Valancourt determined that 'since [his] object was merely amusement, to change the scene'¹⁰⁶ to take a more scenic road and attempt to overtake the carriage. For the St. Auberts, however, this moment is initially one of terror: conscious of the dangers of the road and hearing 'a voice shouting from the road behind, ordering the muleteer to stop'¹⁰⁷, St. Aubert becomes convinced of a band of robbers or banditti and shoots the approaching horseman. The pursuer is then revealed, of course, to be Valancourt 'bleeding profusely, and appearing to be in great pain'¹⁰⁸. For Emily, this incident foreshadows the terror that Valancourt's behaviour will cause later in the novel; calling for her assistance and receiving no answer, St. Aubert 'went to the carriage, and found her sunk on the seat in a fainting fit.'¹⁰⁹ Though it is St. Aubert who 'lamented again the rashness which had produced the accident', it is the reader who becomes aware of the potential dangers of Valancourt's impetuous nature. The young man's inability to foresee or consider the potential negative consequences of his actions is highlighted again later when, witnessing Emily and her father gifting money to a struggling peasant family, he bestows 'all the money he had, except a few louis' despite 'the difficulties of pursuing his journey with so small a sum.'¹¹⁰ Whilst Valancourt 'had seldom felt his heart so light as at this moment' - 'his gay spirits danced with pleasure; every object around him appeared more interesting, or more beautiful than before'¹¹¹ - and is complimented by St. Aubert for his conduct, his failure to consider the practical implications of his behaviour complicates his position as a potential suitor for the heroine. As with Emily, Valancourt's idealised naivety is ultimately unsustainable: he cannot remain forever in the idyllic paradise of the Pyrenees, and must eventually make his way into a society for which he is entirely unprepared. Though Valancourt, in the care of St. Aubert, may be the perfect

¹⁰⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p49

¹⁰⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p39

¹⁰⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹⁰⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹⁰⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p38

¹¹⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p52

¹¹¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p53

romantic match for Emily, his lack of experience and foresight leaves him unable to be her protector.

The death of St. Aubert and the removal of Emily from La Vallée to Thoulouse by her aunt interrupts and complicates the progress of the young lovers' romance. Valancourt's suit is refused by the vain Madame Cheron, and to continue his courtship he must remain in Thoulouse and make his entry into society at a ball as Emily makes hers. Unaware that the party's host, Madame Clairval, is his aunt, Emily is shocked to perceive Valancourt 'dancing with a young and beautiful lady, saw him conversing with her with a mixture and of attention and familiarity, such as she had seldom observed in his manner'¹¹². Overcome by the surprise of his appearance, Emily must struggle to maintain both her composure and consciousness. Whilst Emily, sensible to the society that she is in, is able to mask her discomfort, Valancourt is unable to do the same. Beholding Emily's affected state, Valancourt fails to manage his own emotional reaction and causes a scene. As the Count Bauvelliers comments to Emily of him, 'I observe that he has just put the whole set into great confusion; he does nothing but commit blunders. I am surprised, that, with his air and figure, he has not taken more care to accomplish himself in dancing.'¹¹³ Valancourt's failure to regulate himself reveals a deficiency in his masculinity, a lack of composure that his education has failed to teach or provide. Unlike Osbert, raised under his mother's care in the chivalric society of Athlin and able to subdue his passions through learning and the Romantic appreciation of nature, the orphaned Valancourt's education is left to his elder brother:

The general genius of [Valancourt's] mind was but little understood by his brother. That ardour for whatever is great and good in the moral world, as well as in the natural one, displayed itself in his infant years; and the strong indignation, which he felt and expressed at a criminal or a mean action, sometimes drew upon him the displeasure of his tutor; who reprobated it under the general term of violence of temper; and who, when haranguing on the virtues and mildness and moderation, seemed to forget the gentleness and compassion, which always appeared in his pupil towards objects of misfortune.¹¹⁴

Whereas Emily's learning is nurtured and encouraged by both her parents, Valancourt's education is presented as fundamentally lacking: rather than encouraged, his natural sensibilities are punished. Where Osbert is educated within his society, his manly learnings complemented by the softening influence of his mother and sister, Valancourt's education is rigid and solitary. Rather than enhancing his manly qualities, the harshness of his tutoring (an element of masculine education discussed in the previous chapters) does little for Valancourt but diminish his already small fortune. Valancourt's education, it is implied, is one sought for the

¹¹² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p130

¹¹³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p131

¹¹⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p117

sake of status rather nurture. Rather than educated in a style complementary to his personality, where he might have been taught ways to temper his emotion congenial to his temper, Valancourt receives an education befitting his rank and status.

Though it is implied that Valancourt's enrolment in the army at his brother's order is a profession ill-suited to his temperaments, it nonetheless initially provides the young man with the basis of his marriage suit to Emily (and by extension, Madame Cheron): 'his fortune, though, with a moderate addition from hers, it would be sufficient to support them, would not satisfy the views of vanity, or ambition. Valancourt was not without the latter, but he saw golden visions of promotion in the army.'¹¹⁵ Yet for Valancourt, the military appears to have offered little to no improvement to his education or alteration to his person. As the letters of Henry Seymour Conway, discussed in Chapter One, demonstrate, an officer was expected to be conscious of the rules of polite society and able to perform them with manly decorum. Unlike Theodore, who is conscious both of not imposing himself upon Adeline and that his actions may suffer dire consequences, Valancourt is unable to consider the demands of society and propriety in his emotional decisions. Upon Madame Cheron's withdrawal of her consent to Valancourt and Emily's marriage following her own to Montoni, Valancourt fails to comprehend the reasons for Emily's refusal to speak with him. Consumed by his own feeling, Valancourt is insensible to both Emily's emotions and the precariousness of her situation: 'I was wretched enough when I came hither [...] do not increase my misery with this coldness – this cruel refusal.'¹¹⁶ Whilst 'the despondency, with which he spoke this, affected her almost to tears'¹¹⁷, Emily cannot but be aware of the danger posed to her reputation by conversing with Valancourt unsupervised. Her insistence, however, that she cannot speak with him until he has consulted her aunt is interpreted as rejection by Valancourt, thus beginning a pattern of behaviour that continues till the very closing chapters of the novel. It is not until Emily, terrified by his temper, is visibly overcome that Valancourt is able to calm himself:

Emily, terrified for the consequence of the indignation, that flashed in his eyes, tremblingly assured him, that Montoni was not at home, and entreated he would endeavour to moderate his resentment. At the tremulous accents of her voice, his eyes softened instantly from wildness into tenderness. 'You are ill, Emily,' said he, 'they will destroy us both! Forgive me, that I dared to doubt your affection.'¹¹⁸

Without the means in either his nature or his education to temper his emotions, Valancourt's emotional responses repeatedly tip him into excess: overcome by his own anguish and sorrow, Valancourt aggravates rather than alleviates Emily's distress. Upon learning that they are to be

¹¹⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p117

¹¹⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p145

¹¹⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p145

¹¹⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p146

separated, as Montoni plans to remove his new family to Italy, Valancourt's excessively emotional response denies Emily hers as she must attempt 'to command her own distress, and to sooth his'¹¹⁹. Valancourt's inability to control himself inverts the traditional chivalric mode, in which the knight errant is moved by the distress of the damsel. Emily is forced not only to silence her feelings to regulate his, but also to defend them from him. Though it is Emily who is moved against her will, taken from her home and her lover, Valancourt repeatedly erases her victim status with his own: 'You are going from me,' said he, 'to a distant country, O how distant! - to new society, new friends, new admirers, with people too, who will try to make you forget me, and to promote new connections! How can I know this, and not know, that you will never return for me, never can be mine.'¹²⁰ In his imposition upon Emily's emotional space and his inability to provide her comfort, Valancourt reveals an anxiety about the manner of educating gentlemen, suggesting that in being taught to value his own emotions he is unable to respect or allow Emily the space for her. Despite his sensibility neither Valancourt's schooling or soldiering appear to have educated him in the ideals of chivalry, and as a result his masculinity is dangerously lacking.

Not only does Valancourt's identity as a soldier fail to refine his naturally heroic qualities, but in the company of his brother officers his inexperience and tendency to excess are only exacerbated. DeLucia argues that 'Valancourt's decided preference for wandering aimlessly through the scenic Alps or gambling in Paris, instead of serving Emily or his country, emerges as a symptom of social decay'¹²¹: the failure of his early education and of his military education to fashion his masculinity in a way that can be of service to his beloved or his nation indicate a broader issue. The concerns and criticisms of the soldier's education, voiced by Wollstonecraft in her *Vindications*, are embodied by the chevaliers of Valancourt's regiment. Seemingly trained for the pleasures, rather than defence of society, the chevaliers of *Udolpho* are a far cry from their chivalric origins:

Among his brother officers were many, who added to the ordinary character of a French soldier's gaiety some of those fascinating qualities, which too frequently throw a veil over folly, and sometimes even softened the features of vice into smiles. To these men the reserved and thoughtful manners of Valancourt were a kind of tacit censure on their own, for which they rallied him when present, and plotted against him when absent; they gloried in the thought of reducing him to their own level, and, considering it to be a spirited frolic, determined to accomplish it.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p152

¹²⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p153

¹²¹ DeLucia, p106

¹²² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p293

'A stranger to the gradual process of a scheme and intrigue'¹²³, Valancourt is unable to defend himself from the designs of such men and thus becomes 'entrapped by the schemes of a set of dissipated young men, with whom his profession had partly obliged him to associate.'¹²⁴ Though Valancourt initially attempts to renew 'those tasteful studies, which had been the delight of his early years'¹²⁵ to soothe his wounded heart, he is unable to apply himself and is instead swayed by the hazy glamour of the city's vices: 'The gaiety of the most splendid court in Europe, the magnificence of the palaces, entertainments, and equipages, that surrounded him, all conspired to dazzle his imagination, and reanimate his spirits, and the example and maxims of his military associates to delude his mind.'¹²⁶ Yet whilst Valancourt's excesses render him unheroic, his vices corrupting his natural goodness, the novel suggests that although he must be held accountable, he is not ultimately responsible for his actions. Valancourt is not the man he ought to be, yet the novel suggests that his failings are little fault of his own. Just as Emily cannot be held accountable for the failings of her education and of her guardians to provide for her, neither, it is implied, can Valancourt. Though impetuous and rash, in Valancourt's noble and just intentions Emily finds her equal in sentiment and sensibility which endears her heart to him despite his failings: 'Before she saw Valancourt she had never met a mind and taste so accordant with her own'¹²⁷. It is in his company too, during their initial engagement, that Emily passes 'the happiest hours she had known since the death of her father.'¹²⁸ The pavilion at the home of Madame Cheron temporarily recaptures the ideals of their journey with St. Aubert: 'there, Emily, with Madame Cheron, would work, while Valancourt read aloud works of genius and taste, listened to her enthusiasm, expressed his own, and caught new opportunities of observing that their minds were formed to constitute the happiness of each other, the same taste, the same noble and benevolent sentiment animating each.'¹²⁹ Emily, as the female embodiment of virtue and feeling, provides Valancourt with the focus his education has lacked. In Valancourt Radcliffe suggests that even the most sentimental and unaffected of masculinities, without the proper means to persevere themselves, may be perverted and corrupted:

All these persons were of some distinction; and, as neither the person, mind, or manners of Valancourt the younger threatened to disgrace their alliance, they received him with as much kindness as their nature, hardened by uninterrupted prosperity, would admit of; but their attentions did not extend to real friendship; for they were too much occupied in their own pursuits to feel any interest in his; and thus he was set down in the midst of Paris, in the pride of youth, with an open, unsuspecting temper and ardent affections, without one friend, to warn him of the dangers, to which he was exposed. Emily, who,

¹²³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p293

¹²⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p654

¹²⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p293

¹²⁶ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p295

¹²⁷ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p123

¹²⁸ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p139

¹²⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p140

had she been present, would have saved him from these evils by awakening his heart, and engaging him in worthy pursuits, now only increased his danger.¹³⁰

As Emily exclaims later in the text, upon learning of Valancourt's ruin and witnessing the violent changes in his demeanour, 'if such a friend as [St. Aubert] had been with you at Paris – your noble, ingenuous nature would not have fallen!'¹³¹

Emily perceives Valancourt's ruin not as a betrayal or a failure on the part of her lover, but as a tragedy: "And such a mind", said she, "such a heart, were to be sacrificed to the habits of a great city!"¹³² What is significant here is not only the failings of polite society – whose members are unwilling to intervene or offer protection to the young Valancourt, so long as his behaviour does not endanger their connection – but of the profession that leads him to it. Valancourt does not choose to go to Paris; rather he is 'summoned to his brother officers, and he accompanied a battalion to Paris where a scene of novelty and gaiety opened upon him, such as, till then, he had only a faint idea of.'¹³³ The passivity of Radcliffe's phrasing, here, intimates a lack of control and power on Valancourt's part: he must attend, regardless of his own judgement or feeling, because his profession requires it of him. Initially the scenes at Paris disgust to Valancourt, which causes him to become 'an object of unceasing raillery to his companions'¹³⁴. Consumed with grief, Valancourt, unable to withstand the barbs of his brother officers and unaccustomed to the dangers the city has to offer, is slowly lured into a society that is 'less elegant and more vicious'¹³⁵ than any he had previously known. In both their own debauchery and their wilful corruption of Valancourt, the chevaliers of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* echo Wollstonecraft's argument that the education of the soldier perverted rather than refined masculinity. As Catriona Kennedy has identified, although the barracks were frequently imagined as idealised space that fostered military fraternity and masculine improvement, the reality was often very different. "The regimental peer group", Kennedy notes, could also be 'a coercive and aggressive instrument of military indoctrination.'¹³⁶ Whilst the regiment's structure and the ideal of the 'brothers at arms' encouraged in officers may have facilitated refinement in some cases, it also had the potential to pervert and corrupt. The soldier, Wollstonecraft suggests, 'acquires manners before morals, and a knowledge of life before they have, from reflection, any acquaintance with the grand ideal outline of human nature.'¹³⁷ Rather than heroic, the soldier

¹³⁰ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p294

¹³¹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p584

¹³² Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p585

¹³³ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p292

¹³⁴ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p292

¹³⁵ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p294

¹³⁶ Kennedy, p44

¹³⁷ Wollstonecraft, p34

thus becomes 'prey to prejudice'¹³⁸ and inclined to the shallow pursuits encouraged by a false sense of gallantry: 'officers are particularly attentive to their persons, fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures and ridicule.'¹³⁹ Indeed the purpose of Valancourt's regiment remains unclear throughout the text; DuPont, we learn, finds his way to Udolpho thanks to the manoeuvres of his regiment, but the chevaliers of Valancourt's are largely without purpose. In its condemnation of the mass conscription of men required to staff the British Army during times of war, *Who Pays the Reckoning* likens 'those bred to war' to 'the wretched female who walks the streets in the way of trade, shutting her eyes upon the miserable end, [devoting] her person to indiscriminate prostitution.'¹⁴⁰ In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* then, marked by the declaration of war and by the vast number of new regiments (and in particular militia regiments, as will be discussed later), the idealised martial society, suggested in the relationship between Louis and Theodore, of *The Romance of the Forest* is deconstructed.

This notion of failed masculinity presented by *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, corrupted by an inability to assume its proper place or embody the ideals most naturally suited, is one that would become a convention of the Gothic mode. Radcliffe's influence on the Gothic produced during the 1790s, and particularly after the publication of *Udolpho* in 1794, was considerable: readers' desire for more in the same vein would result in a surge of Gothic publishing, some of which merely copied Radcliffe's style and structure for like and some which sought to engage more deeply with the mode that her novels had created. It is in this tradition that, though little critical work has been devoted to him, we might place Francis Lathom. Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell*, published four years after *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in 1798, is perhaps best known as one of the 'horrid novels' Isabella Thorpe lists for Catherine Morland in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818). Bearing the subtitle 'A German Story' and claiming to be 'founded on incidents in real life' *The Midnight Bell* is a Gothic tale of family intrigue and betrayals, centred on the young Alphonsus Cohenburg. Alphonsus, we learn in the novel's opening chapter, is a youth 'in his seventeenth year' of typically heroic features: 'his form was manly and well turned, his countenance rendered interesting and handsome by a pair of black eyes, and finely arched eyebrows, his cheeks were ruddy, his lips wore the smile of good-humour, and his short black hair hung curling round his neck; his intellects were strong, his genius discerning, and his mind well informed.'¹⁴¹ His father, the Count Cohenburg, is accosted and murdered early in the novel, seemingly by bandits. Alphonsus' mother, Anna, however warns her son that it is Frederic, his uncle, who is responsible for the Count's death and begs the young Alphonsus to 'swear to me

¹³⁸ Wollstonecraft, p34

¹³⁹ Wollstonecraft, p34

¹⁴⁰ *Who Pays the Reckoning*, p29

¹⁴¹ Francis Lathom, *The Midnight Bell*, ed. David Punter (Kansas City: Valancourt Books, 2007), p6

thou wilt revenge his death.’¹⁴² On his uncle’s arrival however, Alphonsus is surprised by his mother’s behaviour ‘seeing her kneeling before the count, and kissing his hand’¹⁴³. Later that night the Countess retracts her earlier accusations; she appears to Alphonsus in the early dawn of the following day, exclaiming Frederic’s innocence and declaring that Alphonsus must flee the castle for both their safeties. Taking the small purse from his mother’s mysteriously blood-stained hand, Alphonsus ‘with a full and sorrowing heart left the castle of Cohenburg.’¹⁴⁴ Without direction or purpose, Alphonsus moves across the landscape of Germany and Bohemia, finding various employments before eventually meeting and marrying the beautiful Lauretta, whose own family secrets intertwine with his. *The Midnight Bell*, in its complex plot, interconnected family mysteries and use of the explained supernatural, continues in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*’s Gothic tradition. Lathom’s novel, however, lacks much of the artistry of Radcliffe’s: the plot shifts between languishing and breakneck speed, offering the reader little in the way of emotional engagement, whilst the central mystery is left largely forgotten for a significant portion of the text. David Punter, in his introduction to the text, argues that ‘the extreme complications of the plot allow almost no space for character development, and none of the figures in the text rise above stock characterisation.’¹⁴⁵ Yet whilst the intricacies of *The Midnight Bell* are never fully realised, the text’s many absences and abrupt turns indicate an unease and uncertainty about the stability of the future that is reflected in the character of the young Alphonsus.

In the June of 1798, a short piece in *The Analytical Review: or, History of Literature* noted that though *The Midnight Bell* was ‘said to be founded on facts’, the events of the novel ‘wear but little appearance of probability.’¹⁴⁶ Though the reviewer found the novel ‘amusing and not ill-written’, it concluded that ‘as a composition, it is not characterised by that extravagance of passion’ expected of a German novel and was ‘calculated, perhaps rather to please and entertain than to make any great impression upon the reader.’¹⁴⁷ Another review in August, from *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature*, took issue with novel’s lack of depth and the abrupt pacing of its plot, supposing that the authors of such works ‘seem not to care how absurd and contradictory the story may be’¹⁴⁸. Though it possesses neither the artistic style nor the depth of

¹⁴² Lathom, p7

¹⁴³ Lathom, p8

¹⁴⁴ Lathom, p10

¹⁴⁵ Punter, pXI

¹⁴⁶ *The Analytical Review: or, History of Literature*, (J. Johnson: London, 1798), 27, 6, in *British Periodicals*, <<https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/5289649?accountid=13828>>, [accessed 3rd December 2019], p644

¹⁴⁷ *The Analytical Review: or, History of Literature*, p66

¹⁴⁸ *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature*, (R. Baldwin: London, 1798), 23, *British Periodicals*, <<https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/4364624?accountid=13828>> [accessed 3rd December 2019], p472

The Mysteries of Udolpho (nor was it so well received), it is important that we consider Lathom's *The Midnight Bell*, not just because it was popular or because it was once referenced by Austen in *Northanger Abbey*, but because it is startling in its brevity. What is particularly striking about *The Midnight Bell*, when we consider it in the context of a nation that had now been at war for almost six years, is the way in which the novel deals with death. For Radcliffe's Emily St. Aubert, death is a complex and multifaceted threat; not just as the literal end to life, but as a force which is able to disrupt and displace the family unit. Death in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* obscures truths, as those who die are unable to reveal the secrets and mysteries their lives have obscured, thus becoming a source of uncertainty and anxiety for those who inherit them. Death also brings grief, an emotion that threatens to consume the still-living, which St. Aubert carefully cautions his daughter against after Madame St. Aubert's funeral: 'the indulgence in excessive grief enervates the mind, and almost incapacitates it for again partaking those various innocent enjoyments which a benevolent God designed to be the sun-shine of our lives.'¹⁴⁹ Yet death in *The Midnight Bell* is frequent, sudden, and rarely dwelled upon for more than a few moments: in the opening chapter, the narrator details the deaths of Frederic's wife Sophia, their three children, and the Count Cohenburg all in quick succession. Whereas Emily's grief for her parents lingers over the events of the entire novel, her mind repeatedly turning to them, Alphonsus is allowed but a moment to ruminate upon the death of his father before he must assume his new short-lived patriarchal duty as Count: 'Tears came to the relief of Alphonsus; and the first words his sorrow permitted him to articulate, were an order to a domestic to convey the sad intelligence to his uncle'¹⁵⁰. By the second chapter, Alphonsus has been forced far from Cohenburg and must turn 'his thoughts to find some means by which he might gain a reputable maintenance of life.'¹⁵¹ The novel is littered with these sharp and sudden instances of death, yet little consequence or narrative space is ever given to them. In the third chapter Alphonsus, having found employment in a mine in Bohemia, is directed to escort a gentleman who 'travelling through Bohemia, came, attracted by curiosity, to visit the mine.'¹⁵² During the tour, the visitor's servant loses his footing crossing a plank into a narrow cavern: 'unable to recover his balance, he sunk into the space below. The fall was, to any one, inevitable death:— he was dashed to pieces.'¹⁵³ Though declared 'much affected' by the narrator at the death of his servant, neither the gentleman – whose name is revealed to be the Baron Kardfelt – nor Alphonsus seem but passingly effected by what they have seen. Indeed for Alphonsus, the man's death presents not tragedy but opportunity; 'he earnestly wished again to mix in the world' and so

¹⁴⁹ Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p20

¹⁵⁰ Lathom, p7

¹⁵¹ Lathom, p11

¹⁵² Lathom, p24

¹⁵³ Lathom, p24

'determined to offer himself to supply the place of the man whose death he had just witnessed.'¹⁵⁴ Yet Alphonsus's time with the Baron is short. The narration suggests that some months, at least, are passed in service with Kardsfelt but the novel's structure does not reflect it: merely eight paragraphs after Alphonsus offers his service, the Baron is killed in a duel.

The Midnight Bell, like *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, uses death to fuel its plot and set the course for its protagonist. Yet the speed and frequency with which these deaths occur arguably desensitise both the characters and the readers. Though, as David Punter notes, *The Midnight Bell* is a text 'repeatedly inhabited – infested, we could almost say – by melancholy'¹⁵⁵ – it is a melancholy that arises not from grief and loss, but from secrets and mystery. Alphonsus 'is at all points in danger of relapsing into melancholy', but it is 'his unknowingness of the secret'¹⁵⁶ and the repeated complications to the mystery that place him in this danger. There is no need, Punter argues, 'to deny the vigour with which all this is accomplished, or even the urgency of some of the narrative passages'¹⁵⁷. Questioning 'what else' of significance we might find in *The Midnight Bell*, Punter suggests that in connecting Lathom to his text, linking 'the narrative of the book and the narrative of the life'¹⁵⁸, we might discover deeper meaning. Arguably then, if meaning can be derived by reading *The Midnight Bell* within the context of its author so too can it be found by considering it within its historical context. The four years between the publication of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Midnight Bell* had seen the French, led by Napoleon Bonaparte, make multiple significant and decisive victories against the coalition of European powers. The Austrian defeat at Rivoli in the January of 1797 and Tagliamento in the March had significantly weakened the Archduke's forces, whilst the British had embarked on what Angela Wright has called a 'brutal campaign' against the Revolutionaries. William Pitt's 'ideological justification', Wright argues, failed to 'convince witnesses who had first-hand seen the ravages that it caused.'¹⁵⁹ As the author of *Who Pays the Reckoning?* had feared, the pursuit of war had bred a barbarity ill at ease with the values of contemporary British society. The British government however, as Clive Emsley has identified, had expected the War of the First Coalition to last but a few campaigns. Yet by 1798 Britain found herself not only still in conflict with France, but without allies: the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte after several successful campaigns and the multiple losses suffered at the hand of the Revolutionary forces had dealt a heavy blow to the First Coalition. In the October of 1797 the Treaty of Campo Formio was signed, thus dissolving the Coalition and leaving Britain alone in conflict with France. As *Considerations* had warned on

¹⁵⁴ Lathom, p25

¹⁵⁵ Punter, p xv

¹⁵⁶ Punter, p xv

¹⁵⁷ Punter, p xii

¹⁵⁸ Punter, p xiv

¹⁵⁹ Wright, p131

the eve of war in 1793, the consequences of ‘a long, bloody and expensive war’¹⁶⁰ were a heavy burden for both a nation’s finances and spirits to bear; particularly, when there seemed to be no resolution in sight. The situation in which *The Midnight Bell* was published in 1798 was remarkably different to that of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in 1794: by 1798, the war had already continued far longer than anyone had imagined in 1793 and showed no sign of ceasing. In its cheap economy of death, its convoluted secrets, and mysteries and the aimlessness of its hero, *The Midnight Bell* is far less concerned with the possibilities of war than with its realities. The novel’s sparseness and suddenness arguably speak to the anxieties not of a nation facing conflict, but already deep in the turmoil of a war with no clear resolution in sight.

Alphonsus Cohenburg is a troubling hero; though well educated, noble spirited, and at various points brave, Alphonsus is frequently arrested and effeminised by the events of the text. In his flight from the castle of Cohenburg Alphonsus leaves behind not just his mother, but the title and heritage that shape his identity. Forced to make his entry into the world without it, Alphonsus is unable to successfully maintain any of the identities he subsequently attempts to construct for himself; he shifts from soldier, to miner, to manservant, and to sacristan all within the space of four chapters. Later, after marrying Laretta and retiring to the simplicity of a countryside life, Alphonsus is unable to protect his wife from the dastardly chevalier Theodore nor is he able to recover her. Overcome by ‘frantic sorrow’¹⁶¹ at Laretta’s kidnap, Alphonsus falls ill with fever and delirium that keeps him bedridden for days. The role of saviour is instead assumed by Laretta’s father, supplanting Alphonsus in his role (as her husband) as her patriarchal protector. It is Byroff’s presence in the narrative, too, that both drives and facilitates Alphonsus to finally return to Cohenburg to reclaim his birth-right and uncover the truth. Rather than excess, it is lack – of direction, of drive, of power – that effeminises Alphonsus. Like Emily, Alphonsus is unable to become the master of his own destiny; his narrative is repeatedly removed from his control, preventing him from achieving masculine maturity until he is restored to the castle. Though as Punter suggests, the twists and turns of the narrative leave little space for the development of character, Alphonsus’ underdevelopment arguably indicates an anxiety about the construction of masculinity in the chaos of 1798. The dissolution of the First Coalition, the very entity which had drawn Britain into war in 1793, threw the nation’s purpose into question. With the Coalition no more and the Revolutionaries’ growing might under commanders such as Napoleon, the ideological defences and oppositions to the war became muddled by the necessity to defend. The military, too, presented a growing danger to society, giving rise to further anxieties about the masculinities created within it whilst the continued

¹⁶⁰ *Considerations*, p2

¹⁶¹ Lathom, p99

conflict demanded the enrolment of more and more men. Drawing on the concerns raised by Radcliffe in 1794, how, *The Midnight Bell* seems to ask, in the chaos and uncertainty of the period can young men hope to fashion a successful masculinity?

Considering how he may sustain himself after he is forced from the castle of Cohenburg, Alphonsus's first choice for employment is in the military. 'The German power', the narrator informs us, 'was at that period engaged in a war against Poland' and Alphonsus resolves 'to offer himself as a volunteer in one of the regiments which were the daily raising'¹⁶². The source or reason for this conflict is not given: if Alphonsus knows, the knowledge is not shared with the reader. Though this lack of clarification or detail is typical of Lathom's narrative, it arguably speaks again to a sense of a desensitisation: war is war, the lack of detail suggests, regardless of by whom or what reason it is fought. Selling his horse and offering himself for service, Alphonsus 'received the bounty bestowed on a volunteer, and taking the military habit, found it made an alteration in his person which he little expected.'¹⁶³ Initially, in becoming a soldier Alphonsus is able to find purpose and direction, his natural talents seemingly well suited to the arts of war. Interestingly, whilst the soldiers of Radcliffe's narratives are never seen to engage in active warfare (only duels, skirmishes and scuffles), *The Midnight Bell* follows Alphonsus into active service. Called to the field, Alphonsus proves a skilled soldier: '[he] was strong, active, and possessed of much courage; he acquitted himself in the toils of war with the most becoming spirit and fortitude'¹⁶⁴. Alphonsus' brave conduct does not go unrewarded: though we may assume that as a volunteer (keeping his noble birth hidden) Alphonsus must be the equivalent of a private soldier, he nonetheless 'gained the favour of his commanding officer, and was promoted by him in the regiment.'¹⁶⁵ Here, in military service and in the favour of commander, an Italian by the name of Arieno, Alphonsus' masculinity begins to develop. In Arieno, on whose words he 'hung with delight', Alphonsus is able to begin to learn of 'the vicissitudes of life, the fallacy of this world, and the stability of hopes placed in a former state.'¹⁶⁶ Yet whilst this idealised officer-soldier relationship initially suggests that – despite Wollstonecraft's criticisms of the soldier's education and Radcliffe's deconstruction of the military space in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* – military fraternity and training may still be the tool by which a strong, national masculinity might be forged and fostered, Arieno and Alphonsus' relationship is not without issue. Arieno, inviting Alphonsus to stay with him when the army retires for winter, eventually reveals to his young companion his own tragic past: a story that not only doubles that of Alphonsus' father, but that further complicates the mystery of his death. Arieno's niece, it is

¹⁶² Lathom, p11

¹⁶³ Lathom, p13

¹⁶⁴ Lathom, p13

¹⁶⁵ Lathom, p13

¹⁶⁶ Lathom, p13

revealed, had been forced to marry a noble by her father despite being in love with a German count and 'a short time after she was missed, and no inquiries could discover whither she had fled.'¹⁶⁷ Learning that the German count was named Cohenburg, Alphonsus deduces that the Count in the story must be his uncle Frederic. Rather than illuminate the Cohenburg family mystery, Arieno's story presents only another secret which threatens to sink Alphonsus into melancholy. Unable to piece together the few pieces of the puzzle in his possession, Alphonsus' mind 'again lost itself in a maze of uncertain conjecture.'¹⁶⁸ For Alphonsus this melancholy, born of his inability to unravel the truth is dangerous because – like Emily's grief – it threatens to consume him and therefore prevent him from acting.

The relationship between Alphonsus and Arieno threatens to destabilise the course of the novel, not only in Arieno's addition to the mystery, but in Alphonsus' continued state of melancholia and the affection shared between the two men. Allen W. Grove has argued for a homoerotic reading of *The Midnight Bell* based on the 'Hermit's Tale', recounted to Laretta in the second volume. Having rescued and nursed Laretta back to health following her kidnap, the Hermit interrupts the narrative to tell her of his own tragic history. According to Grove, the 'Hermit's Tale' 'presents a sincerity and naturalness in a relationship between men that is strikingly absent from the novel's predetermined gesture at closure.'¹⁶⁹ The Hermit recalls to Laretta that, whilst journeying to his sisters an injury to his horse forced him to stop and ask for assistance at a house upon the road. Invited to stay by the inhabitants, a man named Dulac and his family, the Hermit initially passes some pleasant scenes in their company before an unfortunate event: sharing a bed with Dulac, the unusually hot weather causes the Hermit to 'bleed violently at the nose'¹⁷⁰. Encouraged by his bedfellow to go outside to the garden, where the cold water of the well might ease the bleeding, the Hermit returns to find Dulac gone and himself suspected of his murder. 'Bloody bed sheets', as Grove notes, 'confirm the suspicions of his accusers'¹⁷¹ but not the reader; unlike the murder of the Count, whilst the reader is not privy to the whole truth they are aware of the Hermit's innocence. Grove suggests that 'Lathom clearly encodes a transgression other than murder into this scene and questions the injustice of persecuting the Hermit for this transgression.'¹⁷² In the tenderness between the Hermit and Dulac, Grove argues that the bloody bed sheets are symbolic of the homosexual act. If, as Grove states, *The Midnight Bell* 'presents us with a convincing and sexually encoded friendship between men that serves as

¹⁶⁷ Lathom, p20

¹⁶⁸ Lathom, p21

¹⁶⁹ Allen W. Grove, 'Coming Out of the Castle: Gothic, Sexuality and the Limits of Language.', in *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, 26, 3, (2000), 429–446, p445

¹⁷⁰ Lathom, p80

¹⁷¹ Grove, p444

¹⁷² Grove, p444

a viable alternative to the hollowness and superficiality of the conventional ending¹⁷³, then the relationship between Arieno and Alphonsus might also be read as such.

To uncover the truth and return home Alphonsus must follow the traditional marriage plot popularised by Radcliffe's Gothic novels, in which the marriage of the hero and heroine provides a conventional return to stability and, in turn, an answer to the central mystery. To return to the castle of Cohenburg and discover the truth, Alphonsus must meet and marry Lauretta: not only do her family secrets inform Alphonsus', it is the introduction of her father, the former Count Byroff, that provides him with the means to make his return. Arieno's interest and affections for Alphonsus threaten the progress of the conventional plot: not only does Arieno's admiration of Alphonsus suggest the potential for further promotion in the army, his affections for the young man are arguably underscored by homoerotic desire. Arieno is 'palpably an Italian'¹⁷⁴: Italy in the Gothic of the 1790's, as demonstrated not only by *The Mysteries of Udolpho* but also by Radcliffe's final novel (in her lifetime) *The Italian* (1797), is frequently positioned as a place where the values of contemporary society are lost to feudalism, thus breeding the excessive passions and transgressions of figures such as the Signora Laurentini and Montoni. Though Arieno's conduct is far removed from that of Montoni, the connotations of a 'palpable' Italianess must have been understood by a contemporary Gothic reader. Arieno becomes 'more and more attached to Alphonsus'¹⁷⁵ and 'the engaging mien of Alphonsus, though his brow was clouded with sorrow, had won Arieno's heart; and he resolved to make him his friend and companion.'¹⁷⁶ Arieno is sensible to Alphonsus' melancholy, though ignorant to its cause and is able in their closeness to touch 'on the string which tingled to the heart of Alphonsus'¹⁷⁷. In the emotional intimacy of the conversation that follows is also an implication of physical intimacy: 'Oh, my friend!' cried Alphonsus, taking Arieno's hand, 'I owe you more than my gratitude can ever repay: – you are worthy to be trusted with my inmost concerns'¹⁷⁸. Though Alphonsus is unwilling to relate his own history – 'the secrets of my heart, – indeed, indeed, they must lie buried in my breast'¹⁷⁹ – Arieno is happy to give Alphonsus his. Arieno's identity as an Italian is referenced throughout the chapters, a repetition that is striking considering the brevity of detail otherwise in Lathom's narrative. If we consider this, then, in light of Grove's reading of the 'Hermit's Tale', although the intimacy of these interactions between Alphonsus and Arieno are not explicitly coded as homoerotic, they can be interpreted as such.

¹⁷³ Grove, p445

¹⁷⁴ Lathom, p13

¹⁷⁵ Lathom, p13

¹⁷⁶ Lathom, p14

¹⁷⁷ Lathom, p14

¹⁷⁸ Lathom, p15

¹⁷⁹ Lathom, p15

If, as Grove suggests of the 'Hermit's Tale', a male homosexual relationship offers an alternative to the traditional marriage plot then in Alphonsus's relationship with Arieno is the potential to destabilise the narrative course of *The Midnight Bell*. Amongst the qualities that endear Alphonsus to Arieno is the younger man's state of melancholy: a melancholy that, though unspoken by Alphonsus, is recognised and understood by Arieno. In *The Gothic Condition*, David Punter continues his arguments about *The Midnight Bell*'s melancholia, suggesting that it 'takes its form on the scene of an absence; in economic terms, as the always doomed reproduction of a system of exchange which is no longer available, no longer meaningful.'¹⁸⁰ According to Punter, melancholy exists 'as the always deferred, the always unavoidable solution to a problem which cannot be resolved.'¹⁸¹ Within *The Midnight Bell*, Punter continues, melancholy is connected to the novel's mystery – 'the withholding of the secret' – and in turn with homosexuality¹⁸². This connection between melancholia and sexuality, which has been established by scholars such as Judith Butler but more recently in Jolene Zigravovich's collection *Sex and Death in Eighteenth Century Literature*, can be read as queer in *The Midnight Bell* because of the emotional connection between Arieno and Alphonsus. Alphonsus' melancholy arises from the loss of his father, his mother's secrecy, and his exile from the castle. In Arieno, Alphonsus finds a companion that not only shares and understands his melancholy but offers a potential antidote for it: Arieno, as his military commander, offers Alphonsus the employment, education, and affection that he has lost by leaving the castle. If, as Punter suggests, we may read an element of queer sexuality in Alphonsus' melancholy then in the two men's identities as soldiers, *The Midnight Bell* also suggests a potential consequence of military fraternity unexplored by earlier texts. As discussed in Chapter Two, the presence of women in the education of young men was a point of anxiety in Britain throughout the eighteenth century. Though considered necessary to soften the natural roughness of masculinity and form the politeness required by gentlemen, the female presence in masculine education sparked continued concerns surrounding effeminacy and othering. As I have previously suggested, in the Gothic fiction prior to the War of the First Coalition the military served as a solution to these anxieties; a space where manly passion could be directed into chivalric pursuits that was closed to women and therefore female influence, facilitating a masculinity suited the values of polite society without effeminising. Though this idea is problematised by the critiques of the military education in *A Vindications of the Rights of Woman* and further by the dissipated chevaliers and condottieri of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, if we are to read Arieno and Alphonsus through a queer lens, then in *The Midnight Bell* what occurs in the military's absence of women and promotion of masculine fraternity is the

¹⁸⁰ David Punter, *The Gothic Condition: Terror, Horror and the Psyche* (University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 2016), Chapter Two, Google Play Edition

¹⁸¹ Punter, *The Gothic Condition*

¹⁸² Punter, *The Gothic Condition*

possibility for non-heterosexual masculinities. If we can read melancholy in *The Midnight Bell* 'in terms of separation, loss; at which point the whole structure becomes enmeshed in the complexities of gender differentiation'¹⁸³, then we might also read the military as a potentially queer space. The army was a profession which removed men from their homes, their families, and their countries which, by Punter's definition, had the potential to introduce a state of melancholy. But the army also promoted military fraternity, offering a male closeness formed in battle and hardship that would supplant the domestic comforts to fashion soldiers. As critics such as George Haggerty have noted, though the illegality of male homosexuality largely prevented definite or clear representation of homoeroticism, eighteenth-century literature nonetheless offers 'so many examples of male-male desire that it is reasonable to imagine that the spectacle of male love as essential ingredient of gender difference at this time.'¹⁸⁴

Yet the existence of this queerness and its potential to delineate the plot are never fully realised. In the following chapter the two men return to active service and Arieno's invitation to Alphonsus to join him again the following winter can be realised: 'About the middle of the summer, Arieno lost his life in an engagement on the borders'¹⁸⁵. Alphonsus, 'stretched [...] on the bed of sickness' following a fall from his horse, is so overcome by the news of Arieno's demise that it 'went nigh to cost [him] his life.'¹⁸⁶ Though able to recover from his wounds, 'a very short time after the re-establishment of his health, a decisive victory was obtained by the Germans over the Poles'¹⁸⁷ which results in Alphonsus' discharge. Weakened by his injury, Alphonsus chooses to pursue other employment rather than remain in the military. Though necessary for the plot to continue forwards, these incidents reveal concerns about the instability and uncertainty of the military profession. This 'end to a long and very vigorously fought war' brings with it the disbandment of the many newly raised regiments and the 'discharge of every incapable soldier'.¹⁸⁸ Though Alphonsus' enlistment at first provides him with a profession that is both noble and profitable, allowing him to achieve promotion even as a private soldier, it cannot support him in the long term. War, as we have seen, placed a massive financial strain on a nation, one that cannot be continued by the employment of those conscripted during it once it has been resolved. The worries of *The Crisis Stated* about 'the multitudes of men' who are 'suddenly dispersed without some permanent provision'¹⁸⁹ following the resolution of conflict are again echoed here, though *The Midnight Bell* does not linger long on the issue. Arieno's death

¹⁸³ Punter, *The Gothic Condition*

¹⁸⁴ George Haggerty, *Men in love: masculinity and sexuality in the eighteenth century* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1999), p3

¹⁸⁵ Lathom, p21

¹⁸⁶ Lathom, p21

¹⁸⁷ Lathom, p21

¹⁸⁸ Lathom, p21

¹⁸⁹ *The Crisis Stated*, p19

too, reminds the reader that even the seemingly secure employment of officers does not come without risk. Though Arieno 'served under [the Emperor] for about thirty-two years, and his goodness has raised [him] to the rank'¹⁹⁰ he now holds, that very same commitment to his profession that has elevated his position also places him in danger. To be a good soldier, and more importantly commander, is to engage in active warfare and thereby risk injury and death.

Despite the violence of Alphonsus' reaction, the memory of Arieno and their intimacy passes forgotten until his arrival as the sacristan (again taking on the role of a dead man) at the convent of St Helena. There Alphonsus encounters Laretta, 'whose beautifully pensive countenance never failed to arrest the eyes of Alphonsus'¹⁹¹, and who serves as a replacement for the emotional intimacy once shared with Arieno. Through his conversations with Father Matthias and an account left by Laretta's mother, Alphonsus discovers in her history the other half to Arieno's tale regarding his uncle. Frederic, he learns, had indeed 'loved and been loved'¹⁹² by Arieno's niece, whose loss 'was surely the cause of the grief which visibly played upon [his] uncles heart!'¹⁹³ Though this discovery 'solves not the mystery in which [Alphonsus] is concerned' it does connect 'his much revered friend Arieno'¹⁹⁴ with his beloved Laretta. This knowledge however is seemingly not shared by Alphonsus with his intended; though considering the brevity of the text this omission may be little more than a narrative oversight, arguably it also suggests that Alphonsus replaces Arieno with Laretta in his affections. After learning her history Alphonsus is consumed by his attraction to Laretta - 'he everyday felt a stronger disposition for her, and wished to snatch her from the eternal gloom'¹⁹⁵ - despite having had no conversation and little interaction with her. Whilst Lathom's narrative style in *The Midnight Bell*, with its frequent leaps in time and lack of detail, can frustrate sustained critical examination of his characters, I would nonetheless suggest that Alphonsus's immediate attraction to Laretta is influenced by, either consciously or unconsciously, his attraction to Arieno. Having had no significantly intimate relationship since, Laretta arguably assumes the place in Alphonsus' heart and mind previously occupied by Arieno, thus returning his narrative to that of the conventional marriage plot.

In both *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Midnight Bell* masculinity is continuously in conflict, both literally and ideologically. Within the masculine struggle to forge a successful, sustainable masculinity, the heroine, and the virtues she represents, must struggle to become her own

¹⁹⁰ Lathom, p19

¹⁹¹ Lathom, p21

¹⁹² Lathom, p41

¹⁹³ Lathom, p41

¹⁹⁴ Lathom, p41

¹⁹⁵ Lathom, p43

protector as the dichotomy between hero and villain is increasingly complicated by excesses and absences. The soldier's status as hero, too, is thrown repeatedly into question as his education, motivations and masculinity are problematised by an ongoing state of war. What arises in both of these texts then, is an anxiety about the heroines' ability to distinguish hero from villain: if the soldier is beholden to the commands of his superiors, and if his education might pervert, refine, or obscure his true identity then how is the heroine to trust his words or intentions? And if the military is a society solely comprised of men, what transgressions – either homosexual or otherwise – might he commit in her absence? Published the same year as Lathom's *The Midnight Bell* and often regarded as a direct legacy of the Radcliffean Gothic, in Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont* it is these ongoing anxieties that are explored. *Clermont*, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter, continued *The Mysteries of Udolpho*'s notion that the war had fundamentally fractured the trust between men and women, as the distance between the front lines and the domestic sphere became greater as the conflict continued.

Chapter Five

'I am not what I am': Fractured masculinities and female distress in Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont*

Your narrative, my dear (said her friend), convinces me more than ever of the innocence and sensibility of your disposition; and woe be to the man who should ever seek to beguile one, or pain the other! – That a being exists who could be capable of hurting either, perhaps doubt; but alas, I am very sorry to say, too many are to be found who would little scruple doing so! 'Tis unpleasant to hold up objects of a disagreeable nature to the view of youth; yet 'tis necessary to do so, in order to instruct it whom to shun.

Regina Maria Roche, *Clermont*¹

Although not a novel ostensibly about war, this chapter focuses on Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont* (1798) as a text that explores the domestic anxieties of war time by employing the Gothic setting and mode. Drawing on Mary Favret's arguments in *War at a Distance*, this chapter discusses how *Clermont*'s narrative complexities, the real and pressing dangers faced by its female characters, and the distance of its male characters speaks to a growing struggle during the Revolutionary Wars for civilian women to safely navigate society without endangering their virtue, reputation, or physical selves.

Like Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell*, Regina Maria Roche's 1798 novel *Clermont* is perhaps now best remembered as one of the 'horrid' novels listed in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. Published by the Minerva Press, *Clermont* is the tale of Madeline Clermont, a young woman raised by her father in the rural obscurity of 'a retired part of the province of Dauphiny'². The Clermonts' idyllic country life passes 'unchequered by incident, unruffled by discontent'³ until Madeline's seventeenth year, with the arrival of the Chevalier de Sevignie to their secluded valley. Madeline first encounters the Chevalier by chance, although indirectly, in the ruins of a Gothic castle near the Clermonts' cottage; Madeline is struck during an evening visit to the castle by the sounds of an oboe, and the next day discovers a poem pencilled onto a pillar. Though fleeing the ruins on both occasions, Madeline is nonetheless excited by the mysterious stranger. When her father is called to tend to a young man injured during his rambles through the valley, Madeline discovers a landscape painting 'in which a small female figure' bearing 'so great a resemblance to her own person'⁴ is included and realises that the stranger in the ruins and the injured young man are one and the same. The young man, who gives his name as de Sevignie,

¹ Regina Maria Roche, *Clermont*, ed. by Natalie Schroeder (Chicago: Valancourt Books, 2006), p56

² Roche, p3

³ Roche, p7

⁴ Roche, p17

continues in the valley for some time in the care of the Clermonts, during which Madeline becomes increasingly enamoured with him. Despite his admiration for de Seignie, Clermont, unable 'to see a probability of his daughter's attachment ending happily'⁵, turns cold to the chevalier until he takes his leave of the cottage. Though initially dejected to the point of near illness, Madeline is eventually able to check her despondency for the sake of her father and the seasons pass without issue. The novel's action is begun in earnest 'one night in the latter part of spring'⁶ when a carriage accident in the valley brings the Countess de Merville to Clermont's cottage: the Countess is revealed to be a dear friend of Clermont's from his secretive past and, after an evening's discussion, it is decided that Madeline will leave the valley as her companion to continue her education and introduce her to the world. Leaving the cottage in the Countess's company marks Madeline's transition from girl to woman. She is introduced to society, makes friends and meets again with de Seignie, but is also thrown into a world of intrigue, deception, greed and passion. The novel's plot is complex and carefully constructed, interspersed with characters who tell folk tales and ghost stories that foreshadow and illuminate revelations that occur later in the text. *Clermont*, ostensibly, is a novel concerned with how human passions can be manipulated, corrupted, and misunderstood, exploring and challenging ideas of what we consider to be 'good' and 'bad' through the reflections of the sheltered but intuitive heroine Madeline.

Perhaps because of the novel's inclusion on Isabella Thorpe's list of horrid novels in *Northanger Abbey*, very little critical work has engaged with Roche's employment of the Gothic form. Whilst scholars such as Christina Morin have sought to bring attention to Roche in recent years by considering her importance in relation to Irish identity and literature⁷, there has historically been a lack of interest in *Clermont* or many of Roche's other works. As a popular Minerva Press author whose work was listed by Austen alongside texts like the *The Midnight Bell*, there has been a tendency to view Roche as an inferior imitator of the Radcliffean Gothic. Yet Roche was, as Natalie Schroeder has noted, 'a formidable name' during the 1790s: 'although Mrs. Radcliffe was in 1797 the most popular and prestigious living novelist, Regina Maria Roche's third work, *The Children of the Abbey* (1796), challenged the popularity of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.'⁸ Roche, like Radcliffe, deserves scholarly attention not only because her work was immensely popular with readers, but for the quality of her prose and the way in which she engaged with the Gothic during a period in which it was enjoying considerable success. In 1808, *The Lady's Monthly*

⁵ Roche, p23

⁶ Roche, p26

⁷ Notably Christina Morin in their monograph *The Gothic Novel in Ireland, c.1760-1829*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018)

⁸ Natalie Schroeder, "'The Mysteries of Udolpho and Clermont': The Radcliffean encroachment on the art of Regina Maria Roche', *Studies in the Novel*, 12 (1980), 2, 131-143, p132

Museum wrote that Roche was ‘a pleasing novelist’ and that *Clermont*, along with *The Children of the Abbey*, was ‘much admired’⁹. Born Regina Maria Dalton in Ireland in 1764, Roche was the daughter of a Captain Blundell Dalton of the 40th Regiment of Foot (though stationed in Ireland after the Seven Years War and throughout the 1760s¹⁰, the 40th were active during the conflict) and moved to England after marrying in 1794. Roche, Natalie Schroeder claims, ‘had clearly kept her eye fixed on Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho*’¹¹ when writing *Clermont*. Yet whilst *Clermont* undeniably works with the Radcliffean tradition of the Gothic – both novels feature a heroine raised in rural tranquillity, noble fathers with secret pasts and complex family mysteries that span a number of volumes – Roche’s novel is far from a carbon copy. In *Clermont*, the second of her Gothic novels, Roche employs a narrative style that is frequently franker and more direct than Radcliffe’s, not dissimilar in places to Austen’s free and indirect speech. The novel sets itself apart, not just in its prose style but in its heroine and its plot: *Clermont* subverts rather than repeats many of the conventions set in place by Radcliffe, challenging the reader’s expectations of the narrative. Rather than as an imitator of Ann Radcliffe, we should consider Regina Maria Roche’s work as an evolution. Just as Reeve and Radcliffe embraced the Gothic set out by Walpole in 1764, what would be more constructive to our understanding of the Gothic’s social engagement in the long eighteenth century would be to consider how Roche adapted the Gothic mode in response to her social, cultural and political climate.

As discussed in the previous chapter, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is a novel of masculinity in crisis: reflecting the anxieties of a nation marching into a war of uncertain purpose, the masculinities of *Udolpho* are absent and unfulfilled. It is the failings of the men around her to fully realise their roles as hero, lover, father or guardian that repeatedly place the heroine, Emily St. Aubert, in danger. However, although the boundaries between hero and villain are blurred in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily is nonetheless able to identify friend from foe for the majority of the text. Where *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is a novel in which men are never what they should be, in *Clermont* men are never what they seem to be. Whilst Emily’s physical and emotional selves are threatened throughout *Udolpho*, the insufficiency of the novel’s villain allows her to repeatedly avoid and escape harm: Montoni, after all, never truly becomes the patriarchal villain he imagines himself to be. We learn that he did not orchestrate the downfall of the Signora

⁹ *The Lady’s Monthly Museum, Or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction: Being an Assemblage of Whatever can Tend to Please the Fancy, Interest the Mind, Or Exalt the Character of the British Fair./ by a Society of Ladies*, (1808) vol. 5, in *British Periodicals Online* <<https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/4456972?accountid=13828>> [accessed 30th November 2019], p30

¹⁰ Raymond Henry Smythies, *Historical Records of the 40th (2nd Somersetshire) Regiment*, (Devenport: A.H Swiss, 1894), in

<https://books.google.com/books?id=IzQRAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false> [accessed 3rd April 2019]

¹¹ Schroeder, *Clermont*, pxiv

Laurentini, that he cannot force his wife or his niece to obey him (or indeed cause them the physical pain he threatens them with¹²) and he ultimately cannot prevent Emily from fleeing. In *Clermont* the dangers that women face from the men who assume power over them are ever present and frequently fully realised. Schroeder argues that 'Roche's evil agents are far more diabolical and sinister than Radcliffe's. They commit real murders and have incredible powers of deception. They are everywhere at once, without showing their true hand or even being fully identified.'¹³ In *Clermont* anxiety about the distance between the domestic and the military is explored in the distance between the masculine and feminine: whilst Roche's women are intelligent, insightful and of fine feeling, they are repeatedly unable to navigate the patriarchal spaces they inhabit. War fractured gender dynamics, further removing women from the masculine sphere and complicating masculinity. Yet *Clermont* demonstrates that women were confined by the patriarchal model and could not exist outside it (even if they try, as demonstrated by the murder of the Countess de Merville). How, the novel seems to ask, were young women to be expected to make sensible choices and to protect themselves when so much of the masculine sphere existed too far outside of their vision to be understood? Though Schroeder has claimed that in her use of terror Roche 'makes extensive drafts on Radcliffe's *Udolpho*'¹⁴, using Radcliffe's plot and narrative style as foundation, I would suggest that *Clermont* marks a departure from the Radcliffian tradition: a Gothic in which female terrors are fully realised, that reflects the anxiety and turmoil of 1798.

The Treaty of Campo Formio, signed in the October of 1797, had brought to a close the War of the First Coalition for much of Europe. The Austrian monarchy had resigned much of Italy, Belgium and the Rhineland to French control, striking an uneasy peace and leaving Britain alone still at war. To continue in large-scale conflict with France, following four years of combat and now without allies, would be no small feat: to have a hope of success Britain would need both men and means. In addition to recruitment drives across the country for soldiers (both for regulars and militia regiments), funds would need to be found to support such an increased standing army and another year – if not more – of campaigns abroad. In an attempt to raise sufficient finance the British government, under William Pitt the Younger, passed a new bill to raise taxes. Not all, however, agreed with the government's method. 'In time of war' declared an anonymous pamphleteer in 1798 'as war is now carried on in Europe, [the author] conceives it is impossible to raise the supplies within a year.'¹⁵ With a nation already under strain, and the

¹² Though by locking her away in poor conditions, Montoni is arguably responsible for Madame Montoni's death he does not directly harm her as Emily fears.

¹³ Schroeder, *Clermont*, pxvi

¹⁴ Schroeder, *Clermont*, pxvii

¹⁵ Anon., *A plan for raising the supplies during the war, humbly submitted to the two Houses of Parliament, the landed and monied interest, and to all ranks and conditions of the people, capable of contributing to the*

war unlikely to be swiftly resolved, many believed that raising taxes would only further cripple the country: 'if that sum of fifteen millions cannot be levied upon the people within the year, which it is presumed will be the case, that part of it which remains to be levied must be a heavy incumbrance upon the ways and means for raising the supplies of those succeeding years'¹⁶. Another pamphleteer, in a piece titled *Pacification; or, the Safety and Practicability of a Peace With France Demonstrated*, acknowledged that whilst 'money be necessary to conduct the plans of War' it was unreasonable for Ministers to expect the nation to offer up more than they had 'already cheerfully granted'¹⁷. The high cost of war, it seems, was keenly felt in 1798. The Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars would span 22 years and cost Britain a total of £1, 657, 854, 518¹⁸. The cost of the conflict would ultimately amount to 'close to three times the total cost of all the other major wars Britain had fought since the Glorious Revolution, and approximately six times its pre-war national income.'¹⁹ The question then in 1798 was less about if or why Britain should engage with France, but how they might maintain it. The government's plan to raise taxes had drawn criticism for its lack of forward thinking: one pamphlet argued that the nation's 'yet untouched resources'²⁰ might offer an alternative source of finance, others sought to encourage voluntary contributions. But if war would be of such great strain to the entire nation, and with the First Coalition no more, why then was peace no option for Britain?

Though the nation may have 'went to war with France by Anticipation; lest she, at some future period should go to war with us'²¹, by 1798 the ideological debates of 1793 could no longer be entertained. Across the Channel the Coup of 18 Fructidor (the 4th of September, 1797) led by Barras, Rewbell, and La Révellière, and supported by the military might of Napoleon Bonaparte, had forcefully eradicated the Executive Directory of any royalist sympathisers. Once again the power and direction of the Revolutionary government had shifted, and its military forces along with it. One pamphlet published in 1798, entitled *An Appeal to the head and heart of every man and woman in Great Britain, respecting the threatened French invasion, and the importance of*

expences of the state, (London: printed for P. Elmsly and D. Bremner, Strand; J. Sewell, Cornhill; and Wright, 1798.) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW104871844&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 9th February 2019], p10

¹⁶ *A plan*, p8

¹⁷ Anon., *Pacification; or, the Safety and Practicability of a Peace with France Demonstrated: With Remarks upon the Advantages of a Change of Ministry, and the Dangers Which Threaten Both Nations by an Obstinate Perseverance in the War*. (London: J. S. Jordan, NO. 166, Fleet-Street, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW107724112&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 21st February 2019], p7

¹⁸ Colley, p150

¹⁹ Colley, p150

²⁰ *A plan*, p13

²¹ *Pacification*, p18

immediately coming forward with voluntary contributions, feared that in ‘their last Revolution’ France had ‘given an unbounded loose to their expressions of hate, fury, and vengeance’²². ‘Our enemies’, it warned, ‘do not conceal their designs – they do not attempt to disguise the malice they bear us’²³: following the exile of the royalists during the September coup, the Executive Directory had summoned Napoleon to Paris in the October with the intention of leading a force to invade Britain. Whilst the campaign was never mounted, due to the poor standard of the French navy, it nonetheless confirmed for many those long-held fears that France sought to possess and subjugate Britain. A collection of extracts from the addresses made by the Executive Directory in the final months of 1797 was published in 1798 by London printer J. Wright – who also printed *An Appeal* – under the title *French Invasion!* Taken from a number of proclamations and speeches, the pamphlet was presented with an advertisement that stated that ‘the People of England have lately frequently heard of the French Government to attempt the Invasion of this Country; but it seems unfortunately to treat the design as chimerical.’²⁴ How, the pamphlet asks, can the Directory’s intentions be considered illusory or speculative when such definitive intent had been displayed? In another Wright-published pamphlet titled *Thoughts on a French Invasion*, Commissary General Havilland le M’seurier noted that though ‘the menace of a French Invasion’ was ‘formerly afforded a subject for ridicule’ it could in light of the 1797 directives no longer ‘be treated in so light a manner.’²⁵ Throughout 1798 pamphlets and tracts appeared recounting the perceived brutality, echoing the language of brutality and barbarity employed during the Seven Years War, of the Revolutionaries’ campaigns in Germany and Holland and declaring that France no longer sought ‘to amuse [Britain] any longer with the benevolent tender of the ‘Rights of Man’.’²⁶ Whilst the invasion proposed by the Directory never came, these pamphlets suggest not

²² Anon., *An appeal to the head and heart of every man and woman in Great Britain, respecting the threatened French invasion, and the importance of immediately coming forward with voluntary contributions*. (London: J. Wright, Piccadilly, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW104840258&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FA SCIMILE> [accessed 21st February 2019], p6

²³ *An appeal to the head and heart*, p6. It is likely that the pamphlet is referencing here not only the directives mentioned later but the Battle of Fishguard, Wales, in the February of 1797 in which French forces attempted to launch an invasion assisted by Irish Republican organisation The Society of United Irishmen.

²⁴ Anon., *French invasion! a collection of addresses, &c. of the executive directory of France*. (London: J. Wright, Piccadilly, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CB127159787&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FA SCIMILE>. [accessed 21st February 2019]

²⁵ Havilland Le Mesurier, *Thoughts on a French invasion, with reference to the probability of its success, and the proper means of resisting it*. By Havilland Le Mesurier, Esq. Commissary general for the southern district of England. (London: J. Wright, Piccadilly, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW107643764&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FA SCIMILE>. [accessed 9th February 2019], p1

²⁶ *An appeal to the head and heart*, p12

only a persisting anxiety that it still might but the notion that France was becoming an increasing danger because the Revolution had abandoned those principles on which it was founded.

The present war and the threatened invasion, *An Appeal* declares, were ‘the common – the essential – the unalterable – the unalienable interests of every *Man and Woman* in Britain’²⁷: all citizens, it argues, ‘the high and low, the rich and poor, the learned and unlearned’ would be made to suffer in the event of a French victory. For Britain to ‘feel on our necks the feet of an enemy over whom we have so often triumphed’²⁸, *An Appeal* reasons, would not only be intolerable but un-British: ‘If any Englishman should not feel his blood boil with indignation on the perusal of insults like these, he is a disgrace to the memory of those gallant heroes, who conquered in the field of Cressy, Agincourt and Poitiers.’²⁹ *An Appeal* was not alone in these anti-French sentiments, which recalled not only the ancient rivalry between the two nations but the anti-French propaganda and Francophobia of the Seven Years War. A pamphlet titled *Proofs of French Aggression*, by a ‘John Bowles, Esq’ and published also by Wright, declared that recent events ‘render it impossible to deny that the continuance of War is solely to be ascribed to the Jacobin Directory of France’³⁰, whilst another presented extracts ‘from ancient chronicles’ detailing the ‘threatened invasion of England by the French’ in ‘the 10th years of King Richard II’ under the title *Vain Boastings of Frenchmen. The same in 1386 as in 1798*.³¹ *An Appeal* sought to raise voluntary contributions for the war fund by appealing to the national pride of civilians but also by bringing home to them the dangers faced. ‘It is not merely our property that we have to preserve’, *An Appeal* reminds its reader, ‘but everything that is dear to us as men and as Britons – everything that is valuable to us as social beings.’³² War with France, these pamphlets suggest, was an issue that should concern every man and woman of Britain. Undoubtedly by 1798 the strains of the conflict must have been felt at all levels of British society as they sent both men and money off to the military. Yet how, as the author of *Pacification* asked, could the population

²⁷ *An appeal to the head and heart*, p3

²⁸ *An appeal to the head and heart*, p5

²⁹ *An appeal to the head and heart*, p11

³⁰ John Bowles, *Proofs of French aggression; extracted from an answer to Mr. Erskine's "view of the causes and consequences of the war."* By John Bowles, Esq. (London: J Wright, Piccadilly, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW105250598&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>. [accessed 9th February 2019], pIV

³¹ *Vain boastings of Frenchmen. The same in 1386 as in 1798. Being an account of the threatened invasion of England by the French the 10th year of King Richard II. Extracted from ancient chronicles.* (London: J. Pridden, 1798) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW100315858&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>. [accessed 9th February 2019], p2

³² *An appeal*, p22

be asked to give more than they already had: or perhaps more accurately, what more could they have to give? What these pamphlets reveal then is a tension between the real and the ideological or imagined Britain. Rivalry and victory over France had become inherent parts of British national identity: it had allowed for the creation of an imagined unified (though in reality still primarily English) British identity in the 1750s and 1760s, and was now emboldened again by the reports of the plans for invasion. But Britain had already once driven itself to near bankruptcy to achieve victory during the Seven Years War, which the subsequent losses in the American Wars of Independence had kept fresh in public memory.

In *War at a Distance* Mary A. Favret argued that ‘modern wartime refers first to the experience of those living through but not in a war.’³³ Favret notes that ‘as writers in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries went about their everyday routines, their country was sending men to kill and be killed across the globe.’³⁴ For those at home in England in 1798, the war existed in paradox: somehow separate and distant from daily life whilst constantly threatening to spill over British borders. The effects of war on civilian life – the term ‘non-combatant’ and the idea of the ‘civilian’, Favret notes, originated during the Napoleonic period³⁵ – were at once painfully present and impossibly distant. According to Favret, although the rise of print culture meant that whilst war remained a daily topic of concern and conversation its reality remained detached: ‘In the late eighteenth century, news of war came with considerable lag time; reports of a particular event, the loss of a battle or the death of your brother, could take months to be communicated home and confirmed.’³⁶ The pamphleteers of 1798 called for the British populace to approach the war personally – either to support or condemn it – and to recognise the impact of distant conflict on their own domestic lives. How then, considering Favret’s assertions, could one develop an informed opinion when the reality of warfare was constantly too distant to discern? ‘The wartime writing of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period’, Favret suggests, ‘gives expressive form to this experience of mediated distance – distance spatial, temporal, epistemological, and in the end, mortal – and the responses it generates.’³⁷ The effects of war were not hidden from the public – they could be seen and felt domestically, in the thousands of men who left their professions to become soldiers, in the increases to taxes and the scarcity of certain supplies – but they could not necessarily be understood. The distance, or the lag as Favret terms it, between the domestic and the military spheres created a fundamental break in society: the civilian could not understand the soldier. The temporal disruption in the feedback of information meant that the military acted constantly

³³ Favret, p19

³⁴ Favret, p19

³⁵ Favret, p23

³⁶ Favret, p24

³⁷ Favret, p24

ahead of the public, suggesting that public opinion and feeling had little effect on campaigns and actions. The war was too far away to be seen, but also too far removed from domestic life to be understood. The British military ostensibly existed to protect and defend the interests and values of the population, yet in that distance (both physical and temporal) there was a space for doubt and dishonesty. Warfare was too far removed from the domestic sphere for the public to develop individual understanding: how could the civilian judge the soldier, with such a distance and disconnect in their experiences? Pamphlets such as *An Appeal* hinged upon a narrative of noble British heroism in the face of French cruelty and aggression, recalling again Kathleen Wilson's argument that national indemnity was centred in a joint narrative and shared understanding. Favret's argument, however, fundamentally problematises this idea. In the distance between the reality of war and the informed imagining of the nation, what looked to be heroism could easily be villainy. In the Gothic of 1798, then, what is explored is a fear about what is lost in translation. In Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell*, as the last chapter argued, there was an anxiety about the formation of masculinity in a time of uncertainty created by war. Alphonsus is forced from his home by events he has only half witnessed, the climax of a mystery into which he has no insight. In his ignorance he becomes aimless, unable to successfully find his purpose or fashion his masculinity until he is guided by home – and therefore to the truth – by his substitute patriarch, Byroff. But whilst Lathom's Gothic centred on a male anxiety about the creation of successful, fulfilled masculinity, arguably those most affected by the anxious distance between the domestic and the military were women. It is this anxiety, I will argue, that is explored in Regina Maria Roche's four volume 1798 novel, *Clermont*.

Preparing Madeline for her departure from their secluded rustic cottage in the company of the Countess de Merville, Clermont tells his daughter that he trusts that she 'may ever continue the unaffected child of nature' and reminds her to 'ever remember that modesty is the best ornament of a female, and simplicity her chief attraction'³⁸. Though sheltered, Madeline is otherwise refined in both sense and sensibility: she 'possessed besides an exquisite taste for drawing and music' and 'never did a pupil render the toils of an instructor less difficult than did Madeline those of her father'³⁹. 'The liveliness of [Madeline's] fancy', the reader is told, 'was equal to the strength of her understanding'⁴⁰. The natural brilliance of Madeline's mind and the strength of her sensibility, which 'rendered her a companion well qualified to diversify [her father's] lonely hours'⁴¹, is reflected equally in her physical form:

³⁸ Roche, p33

³⁹ Roche, p5

⁴⁰ Roche, p5

⁴¹ Roche, p5

She was tall and delicately made; nor was the symmetry of her features inferior to that of her bodily form: but it was not to this symmetry that they owed their most attractive charm, – it was derived from the fascinating sweetness diffused over them. Her eyes, large and of the darkest hazel, ever true to the varying emotion of her soul, languished beneath the long silken lashes with all the softness of sensibility, and sparkled with all the fire of animation: her hair, a rich auburn, added luxuriance to her beauty, and by a natural curl, gave an expression of greatest innocence to her face; the palest blush of health just tinted her dimpled, fair and beautifully rounded cheek; and her mouth adorned by smiles, appeared like the half blown rose when moistened with the dews of early morn.⁴²

Madeline's inherent, unaffected brilliance – her 'prodigality'⁴³ – is crucial not only to the plot but for the association of the reader. These early descriptions of Madeline suggest a quickness of mind, a command of sentiment and a depth of understanding in the novel's young heroine, as 'with equal delight she could enjoy the gaiety of innocent mirth and the lonely hour of solitude: feeling and precept had early taught her pity for the woes of others; and with cheerfulness she could tax either convenience or comfort to supply the claims of poverty.'⁴⁴ Though Madeline is of noble heritage (a fact hinted at in the novel's opening, and revealed later in the text), she is raised in isolated simplicity and educated by her father. This solitary, rural upbringing aligns Madeline with Radcliffe's Emily St. Aubert: both heroines are raised and educated in the Rousseavian model, suggesting initially an idealised feminine education that, arguably, aligns them with the contemporary middle-class female reader. Whilst the remoteness of the valley may protect Madeline from the vices and passions of society, Clermont recognises that their seclusion and his paternal care cannot provide for her forever:

You know not (he continued), heaven only knows it, the load of anxiety her offer has removed from my heart; unnumbered have been the sleepless nights, the wretched days I have passed on your account: looking forward to the hour which should deprive you of my protection (a tear dropped from Madeline on his hand); which should leave you forlorn in a world too prone to take advantage of innocence and poverty; the asylum of a cloister was the only one I had means of procuring you; but to that you ever manifested a repugnance, and I could therefore not influence you to it.⁴⁵

A father, Clermont knows, cannot be his daughter's protector forever. For Madeline to have a future in which she is not confined to a cloister, she must enter into society in the hope of finding friends, connections, and (we may assume) suitors that will provide her the stability she cannot attain for herself. For all her brilliance, there are no avenues available to Madeline that permit self-sufficiency: like many young women in late eighteenth-century Britain, though she is educated and intelligent, Madeline's ongoing security and safety are reliant on her patriarchal protector. Although she leaves the valley in the protection of the Countess de Merville, a widow

⁴² Roche, p6

⁴³ Roche, p5

⁴⁴ Roche, p5

⁴⁵ Roche, p32-33

of independent means and fortune whom Clermont regards to be 'just the guide to whose care I can consign my beloved girl with confidence and pleasure'⁴⁶, as the novel's events unfold Madeline is in near constant danger. Trapped by a family mystery which she cannot hope to unravel, Madeline must navigate not only a world that seeks to alternately possess, corrupt and destroy her but the terrible consequences of choices made by those who otherwise seek to protect her. In Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, terror is frequently created by that which Emily *supposes* has occurred or will occur: the figure behind the black veil, the murder of her aunt, the injured body in the castle, the door to her chamber which mysteriously locks and unlocks. Aware of the precariousness of her situation as a young, orphaned woman, Emily is conscious of the danger that staying in the unruly, masculine sphere of Udolpho presents to both her person and reputation. Forced to bear such an intense mental strain, Emily is unable to check her imagination and her terror is exacerbated as a result. In the Radcliffean Gothic the threatened taboo is rarely realised. In *Clermont*, however, terror is more present and tangible: husbands violently betray wives, fathers hide terrible secrets of wrongdoing, and the threat of sexual violence is realised. Terror occurs in *Clermont* because those fears which Madeline can hardly bear to give voice to *are* true: the patriarchal powers that control her and the women around her – even her beloved father – cannot be trusted.

A significant aspect of *Clermont's* departure from the Radcliffean model of the Gothic is the novel's representation of maternal and sororal relationships. Whilst Adeline and Emily enjoy female friendships later in the novels (with Clara de la Luc and the Lady Blanche respectively), their maternal figures (Madame de la Motte and Madame Cheron/Montoni) lack the sense, reason or indeed warmth to guide them. Madeline, however, is permitted a female society that is both present and positive: the Countess de Merville is an idealised matriarch, through whom Madeline is permitted both the sisterly friendship of Madame D'Alembert and the 'amiable, elegant and accomplished'⁴⁷ society of Madame Chatteneuf[sic] and her daughter Olivia. Though her initial interest in the Countess stems from a curiosity regarding her father's past, Madeline is quick to observe 'the dignified and benign aspect'⁴⁸ of the older woman. Whereas St. Aubert laments the unsuitability of Madame Cheron as the guardian to whom he must consign Emily, Clermont observes that the Countess 'will at once cherish [Madeline] with the tenderness of a parent, and watch you with the sedulity of a friend'⁴⁹. The Countess, whose 'virtues are as fascinating as her manners'⁵⁰, is positioned as the ideal guardian for Madeline: having completed her solitary education in the care of her father, the widowed Countess possesses

⁴⁶ Roche, p33

⁴⁷ Roche, p44

⁴⁸ Roche, p27

⁴⁹ Roche, p33

⁵⁰ Roche, p33

both the respectability and status needed to introduce Madeline into society, and the reason and sensibility to successfully guide her. The Countess' wisdom is signalled to the reader as the women journey from Clermont's cottage to the Countess' home. Passing the 'gloomy residence' of the Count de Montmorenci, later revealed to be Madeline's grandfather, the Countess remarks that 'a man should not be reproached for them [referring to faults] when in trouble; but they should be remembered to prove the justice of Providence in the sending that trouble, and that, sooner or later, he will punish the evil doer.'⁵¹ The Countess' words foreshadow the revelation later in the novel, when Madeline learns of the betrayals and misdeeds that resulted in Clermont's seclusion. Though the Countess is aware of Clermont's history and the misfortunes of the Montmorencis, Madeline and the reader are not: her words therefore frame the succeeding narrative, shaping the opinion of Madeline and in turn the reader as the events unfold. It is under the Countess' watchful eye, too, that Madeline makes her entrance into society, navigating her first friendships and her reintroduction to the Chevalier de Sevignie. Unlike Madame Cheron, who condemns Emily for 'improper' conduct with Valancourt yet fails to understand her niece's sentiments or offer her helpful guidance, the Countess de Merville is able to offer Madeline both social instruction and emotional support. Attending a ball thrown by Madame Chatteneuf and her daughter, Madeline is surprised to meet de Sevignie in the company of a group of officers acquainted with Olivia. Though not insensible of proper social conduct, in her confusion Madeline allows herself to be drawn into private conversation with de Sevignie. The conversation is interrupted when, to Madeline's 'infinite surprise and embarrassment', she 'beheld the Countess de Merville at a little distance attentively observing her'.⁵² The Countess professes in a 'grave accent'⁵³ that, having not seen Madeline amongst the dancers, she had 'been seeking [her] everywhere'⁵⁴: though the Countess makes clear her displeasure at the impropriety of the situation in her words to Madeline and cool greeting to de Sevignie, she does not admonish or punish her charge. The following day, after the receipt of an unexpectedly cold letter from de Sevignie throws Madeline into a state of distress and confusion, the Countess again guides Madeline in proper behaviour: 'Does your letter require a written answer? (again asked the Countess, in an accent of surprise) young ladies should be very careful how they write to gentlemen.'⁵⁵ Here, the Countess's instructions not only prevent Madeline from unthinkingly committing 'a breach of respect to [the Countess]' and 'of duty to her father'⁵⁶ but allows her pause to collect her overcome feelings. To the Countess, Madeline's private person is as important as her public: while she instructs and manages Madeline's behaviour

⁵¹ Roche, p38

⁵² Roche, p49

⁵³ Roche, p49

⁵⁴ Roche, p49

⁵⁵ Roche, p54

⁵⁶ Roche, p54

towards de Sevignie for the sake of her public reputation, she is also sensible to her emotional needs and wellbeing. Witnessing Madeline's distress at the letter, the Countess 'thought, indeed, she should fulfil the sacred trust reposed in her by Clermont' by removing Madeline from the Chatteneufs' home so that she might privately 'particularly enquire about the commencement, and try to discover the strength of the attachment it was so obvious [Madeline] entertained for de Sevignie'⁵⁷.

In her guardianship of Madeline, the Countess acknowledges that central to her care of the young woman is the passage of wisdom: 'They who have made a perilous voyage, would be inexcusable if they did not caution those they saw about undertaking the same, of the dangers which lay in their way, that, by being timely apprised, they might endeavour to shun to at least acquire skill to overcome them.'⁵⁸ Though the Countess does not acquaint Madeline with the details of her own 'perilous journey', she regardless undertakes the task to warn her 'against its dangers.'⁵⁹ The Countess's advice to Madeline, immediately following de Sevignie's first mysterious mood change, arguably embodies the very crux of the novel's anxieties. The Countess warns her charge that:

To none is the young, the lovely, the inexperienced female so particularly exposed as to those which proceed from a sex, ordained by heaven for her protectors, but of whom too many seem to forget, or rather disregard their original destination. Yes, my love, there are beings who make it to their study, sometimes their boast, to ensnare the unsuspecting, and entail shame and sorrow upon her who would never perhaps have known either, but for a too fatal consequence in their honour. Others there are of a nature scarcely less hateful to virtue or injurious to society, who from a mere impulse of vanity, seek to gain the affections, which are no sooner won than disregarded; while they triumph aloud over the credulity and weakness that afforded them such a conquest.⁶⁰

The Countess' cautioning stems from her knowledge of Clermont's mother, the first Madeline, and the situation of her own daughter, Madame D'Alembert: both cases of refined, intelligent young women deceived and ruined by men who were not what they first seemed. The Countess notes that though de Sevignie's 'eyes declare love and admiration, and his language I dare say accords with their glances'⁶¹ Madeline knows nothing of his situation. Rather than condemn Madeline's affection or its object, the Countess cautions Madeline to be mindful of circumstance: to pursue an attachment without promise or hope of a future, she warns (mirroring Clermont's earlier worries) can have disastrous consequences. Yet whilst Madeline receives the advice graciously – 'Your precepts, your advice, my dear madam (said Madeline), I will treasure up as I

⁵⁷ Roche, p55

⁵⁸ Roche, p56

⁵⁹ Roche, p56

⁶⁰ Roche, p56-7

⁶¹ Roche, p57

would the means of felicity: oh how gratefully do I feel your kind solicitude about me'⁶² – the Countess' matriarchal wisdom – as well as her rank and fortune – is not sufficient to protect the women under her care from harm. Though the Countess seeks to create a space of maternal education and affection in which femininity might safely bloom, she is ultimately unable to maintain it. This struggle is reflected literally in the physical state of the château itself; though the Countess de Merville is beloved by her tenants, who behold her with 'proofs of love and gratitude'⁶³, the château exists in a state of decline. 'Time' the narration notes, had 'marked it in many places with visible decay; some of the windows were dismantled from the failure of the stone work, and many of its battlements had mouldered away: it stood upon an elevated lawn, sequestered in the bosom of an extensive wood, whose mighty shades appeared co-eval with itself'⁶⁴. Though her possession of the château facilitates the Countess's female independence, allowing her to care for her tenants and for Madeline, it fails to provide sanctuary from patriarchal greed and vice. Despite her wisdom and status, the Countess' matriarchal power is limited by the society that exists outside the confines of the château. Madeline, when first beholding 'the vast magnitude and decaying grandeur of the château'⁶⁵, is overcome with 'surprise and melancholy'⁶⁶. On her first night in the residence, Madeline 'felt an uneasy sensation, something like fear, stealing over her mind as she looked around her spacious and gloomy apartment, nor could she prevent herself from starting as the tapestry, which represented a number of grotesque and frightful figures, agitated by the wind that whistled through the crevices, every now and then swelled from the walls.'⁶⁷ Whilst the gloomy, crumbling relic of a bygone age may be a convention of the late eighteenth-century Gothic novel, the situation at the château is, to both Madeline and the reader, at odds with the person of the Countess. Where in *Romance of the Forest* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the poor state of the Abbey St. Clair and the castle of Udolpho signified the failures of the Marquis and Montoni to meet the ideals of husbandry, in *Clermont* the decaying state of the château seems rather to speak to the struggle of the Countess to maintain matriarchal power in an otherwise patriarchal society. Whilst the Gothic decay of the building, with its subterranean passages, initially serves to protect the women that reside within it, it also enables terror; a reality that is realised in the murder of the Countess and the arrival of the Monsieur D'Alembert.

'Remember', the Countess de Merville instructs Madeline from her death bed, 'I never desire you to be [Madame D'Alembert's] companion, except she is without the company of Monsieur

⁶² Roche p57

⁶³ Roche, p41

⁶⁴ Roche, p38

⁶⁵ Roche, p39

⁶⁶ Roche, p39

⁶⁷ Roche, p42

D'Alembert'⁶⁸. The suddenness and violence of the Countess' death comes as a destabilising shock to both Madeline and the reader, disrupting the narrative and shifting the focus from romance to Gothic. Having been called back from the Chatteneuf's (and thereby also de Sevignie), Madeline is distressed to find her guardian with 'an appearance of illness and dejection'⁶⁹. Consumed by unnamed melancholy, the Countess is momentarily overcome as she takes in the view from the seat which 'owed its formation to her lord': 'I love the shelter of those venerable boughs [...] they recall a thousand tender recollections: at such an hour as this, when day was declining, often I have sat beneath them with my lord, watching the sports of our children, – the lovely boys, whose loss first taught me the frailty of human joys, first convinced me that it is hereafter we can only expect permanent felicity.'⁷⁰ The Countess' morbid speech foreshadows her death: though Madeline, and by extension the reader, is unaware of the cause of the Countess's distressed state and sudden ill health, the novel begins to create a sense of an unnamed anxiety. Madeline is surprised to discover 'the vivacity' of a letter from Madame D'Alembert, which 'clearly proved that [she] was ignorant of her mother's late illness and disquietude.'⁷¹ 'Surely', Madeline reasons, the source of the Countess's worry 'must indeed be painful when she thus hides it from those who are most interested about her.'⁷² Yet it is not illness nor melancholy that ultimately claims the Countess' life, but murder. The situation of the event – on the Countess' own lands and within a place of worship – amplifies the shock of Madeline, the servants and the reader. So horrifying is the situation that even Madeline's grief is arrested, as she cannot comprehend the reality of what has occurred:

'tis not a common friend; tis a mother I lament; – she was the only person from who I ever experienced the tenderness of one. Do you not wonder (she continued grasping, the arm of Agatha) how any one could be so wicked as to injure such a woman – a woman who never, I am confident, in the whole course of her life, injured a mortal, whose hand was as liberal as her heart, and whose pity relieved, even when her reason condemned the sufferer? Would you not have thought [...] that the innocence of that countenance might have disarmed the rage of a savage?⁷³

In *Clermont*, sense and fortitude are not enough to provide women with safety. The Countess cannot protect the boundaries of her home, nor can she successfully protect herself and her dependants. The Countess' failures however, come not from her own insufficiency but from a system that permits the abuses of patriarchal power. The Countess' downfall, Madeline learns much later, is a product of the greed and vices of the D'Alembert's: the elder D'Alembert, seeking fortune to elevate his son had fixed upon 'the young and lovely heiress of the Count

⁶⁸ Roche, p130

⁶⁹ Roche, p76

⁷⁰ Roche, p79

⁷¹ Roche, p87

⁷² Roche, p87

⁷³ Roche, p154

Merville, who was just then presented at the French Court by her mother, and was the admired object at it.⁷⁴ The younger D'Alembert is able to play the man of feeling, assuming a 'mask of tenderness and sensibility' to hide his 'features of the utmost deformity and horror.'⁷⁵ The Countess - who 'with unutterable anguish [...] beheld her amiable and beloved child united to a hardened libertine' - remains with the couple after the marriage, attempting to maintain her patriarchal power and protect her daughter, but is ultimately 'driven from her residence by the insulting treatment of D'Alembert'⁷⁶. The Countess endeavours to make provisions for her daughter, refusing to supplement D'Alembert's income (which already 'far exceeded both the fortune of his wife, and the income allowed by his father'⁷⁷) in the hopes that she 'might reserve something of an independence for her daughter, in case she was ever plunged into pecuniary distresses (of which she beheld every probability) by the thoughtless and unbound extravagance of her husband.'⁷⁸ The entailing of the patriarchal estate upon the female line grants the Countess and her daughter power and independence, yet it also places them in danger: having first fooled Madame D'Alembert into marriage, the younger D'Alembert contrives to murder the Countess and lock away his wife so that he might possess their fortune.

The futility of the Mervilles' struggles to maintain their reputation, independence, and physical safety against the libertine pursuits of D'Alembert is epitomised in the tale of the orphan Adelaide St. Pierre, 'a young and lovely girl, the orphan of a noble but reduced family'⁷⁹ taken into the care of the Countess and her daughter. Considering Natalie Schroeder's argument that Roche's work was influenced and inspired by that of Radcliffe, the naming and situation of the unfortunate Adelaide seems to recall that of Adeline in *The Romance of Forest*. Whereas in *Romance of the Forest* Adeline's beauty and grace not only endear her to protectors (such as Theodore, Peter and La Luc) but also prevent those who do seek to harm her from carrying out their violent acts, Roche's Adelaide ends in tragedy. Adelaide's 'charms attracted the admiration of D'Alembert; and, in defiance of the laws of hospitality, honour and humanity, he insulted her with the basest proposals, and threatened revenge when he found them treated with the contempt they merited.'⁸⁰ Learning of the girl's terrible treatment at the hands of a man who should have been her protector, the Mervilles send Adelaide to the safety of a convent 'to lodge her there until they could hear of a respectable family who would receive her as a border'⁸¹. Their plan, however, does not succeed. Adelaide is reported to have eloped, and though the

⁷⁴ Roche, p357

⁷⁵ Roche, p357

⁷⁶ Roche, p357

⁷⁷ Roche, P357

⁷⁸ Roche, p357

⁷⁹ Roche, p359

⁸⁰ Roche, p359

⁸¹ Roche, p359

Merville women are certain of D'Alembert's guilt, they have no means to prove it. Whereas Radcliffe's Adeline is restored to her rightful position by the law, Roche's Adelaide is condemned by it: aware that her reputation would be ruined even if she escaped D'Alembert's power, Adelaide 'stabbed herself to the heart with a knife which she concealed about her body'⁸². Though in Adelaide's suicide we might read an element of female agency – choosing death at her own hands over submitting to the sexual violence of D'Alembert – her death is rendered ignoble as 'her body was thrown into a vault beneath the house'⁸³. D'Alembert himself is physically absent for much of the text, but the consequences of his violence are keenly felt by the women of the novel and the extent of his corruption is visible in the distress of Madame D'Alembert and her desperation to hide Madeline from him. His first actual appearance in the text is again one in disguise, presenting himself to Madeline as Dupont, the nephew of Madame Fleury. Though he appears 'young, handsome and rather elegant', Madeline 'conceived a prejudice against him; – his gentleness seemed assumed, and there was a fierceness, a boldness in his eyes, which at once alarmed and consumed her.'⁸⁴ However, whilst Madeline is able to perceive what the Countess and her daughter could not in D'Alembert, she is no less unable to realise the truth of either his identity or his designs upon her. Madeline attempts to defend herself and her father by playing on the vanity of Madame Fleury and Dupont, who she still believes to be Fleury's nephew but is in fact D'Alembert in disguise. Unaware of Dupont's true identity, Madeline's attempts are doomed to fail. Later, when both his identity and intention to possess Madeline (both as sexual conquest and for financial gain) are revealed, the law is used again to D'Alembert's advantage: aware of Clermont's supposed crime against his brother, D'Alembert threatens to bring officers of justice to arrest him (Clermont at this point having been drugged and also held at Madame Fleury's) if Madeline will not submit to him.

This violence against women in *Clermont* and the terrible realisation that no amount of intelligence, grace, sensibility or virtue can protect women from the designs of men indicates a pressing anxiety about the situation of young women in a time of war. As demonstrated in previous chapters, chivalry was a concept that functioned by placing female virtue and distress at the centre of a masculine code of honour and behaviour. Whereas in earlier Gothic novels the heroine's innate beauty and her vulnerability in her distress endeared her to the hero and awakened manly chivalric valour, in *Clermont* chivalry and sensibility are exposed as performed models of masculinity and therefore dangerous. The Countess and her daughter, otherwise presented throughout the novel as noble, benevolent protectors of refined sense and feeling,

⁸² Roche, p364

⁸³ Roche, p364 It is worth noting, however, that it is Adelaide's blood that Madeline sees when she is imprisoned in Madame Fleury's, which leads her to be suspicious of Fleury and 'Dupont'.

⁸⁴ Roche, p336

know nothing of D'Alembert's situation: of his own libertine nature, of his father's violent schemes against the Montmorenci family and their shared greed. The reality of the D'Alemberts is too far removed, too well hidden from the Mervilles' gaze and therefore cannot inform their opinion or perception. They are forced to make their judgement based solely on the D'Alembert who is visible to them, which allows him to deceive them (though, the narrator notes, it was not easily done).

Women in *Clermont* are repeatedly abused, abandoned and even murdered. Female spaces are threatened and encroached upon by male greed and desire, leaving women with no safety or sanctuary: even their attempts to flee or seek refuge are disrupted and manipulated by the men who do or would possess them. The novel's violence, deviating from the Radcliffean tradition of the Gothic, suggests a female anxiety not only about the position of women in a patriarchal society but the impossibility of navigating masculinity exacerbated by a state of war. Distance in *Clermont* permits atrocities to go unpunished until the novel's resolution: the sprawling decay of both the Countess's chateau and the Montmorenci residence, the mountains and borders between France and Italy all conceal the realities of the complex affair between the Montmorenci brothers, their wives and the D'Alemberts. The falsehoods and deceptions of the men of the novel entrap and endanger the women who remain constantly too far removed to see the truth. Even the novel's title, *Clermont*, is a deception to both Madeline and the reader: Clermont is not Clermont at all, but rather Lusane St. Julian, the oldest but unrecognised son of the Count de Montmorenci. If – as previous chapters suggested – war fundamentally changed and altered men, resulting in long absences and experiences that could not be conveyed home, then how could women trust their brothers, fathers, fiancés or husbands? Madeline is frequently forced to question both her father and her prospective lover: their absences, their physical and emotional distance from her, and their concealment of their situations prevent her from being able to fully trust in the version of themselves they present to her. In its deconstruction of the masculine gender roles and its presentation of a world in which even the most exemplary female virtue offers no safety, *Clermont* demonstrates a fear that a man, separated from the events of his past or from the reality of his situation, could convincingly play a hero yet be a villain.

For the civilian women of 1798, then, war was an increasingly problematic reality. Whilst popular songs such as *A Soldier for Me* framed the soldier as a masculine ideal for his heroic deeds and handsome red coat, the distance between the domestic and military sphere left perhaps too much space for doubt and deception. Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* had clearly demonstrated the disastrous consequences of sustained warfare in the ravaged Italian countryside and the mental distresses of her heroine: war, *Udolpho* reminded its reader, was a

terrible, violent reality that ruined landscapes, warped masculinity and threatened female virtue. As the conflict continued, the greater the distance must become between the civilian and the soldier; and greater still, arguably, between the female civilian and the soldier. To recall Kathleen Wilson's argument that national identity relied on a social coherence obtained through shared understanding, this lack of shared experience and truth caused by extended war threatened to disrupt social order. The longer the war continued, the more men – private soldiers and officers alike – it would need to fill its ranks and therefore the more women whose civilian lives would be directly affected. With an ever-increasing number of brothers, cousins, friends, lovers, fiancés and even fathers called to defend King and country, female understanding of masculinity and thereby women's ability to judge men accurately became fractured. The campaign system of warfare meant that the military was an ever-shifting, ever-changing entity: campaigns were flung across Europe and north Africa, with regiments constantly in transit. Even the militia lacked permanence, as regiments were consistently rotated around the country. Military news, as Favret has shown, travelled far slower than warfare unfolded; letters home declaring successful campaigns and safety could hardly be trusted to bear the truth, if they came at all. As this physical, temporal and emotional distance between the domestic and the military spheres grew, then, how could women hope to successfully judge men? Though ideals of husbandry and sensibility may have aligned with the ideological imaginings of soldier as hero in the early 1790s, how valuable a judgement tool could they be during a prolonged period of warfare? The soldier, after all, was an identity: a set of values was ascribed to the red coat, defining the wearer by his military code and deeds. Yet the truth of the soldier could only ever be second hand, reported with hindsight, tempered for polite society or altered to fit the narrative of noble British heroism defending virtue from French greed and aggression. *Clermont's* hero, de Sevignie, remains worryingly ambiguous throughout the novel: though he ultimately saves Madeline and her father from the nefarious designs of the D'Alemberts and is revealed to be the lost son of Clermont's brother, de Sevignie is again and again the cause of anxiety and terror for Madeline. Although Madeline comes to love de Sevignie because he shares her refined sensibility, she knows nothing of who he is and so is unable to explain the cause for his frequent absences, his drastic changes in mood, and the intensity of his emotional expression. In his ambiguity de Sevignie is a threat to Madeline; with no knowledge of his family or his reputation Madeline is unable to properly discern his character. In the space left by his absences and the sudden alterations to his temper, there is the possibility that he is not the sensible, heroic man he appears to be.

Even in his first introduction to the novel, Madeline regards de Sevignie with anxious uncertainty. Though impressed by the sweetness of the oboe she overhears and 'the tender

sentiments' of the sonnet she discovers in the ruined castle, neither can 'inspire her with sufficient courage to bear the idea of throwing herself entirely into his power'⁸⁵ and on both occasions Madeline flees the scene for safety. It is only after their third 'encounter' that Madeline actually beholds de Sevignie:

He appeared of the first order of fine forms; and to all the graces of person and bloom of youth, united a countenance open, manly, and intelligent, but overcast by a shade of melancholy, which seemed to declare him acquainted with misfortune, and from nature and self experience formed to sympathise with every child of sorrow; his hat lay beside him, the breeze had wafted aside his dark hair from his forehead, and discovered his polished brows, where according the words of the poet, 'sate young simplicity'; in his eyes, as he sometimes raised them from the paper, was a fine expression, at once indicative of refinement and sensibility.⁸⁶

Madeline is enraptured by the appearance of de Sevignie, observing him 'as if rivetted to the spot by a magic spell'⁸⁷. Yet whilst Madeline is able to intuit much of de Sevignie's character from his visage and his carriage, she remains ignorant of his situation or history the majority of their acquaintance. When questioned by Clermont about his presence in the valley, de Sevignie answers that 'a love of rambling, inspired by a wish of seeing all in nature and art worthy of observation in his native country, had led him to a little hamlet about a league from [their] valley'.⁸⁸ Madeline's affection for and attraction to de Sevignie is developed in isolation, rendering her at once intimately acquainted with and entirely oblivious of his person. Though Clermont professes that he never 'met with a mind more indebted to nature, or more improved by education, than that of de Sevignie'⁸⁹, he is able to perceive in part the reality that Madeline cannot. Though the young man 'appeared by his looks to admire [Madeline], and by his delay in the valley (now that he was sufficiently recovered to leave it) to be attached to her company', Clermont observes that 'not a word expressive of that admiration or attachment ever escaped him' and that 'even if he had declared a passion, there would have still have been a bar to Madeline's happiness from her father's ignorance of de Sevignie's real situation and circumstances.'⁹⁰ Despite Clermont's repeated attempts to begin conversation 'calculated to lead to the mention'⁹¹ of his family or station de Sevignie is reticent to discuss either, leading Clermont to surmise that Madeline can have no hopes of marriage or future with him. In the introduction to the 2006 edition of *Clermont* Natalie Schroeder argued that despite 'striking similarities' between Radcliffe's Valancourt and Roche's de Sevignie, Roche's hero 'is, if anything, more perfect, more feminized than his Radcliffean counterpart' owing to his 'innate moral

⁸⁵ Roche, p10

⁸⁶ Roche, p14

⁸⁷ Roche, p14

⁸⁸ Roche, p16

⁸⁹ Roche, p17

⁹⁰ Roche, p23

⁹¹ Rohce, p23

perfection.⁹² Yet whilst Valancourt lapses into immoral vice and unregulated emotions, he is not a mystery to either Emily or the reader. His status as the second son of a noble family, his profession as a soldier and the connections of his family are made clear by the narration shortly after his introduction. Though Emily remains ignorant of Valancourt's difficulties in Paris until their reunion after her escape from Udolpho, the reader does not; despite his absence from Emily's narrative, the scenes in Italy are punctuated briefly by accounts of Valancourt in France. In *Clermont*, the reader is granted no such insight: like Madeline, they remain ignorant to the truth of de Sevignie's person and origins until the conclusion. Rather, what the reader is permitted to share in is the concerns of Clermont which, in questioning de Sevignie's secrecy over his situation, cast doubt on his person.

Madeline's second encounter with de Sevignie at the Chatteneuf's offers little more insight or clarity into his character. As the women discuss Madeline's unexpected acquaintance with the young man the morning after their meeting at the ball, Olivia informs her friend that although de Sevignie had 'been here some weeks [...] and is universally noticed and liked'⁹³ his circumstances and connections remained unknown. While Olivia surmises that 'from his manner and style of living'⁹⁴ his family must be respectable, little else is learned by either Madeline or the reader. Though referred to by the Chatteneufs household as a chevalier and residing with the company of officers stationed nearby, de Sevignie's actual status remains unclear. As the couple continue to meet as part of the society at the Chatteneufs, Madeline becomes increasingly aware of the dangers of an attachment to such an unknown quantity as de Sevignie. After the felicity of the first reunion, Madeline is influenced by 'the words, the looks of de Sevignie, above all the interview he had requested' to believe that her earlier hopes of their union were not unfounded: 'She paused, she blushed, – yet felt that if indeed she was, ere her return to [the chateau], the affianced wife of de Sevignie, she would be one of the happiest of her sex.'⁹⁵ Madeline's hopes, however, are dashed the following day when she receives a letter 'so cold, so formal'⁹⁶ in the place of the expected interview and proposal. Certain that she has been woefully misguided, Madeline is then repeatedly thrown into a state of anxiety and confusion by the continued alterations to the Chevalier's manner. The strangeness of de Sevignie's conduct is observed not only by Madeline when he next appears – she is shocked not only by his changeable attitude toward her but also by his 'pale and languid' look – but by Olivia, who remarks that the man 'is really one of the most altered beings within a few days I ever knew'⁹⁷.

⁹² Schroeder, *Clermont*, p xv

⁹³ Roche, p52

⁹⁴ Roche, p52

⁹⁵ Roche, p51

⁹⁶ Roche, p53

⁹⁷ Roche, p61

His conduct, Olivia notes, 'is really quite incomprehensible: was he an unfortunate lover; one might be able to account for it; but of that (continued she, looking archly at Madeline), there is little danger.'⁹⁸

Though still ignorant of the root cause, Madeline is however able to find reason in de Sevignie's repeated shifts in conduct: 'Either his reason of his situation does not sanction his attachment to me (said she), and thus delicately feelingly tries to suppress mine by remitting his attention. Never does he now address me with tenderness, but when we accidentally meet, as if thrown off his guard at those moments by surprise.'⁹⁹ While Madeline endeavours to be ruled by her reasoning, and is thus conscious of the futility of her attachment to the Chevalier regardless of his own affections, de Sevignie's repeated encroachments on her physical and emotional space undermine her resolve. Still impressed by his sensibility, so congenial to her own, Madeline struggles to set aside her feelings, despite the warnings of her paternal guardians, her own sense, and the continued distress they cause her. That de Sevignie, alone conscious of his reasons for being unable to propose, fails to restrain himself from seeking out Madeline despite his hopelessness eventually casts doubt on the quality of his character. At the encounter at the Countess' chateau Madeline, believing de Sevignie's reticence to stem from lack of fortune, is shocked by her rashness in her desire for him:

Charmed by the noble, the generous conduct of de Sevignie, ignorant of the difficulties and sorrows of life, when unpossessed of a competence; and believing, firmly believing, that her attachment for him could never be conquered, she was almost tempted to offer him her hand. To assure him ease, security, the enjoyment of all affluence could give, would gladly be relinquished by her the sake of sharing his cares, dangers, and obscurity.¹⁰⁰

Though 'delicacy, that celestial guardian of her sex'¹⁰¹ rises to check Madeline's impulses, the incident suggests a danger in her attraction to a man of whom she knows so little. While de Sevignie is later revealed to be good and honourable, facilitating the rescue of Madeline and her father in the final volume and being revealed as much the victim of the D'Alemberts' and Lefroy's schemes as Madeline, the novel does not shy away from the dangers Madeline faces in her earlier association with him. The cautionary tale comes, however, not from Madeline herself but from the 'much injured and unhappy'¹⁰² Madeline St. Foix for whom she is named: Clermont's unfortunate mother. The elder Madeline is herself the product of an ill-advised marriage of a noble woman to a soldier of reduced fortunes, who 'the delirium of passion over, and pressure of distress experienced' came to regret 'having yielded to an affection which

⁹⁸ Roche, p61

⁹⁹ Roche, p61

¹⁰⁰ Roche, p98

¹⁰¹ Roche, p98

¹⁰² Roche, p216

heightened his cares, by involving the woman he adored in sorrow' and 'fell victim to his feelings' shortly after Madeline's birth¹⁰³. Left an orphan by sixteen and in the care of her uncle – much to the displeasure of her aunt – Madeline St. Foix is fixed for a life in a convent, only to be stopped during her journey to it by St. Julian, the future Marquis de Montmorenci. Having herself harboured a secret passion for St. Julian, Madeline is overcome by his declaration of love: she agrees to give up the cloister and the pair are married in a private union. St. Julian proposes the secret marriage so that Madeline might be under his protection and 'solemnly assuring [her], that the moment he could acknowledge me as his wife, without involving [her] in distress, with equal pride and pleasure he would do so.'¹⁰⁴ The recognition of their marriage, however, never comes. Shortly after the birth of their son, Clermont/Lusane, St. Julian's attentions to Madeline begin to fade until eventually he arrives to inform her that rather than accept her as lawful wife, she must return to society and pretend to live as a widow. With 'no means of escaping the fate he doomed [her] to'¹⁰⁵ and fearing for her son's future, Madeline flees Paris to appeal to Count de Montmorenci only to discover St. Julian already there and having told his father that her story is but 'artifice and ambition'¹⁰⁶. Helped by a female domestic to again escape, Madeline by chance happens upon the Countess de Valdore and her husband (the Countess de Merville's parents), once a close family acquaintance. The Countess, moved by 'the high esteem and regard'¹⁰⁷ she had always felt for Madeline, agree to take the infant Lusane (Clermont) into the care and protection whilst Madeline, fearful that St. Julian will continue to search for and silence her, confines herself to a monastery.

The tale of Madeline St. Foix, as with that of Adelaide St. Pierre, mirrors the situation of Madeline Clermont, effectively doubling her. Though Madeline herself is able ultimately to avoid the social ruin or sexual violence of her predecessors, their tragedy highlights the precariousness of Madeline's own situation. In his absences and his secrecy, de Sevignie becomes a potential danger to Madeline. As the account of Madeline St. Foix demonstrates, even the most seemingly sincere of affections can be finite and the most ardent lover turned cold. Marriage is not enough to save the elder Madeline from ruin: whilst St. Julian can cast her off with little consequence, Madeline has no way to save or protect herself: she cannot prove her marriage, nor therefore the legitimacy of their child. What Madeline St. Foix's story reveals, too, is that people do not exist outside of or separate to their societies and that the pressures of finances, status, and even family might influence even the most committed of lovers. Both Madelines have a limited acquaintance with the object of their affection and, though both

¹⁰³ Roche, p222

¹⁰⁴ Roche, p225

¹⁰⁵ Roche, p228

¹⁰⁶ Roche, p229

¹⁰⁷ Roche, p230

women feel they know they know the men well having shared an emotional honesty, their ignorance regarding family, rank, and history places them at risk of ruin. To Madeline Clermont, de Sevignie is an unknown quantity: she is able to perceive that the changeability in his mood and behaviour towards her must stem from an issue he has not disclosed to her, but she has no method of discovering what. All that Madeline is able to discern or discover regarding de Sevignie is what he chooses to tell her and so her judgement of him is always clouded or skewed. The novel's concern about the way in which women are able, or more accurately are unable, to gather information suggests that in the temporal and spatial distortions created by war, women were in danger of committing themselves to men who might harm them. Men possessed an ability to move more freely than most women: though de Sevignie's adopted family are of a lower social rank, he 'was brought up, by the desire, it was said, of Monsieur D'Alembert, my godfather.'¹⁰⁸ Too altered by his education 'to partake of the amusements or join in the pursuits' of his family, de Sevignie decides instead to fulfil 'a passion for wandering about' enabled by the wealth he has received from D'Alembert¹⁰⁹. Educated as a gentleman and provided with finance, de Sevignie is able not only to leave his family and instead indulge in his own desire to travel, but to keep his family and history a secret from those he encounters. Though Madeline can ramble the valley freely, to leave it she must do so in the company of a guardian or protector which means that her name, person, and family must always be known by those she meets (though of course, these aspects of her identity are later revealed to be false). De Sevignie is part of the group who assemble at Madame Chatteneuf's because he is closely acquainted with the officers who, being quartered in the area, are automatically invited into society. Though referred to as a chevalier, it is unclear if de Sevignie's rank is given out of politeness or profession, but what is most important is that he was permitted at the Chatteneuf's without proper introduction or their knowing his reputation because of the company he keeps and the title ascribed to him. This imbalance restricts women whilst enabling men to successfully conceal their pasts or situations, which results in the disastrous marriages of Madeline St. Foix and Madame D'Alembert and threatens to do the same to Madeline. In the space between Madeline and de Sevignie, which Madeline has no way of closing, there is the potential for the secrets he keeps to be destructive; Madeline cannot know or hope to discover the truth, which means she cannot be certain that he is not a villain. As officers were stationed in rotations around the country, particularly more so after the invasion threats of 1797 and 1798 saw an increase to the number of men enlisted in the militia, they were recommended to the societies of the towns and villages they were quartered in by their ranks and uniforms and not by their families and status. As news travelled slowly and connections across the country were limited, the tension in

¹⁰⁸ Roche, p373

¹⁰⁹ Roche, p373

Clermont suggest fears that a man could present himself as an honest gentleman in one time having been a degenerate and a villain in another.

Though *Clermont* concludes with the restoration of order, it is a novel nonetheless characterised by violence against and the betrayal of women: although Madeline is able to protect her father and marry de Sevignie, allowing all three of them to take their proper places as heirs to the Montmorenci family, she is witness to a number of women who are victims of murder, spousal abuse, betrayal, and manipulation by men. Even in its resolution, its 'happy ending', the novel fundamentally disrupts Madeline's reality. She is no longer Madeline Clermont but Madeline St. Julian, and neither her father nor lover are who she believed them to be. Against the backdrop of Britain in 1798, the inability of the women in the novel to protect their spaces, their selves, and their reputations demonstrates an anxiety about the increasing distance between male and female experiences, exacerbated by a time of war. From the domestic sphere, women could perceive the events of the war only second hand: their information would always be in the control of men, be it newspapers, letters or first-hand accounts. War's ability to upset and disrupt a nation was no less powerful just because the fighting was occurring elsewhere: regimental uniforms and military titles altered identities and an officer might enter any society he was placed in without needing to disclose his connections or past. Temporal distortions caused by a period of war disrupted women's ability to judge and discern a man's true character and could no longer be relied on to protect them. Where *The Mysteries of Udolpho* demonstrated not only the actual horrors of war, but the ways in which soldiering could corrupt and pervert masculinity, *Clermont* explores the dangerous ways in which war might complicate the domestic sphere. Though not ostensibly *about* war or the military, arguably what *Clermont* indicates in its violence and complex plot is an increasing anxiety about the consequences of war for women, not as an embodiment of the nation whose virtue is threatened by foreign invasion or national debt and destruction post war, but in the alterations to the men of their society. The lag between the domestic and the military spheres meant that too much might be concealed by the space in between, that it was too easy for men to perform the role of a hero or a gentleman to a society that did not know him otherwise. It is this concern about war's ability to shape and alter a society in ways women could not perceive or comprehend, that Jane Austen considers in 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice*. The next chapter will consider how Jane Austen embraced the legacy of Gothic authors such as Ann Radcliffe and Regina Maria Roche in novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey*, transplanting the fears explored in the Gothic analogies into the domestic lives of heroines such as Elizabeth Bennet and Catherine Morland, and how the legacy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars continued to influence Gothic fiction into the 1820s in texts such as Mary Shelley's *Valperga*.

Chapter Six

'The riot is only in your own brain': Gothic legacies and military depictions in Jane Austen and Mary Shelley

If the French load their flat-bottom boats with rods instead of muskets, I fear all our young heroes will run away. The invasion seems again come into fashion: I wish it would come, that one might hear no more of it—nay I wish it for two or three reasons. If they don't come, we shall still be fatigued with the militia, who will never go to plough again till they see an enemy: if there is a peace before the militia runs away, one shall be robbed every day by a constitutional force.

Horace Walpole in a letter to Henry Seymour Conway, 14th October 1759¹

This chapter shifts the focus of this thesis away from the Revolutionary Wars and towards the Napoleonic Wars, including their aftermath. Although not a Gothic author, this chapter considers how the work of Jane Austen drew on the conventions established by Gothic authors to engage in discussions of war and war time. Austen's responses to war, this chapter argues, continues the narratives of Radcliffe, Lathom, and Roche by demonstrating how war upsets and destabilises the domestic sphere and civilian lives. It is this disruption, too, that is the focus of Mary Shelley's *Valperga* (1823), which places the female experience of war at the forefront of the narrative to highlight the inherent instability and unsuitability of chivalry.

That Jane Austen read and was familiar with the Gothic is a truth universally acknowledged. The most famous of Austen's references to the Gothic come from the posthumously published *Northanger Abbey* in the characters' discussions of Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* (1796) and the list of 'horrid novels' which Isabella Thorpe reads to Catherine Morland. These include Eliza Parson's *The Castle of Wolfenbach* (1793) and *The Mysterious Warning, a German Tale* (1796), Carl Freidrich Kahlert's *The Necromancer; or, The Tale of the Black Forest* (1794), an abridged translation of a German novel titled *Horrid Mysteries* (1796), Eleanor Sleath's *The Orphan of the Rhine* (1798), Lathom's *The Midnight Bell* and Roche's *Clermont*. But engagements with the Gothic also appear across Austen's other novels and in her personal correspondence. In a letter dated 24th October, 1798, recounting the progress of a journey from Kent to Steventon (at that point the Austen family home) Austen informed her sister Cassandra that their 'father is now reading the 'Midnight Bell,' which he has got from the

¹ Walpole to HS Conway, 14th October 1759 in 'Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence' (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/>> [accessed 11 March 2016]

library, and mother sitting by the fire.’² In another letter to her sister, dated 2nd March 1814, Austen wrote that she had ‘torn through the 3rd vol.’ of Eaton Stannard Barrett’s satirical novel *The Heroine* (1813) and declared it ‘delightfully Burlesque, particularly on the Radcliffe style’³. Radcliffe and Roche are mentioned again in Austen’s 1815 novel *Emma*, when Harriet Smith laments to Emma that though she finds Robert Martin very pleasing he had ‘never read *The Romance of the Forest*, nor the *Children of the Abbey* despite her recommendation.’⁴ Whilst it is Radcliffe that Austen most consciously references, not only in the mentions of her work but in the plot structure of *Northanger Abbey*, Austen’s prose style and flair for the ridiculous suggests a broader reading of the genre and in-depth understanding of its conventions. But the purpose of this chapter is not to prove that Austen read the Gothic or to suggest that we should (or could) read Austen’s works as Gothic themselves, but to consider what we learn if we explore how these texts embraced the Gothic mode and were influenced by it.

Born the year the American Wars of Independence began, Jane Austen’s lifetime was one that was witness to a series of events that fundamentally altered the course of British and European history for generations to come. Although her early life at Steventon Rectory was what Warren Roberts has called ‘insular’, a home that’s ‘rhythms were self-contained’⁵, and her travels were limited to the south of England, Austen was neither unaware or unconnected to the events of the French Revolution or the wars that followed. Education was of significant importance to the Austen family: Austen’s parents ran a school at the Rectory, their pupils mostly the sons of local and minor gentry, and were careful to ensure all the children were well taught and read. The Reverend George Austen kept a relatively well-stocked library for the family, her elder brothers James and Henry ran a magazine whilst students at Oxford, and Austen often visited the library belonging to the Lefroy family at Ashe. As Austen’s letters and juvenilia show, politics and history were topics often discussed amongst the Austen family and their social circle. For the Austens, too, the Revolution was perhaps less an abstract concept than for other middle-class gentry families: their cousin Eliza, the daughter of George Austen’s sister Philadelphia, had emigrated to France in 1779 and later married the Comte Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, a captain in the French army. The Fueillides, sympathetic to the French monarchy, had left France for England after the outbreak of Revolution, but the Comte was ultimately arrested and sentenced to death on the guillotine in 1794 after attempting to return to secure his property. Austen herself shared a close relationship with her cousin – particularly after Eliza married her

² Letter Oct 24th 1798 to Cassandra Austen, *Letters of Jane Austen* (Brabourne edition, 1884) in <<https://pemberley.com/janeinfo/brablets.html>> [accessed 10th July 2019]

³ Letter 2nd March 1814 to Cassandra Austen

⁴ Jane Austen, *Emma*, ed. by James Kinsley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p72

⁵ Warren Roberts, *Jane Austen and French Revolution*, (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2001) in *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <<https://search.proquest.com/legacydocview/EBC/436858?accountid=13828>>. p4

brother Henry in 1797 – and through her must have been acutely aware of the Revolution and the Reign of Terror.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, too, would have direct impact on Austen's family life: her brother Francis and youngest brother Charles were both naval officers, and Francis served in a number of successful naval campaigns throughout the both conflicts. Her brother Henry, who would later act as her literary agent, enlisted in the militia after the outbreak of war in 1793 and served until 1801. Although immensely proud of both her naval brothers, particularly the decorated service of Francis, Austen seems to have been less than fond of Henry's decision to become a soldier. In a letter to her sister Cassandra dated 9th January 1796, she wrote that 'Henry is still hankering after the Regulars, and as his project of purchasing the adjutancy of the Oxfordshire is now over, he has got a scheme in his head about getting a lieutenancy and adjutancy in the 86th, a new-raised regiment, which he fancies will be ordered to the Cape of Good Hope.'⁶ Henry Austen's entrance into the regular army never came to pass; much to Austen's pleasure it seems, as she 'heartily hope[d] that he will, as usual, be disappointed in this scheme'⁷, but he remained in the Oxfordshire militia until 1801. Through her cousin Eliza, her brothers, and her engagement with the literature and politics of her day, Austen was well positioned to observe and interpret the influences and impact of war in the British domestic sphere. It is this impact, through the lens of the Gothic authors who preceded Austen, that this chapter will seek to consider in two of Austen's novels, *Northanger Abbey* and *Pride and Prejudice* and to continue into the post-Napoleonic period, in Mary Shelley's *Valperga* (1823).

Pride and Prejudice began life in 1796, the same year that Napoleon invaded Italy and that a number of influential Gothic texts were published, including Lewis's *The Monk* and Roche's *Children of the Abbey*. Originally titled as *First Impressions*, the novel was completed in 1797 when the novel was then offered by Austen's father to the publisher Cadell, who rejected it. The novel later revised and retitled by Austen, to be published in 1813 following the success of *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811. Austen began writing what would become *Northanger Abbey* in 1798 and completed it sometime in 1799, though it would not be published until 1818, after her death in the July of 1817. At that time called *Susan*, the novel was sold with the assistance of Austen's brother Henry in 1803 to the London publisher Benjamin Crosby. The novel was advertised shortly after for publication, but *Susan* never appeared in print: Austen infamously wrote a letter to the publisher demanding the novel be returned to her (signed as 'Mrs Ashton Dennis', with the initials M.A.D) but ultimately did not purchase it back until the spring of 1816. Though Austen changed the name of her heroine from Susan to Catherine and rewrote certain

⁶ Letter 9th January 1796 to Cassandra Austen

⁷ Letter 9th January 1796 to Cassandra Austen

sections it seems likely that, as Austen was also working on *The Elliots* (later *Persuasion*) and the unfinished *The Brothers* (later *Sanditon*) whilst suffering from increasingly poor health, *Northanger Abbey* remained much the novel it was in 1798. An author's note to the text confesses that the novel was prepared for publication in 1803, and that 'The public are entreated to bear in mind that thirteen years have passed since it was finished, many more since it was begun, and that during that period, places, manners, books, and opinions have undergone considerable changes.'⁸ The military makes an appearance in both novels, in the figures of General and Captain Tilney in *Northanger Abbey* and the officers of Colonel Forster's militia regiment in *Pride and Prejudice*. In both novels the Revolutionary Wars appear at once distant and near, their losses and gains never actively discussed but always influencing and shaping the societies presented. In both texts, too, war is disruptive. But this disruption is less about the possible violence of an imagined French invasion or the threat that the conflict will spill onto British shores, than the way in which social order has been unsettled and the unspoken rules of propriety unseated. Austen's concern lies with the lives of those who live in the small countryside societies of places like Meryton and Fullerton, for whom the war is too far away for them to perceive its consequences, and the absurdity of the fashionable society of towns such as Bath, who blindly continue with their assemblies and promenades as if nothing has changed.

What, then, was the climate while Austen was first constructing these texts? For much of 1798, as discussed in the previous chapter, Britain was still at war with the Revolutionary armies, with no allies and little possibility of an end to the conflict. Though many had believed – or at least hoped – in 1793 that the War of the First Coalition would be resolved swiftly and decisively, failed campaigns, political turmoil, and broken alliances on both sides had continually prolonged the violence. Unlike other European nations, both the British and French governments were unwilling to accept peace on the terms that might be offered. In the November of 1798 the Second Coalition would be formed, led by Britain, Austria, and Russia: for the next seventeen years, apart from a brief period of peace following the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 and Napoleon's abdication in 1814, Britain would be in constant war with France. The conflict would span a number of countries and five further coalitions between the European powers, witnessing the fall of the Directory and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon had returned to France in October 1799 after a series of successful campaigns that had won the Revolutionaries significant advantages against the other European forces, and his military prowess had made him a powerful figure. Having used his military might to support the Coup de 18 Fructidor, the Coup de 18 Brumaire (November 9th) would see the Directory overthrown and Napoleon take control of the Republic. Napoleon's ascension for many signalled the end the

⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p1

Revolution, as the principles the French Republic had been founded upon were replaced by what would come to be an absolute rule.

In Britain Napoleon's seizure of power was regarded anxiously: those sympathetic to the Revolution feared the loss of its core values under Napoleon, whilst others were concerned with the threat that Bonaparte presented to national security. When the Directory had begun plotting an invasion of Britain it had been Napoleon, who had led decisive victories against the British army, they had tasked to lead it; a man whose supposed thirst for conquest now threatened to swallow all of Europe. The idea of Napoleon as a despot who threatened the values won by the Glorious Revolution and who had betrayed the Revolution to satisfy his own greed would become a popular one over the next two decades, as political satires and cartoons such as those by the famous caricaturist James Gillray demonstrate. One song published after the Coup de 18 Fructidore by a Lincoln printer titled 'A Ropes End for Buonaparte'⁹, which declared itself to be 'A favourite new song', was sung from the perspective of a 'steady Sam' who 'drinks with my friends, and [...] fights with my foes' and 'was never the lad to give in'¹⁰. 'A Ropes End for Buonaparte' assured the public that 'on Sam [they] may depend', as 'we'd set too, and drub them so hearty, / The Invasion and they would be soon at an end, / And a Ropes end for grim Buonaparte.'¹¹ Were Napoleon to invade, the song suggests, he would find himself rebuffed by the 'steady Sams' of Britain: 'Then our Island for ever! and that we'll defend, / Our King, and our state, bold and hearty, / Til the safety we fight for, put war to an end'¹². Whilst Steady Sam promised a strong defence and a 'ropes end' for Napoleon if any invasion were mounted, another song 'Concerning [a] boxing match between that ancient British boxer John Bull, and the elf Bonaparte'¹³ assured that were Napoleon to attempt to land in Britain 'John Bull will him box, and keep your coat clear.'¹⁴ In the 'Boxing Match', Napoleon – whose 'second' is the devil – is met by the imagined figure of John Bull, who blocks the French with 'Britannia so close at his

⁹ There is no date on the publication, but estimated to be at some point in 1800.

¹⁰ 'A rope's end for Buonaparte. A favorite new song.', (Smith: Lincoln) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&docLevel=FASCIMILE&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3317136888&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0> [accessed 5 Dec. 2019]

¹¹ 'A rope's end for Buonaparte. A favorite new song.'

¹² 'A rope's end for Buonaparte. A favorite new song.'

¹³ 'A New song. Concerning the boxing match between that ancient British boxer John Bull, and the elf, Bonaparte. Tune - The black sloven', (Ridges: Newark, dated in archive as 1800) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*,

<http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&docLevel=FASCIMILE&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CB3326102457&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0> [accessed 5 Dec. 2019]

¹⁴ 'A New song. Concerning the boxing match between that ancient British boxer John Bull, and the elf, Bonaparte. Tune - The black sloven'

back'¹⁵. Recalling the propaganda of the Seven Years War, these anti-Napoleon texts centred on the idea that 'the true spirits of Englishmen' – interestingly, again, the images conjured in these songs are labelled as characteristics of British national identity but are in fact specifically English – were so superior to that of his French armies that Napoleon could never hope to 'cross the ocean by day nor by night.'¹⁶

Napoleon's coup would alter the way that many Britons perceived the war with France, but to withstand his armies, however, would require large quantities of resources, taxes, and men. Though France sought to staff its military through conscription, passing a law in June 1799 which decreed that 'all those between 20 and 25 eligible for military service were to be conscripted at once, and nobody was allowed to buy a substitute'¹⁷, Britain sought other avenues for recruitment (though some Generals were in favour of a national conscription). As we have seen, patriotic propaganda furiously reiterated fears of invasion and occupation, encouraging 'every man to arm instantly, as the fate of the battle is of the greatest importance'¹⁸. To resist what Fredrick Howard, 5th Earl of Carlisle, in a pamphlet titled *A farewell warning to my country before the hour of danger* called the 'anarchical tyranny' and 'impiety'¹⁹ of France would require 'brave and honest men, good Christians, and faithful subjects'²⁰. Recalling the patriotism and nostalgia of the materials published to encourage recruitment during the Seven Years War, pamphlets such as Howard's relied on the idea of the Englishman as 'born to freedom by inheritance, and possessing it.'²¹ Though the patriotic fervour and willingness to fight may not have been as widespread as such texts and some historical accounts of the Napoleonic period suggest, as Linda Colley has demonstrated²², the ranks of the British military swelled nonetheless. According to Colley, 'when the Bastille shattered in 1789, the British Army

¹⁵ 'A New song. Concerning the boxing match between that ancient British boxer John Bull, and the elf, Bonaparte. Tune - The black sloven'

¹⁶ 'A New song. Concerning the boxing match between that ancient British boxer John Bull, and the elf, Bonaparte. Tune - The black sloven'

¹⁷ Doyle, p371

¹⁸ *An alarm to the public, and a bounty promised to every loyal subject, who will come forward to repel the enemy. Arms and Accoutrements provided for every man, gratis.*, (Yarmouth: F. Bush, 1798.) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW106005535&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 9th February 2019], p3

¹⁹ Fredrick Howard, Earl of Carlisle, *A farewell warning to my country, before the hour of danger. By the author of "the crisis," &c. &c.* (London : sold by J. Hatchard, 173, Piccadilly; and F. & C. Rivington, St. Pauls Church Yard, 1798.) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=su_uk&taBid=T001&docId=CW104997089&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE> [accessed 29th May 2019], p4

²⁰ Howard, p5

²¹ Howard, p4

²² For a full discussion of the returns from the 1798 and 1803 Defence of the Realm Act, please see Linda Colley's 'Manpower' chapter in *Britons*.

was 40,000 strong. By 1814, it had expanded more than sixfold to some quarter of a million men.²³ The regular forces were supported too, Colley notes, by an increased militia and 'by an expanding penumbra of part-time and volunteer units'.²⁴ But the recruitment, management, and maintenance of these growing forces, staffed by men from a variety of social backgrounds, would require not only 'fiscal and administrative innovations'²⁵ but fundamental changes to the British military system. As Colley has argued, 'it was simply not enough anymore to maintain civil order and obedience by way of professional soldiers, barracks, surveillance, and sermons. Nor was it even enough to foster loyalty by means of an intensive campaign of propaganda and patriotic ceremonial.'²⁶

Nationalist sentiments and protection could not, and indeed would not, be the only reason for a man to enlist: the disruptions caused by the conflict to agriculture and trade prompted many workers to seek alternative employment in the military, whilst the potential for social mobility and improved fortunes offered by the officer class influenced young men of the middle and upper classes to purchase commissions. That some were called to arms 'by instinct, by idealism, by a desperate concern for their homeland and by their youth'²⁷ is undoubtable, but certainly a significant number did so for financial and social gain. It is this type of soldier we see, for the most part, in the works of Jane Austen: both the army and the navy were frequently the professions of younger sons, offering an opportunity to earn the fortune and favour their fathers could not bestow upon them. The military was a respectable career for the sons of both gentlemen and aristocrats, as commissions could be purchased that reflected social status thanks to their monetary value (a commission as an ensign, for example, was considerably cheaper than that of a higher ranking officer). But this financial aspect complicated the figure of the soldier, because it suggested an element of the mercenary that could not be tolerated in the idea of the British soldier as heroic. As will be discussed later in this chapter, naval officers, being employed much younger (midshipmen were generally around fourteen years old) and subjected to much harsher conditions, were cause for less concern: even if a naval officer did not see active combat, he would be required to take long and dangerous sea voyages away from home. The army officer, however, could easily avoid any active combat or danger whilst commanding his troops at a distance and often spent as much time dancing at the assemblies of the societies he was quartered in as he did engaged in the arts of war. 'Nothing', the Earl of Carlisle believed, 'but the most STEADY UNION among ourselves, the most DETERMINED

²³ Colley, p287

²⁴ Colley, p287

²⁵ Colley, p286

²⁶ Colley, p286

²⁷ Colley, p302

TEMPER towards each other, and the most HEROIC VALOUR in our common efforts'²⁸ could enable Britain to subdue the threats against it. To field a sizeable army, however, pragmatism had to take priority over idealism.

To fight Napoleon's forces across multiple fronts *and* repel any invasion that might come, Britain would need huge numbers of men to enlist as both regular and militia soldiers and to persuade them to do so, there would need to be an offer financial reward. But this financial reward threatened the idea of the soldier as hero of the nation with the possibility that he might be little more than a mercenary: we need only to consider Emily St. Aubert's horror and distress whilst at the castle of Udolpho to imagine why this might be of such concern. A pamphlet encouraging enlistment published in 1798 titled *An alarm to the public, and a bounty promised to every loyal subject, who will come forward to repel the enemy*, which combined bible verses with pro-military sentiments, declared that 'It is a glorious war in which we are engaged, and every conqueror will be well rewarded'²⁹. A few stanzas later, however, the pamphlet also warns against soldiering for personal gain:

But it is essential that every man who enlists in the king's service, should have a sincere love for his king and country: young gentlemen are to be cautious upon what principles they engage in the king's service as officers. For if they buy their commissions only for their own emolument, they will be held in contempt by every good soldier, and merit his majesty's highest displeasure for ever.³⁰

The pamphlet reveals a contradiction at the centre of the notion of the British soldier: that brave, patriotic men who fought for the safety of their country should and would be rewarded financially and socially, which was used to encourage enlistment, but that they should not and could not enlist *because* of those gains. Just as war created a temporal disruption between the front lines of campaigns in Europe and the domestic sphere in Britain, so too did it create a disconnect between the real and the imagined identity of a soldier.

In the introduction to the 2003 Oxford Classics edition of *Northanger Abbey*, Claudia L. Johnson suggested that 'in subjecting her heroine to a moralizing, mortifying [...] not fully persuasive comedown' Jane Austen 'is actually replicating rather than undermining a prominent formula of gothic fiction, whereby overimaginative heroines are punished for the transgressiveness of suspicions that are harrowing precisely because they cannot be unequivocally confirmed or denied.'³¹ Though *Northanger Abbey* is undeniably a satire, what it mocks is arguably less the Gothic form and more the inability of readers such as Catherine Morland to translate the

²⁸ Howard, p6

²⁹ *An alarm* p4

³⁰ *An alarm*, p3

³¹ Claudia L. Johnson in Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watsons, Sanditon*, ed. by James Kinsley and John Davie, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. xiii.

valuable lessons contained within works such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* to their own genteel, domestic sphere. Catherine, Johnson notes, is ‘always wiser than she knows’³²: though the ‘dreadful nature’³³ of the crimes she suspects General Tilney has committed are farfetched, they are not entirely unfounded. The reading of *Northanger Abbey* as a straight parody of the Gothic mode, as Johnson notes, derives ultimately from a misreading or misunderstanding of the tradition’s history of self-parody, camp excess, and explained supernatural. Though Austen’s narration suggests that her heroine is too far removed from the heroines of the Gothic, like Radcliffe’s Emily St. Aubert, Catherine Morland must learn to inform her intuition with reason rather than indulge in her imagination: a lesson that is achieved primarily through embarrassment, sensibility, and terror. Catherine’s folly is not that she suspects General Tilney to be a patriarchal tyrant, but that in her fundamental misreading of the Gothic allegory she is unable to deduce his true crime. Catherine’s belief that the General has murdered his wife directly mirrors Emily’s suspicions about Montoni in *Udolpho*: the scene at Northanger, when Henry discovers Catherine prying in his deceased mother’s room, functions not to ridicule the Gothic plot but to reflect it. Emily, fuelled by Annette’s stories, by the black veil, and by the turbulence at Udolpho, believes Montoni to have killed her aunt so that he may possess her fortune, just as she believes him to have murdered Lady Laurentini so that he could take possession of the castle. Emily’s suspicions, however, are ultimately proved just as false as Catherine’s. Lady Laurentini is in fact still alive, Madame Montoni is not murdered but ill, and the ‘corpse’ behind the black veil is a wax effigy. But though Emily is humbled and admonished for indulging in her imagination, she is nonetheless correct about Montoni’s true character. He has not murdered either Laurentini or Madame Montoni nor does he physically harm Emily, but he *has* seized the castle by illegal means, terrorised his wife to the point of fatal illness, and placed Emily at risk of physical and sexual violence by imprisoning her at Udolpho. As Robert Miles has noted, ‘*Northanger Abbey* does not work with the conventions of the Gothic novel so much as it warns against the dangers of Gothic reading’³⁴. Catherine’s failure in *Northanger Abbey* is not only that she has not applied common sense and reason to her judgements, but equally that she has misunderstand the lesson that Radcliffe’s Gothic allegory has attempted to teach her.

It is Montoni, of all the Gothic villains, who Austen most consciously references in the character of General Tilney. On his first introduction to Catherine, during an assembly at the Pump Rooms in Bath, the General is described by the narration as ‘a very handsome man, of a commanding

³² Johnson, *Northanger Abbey*, p xv

³³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p 145

³⁴ Robert Miles, *Gothic Writing 1750 -1820: A genealogy*, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p 133

aspect, past the bloom, but not past the vigour of life'³⁵. This first appearance echoes that of Montoni and, though Catherine lacks the awareness of Emily St. Aubert (who immediately acknowledges something in Montoni's countenance that troubles her), she is still made uneasy by the General: 'Confused by his notice, and blushing from the fear of its being excited by something wrong in her appearance, she turned away her head.'³⁶ Although Catherine does not indulge in her suspicions concerning the General's character until she reaches Northanger Abbey itself, she repeatedly notices signs of his tyranny. After barging into the Tilneys' house to make her apologies for John Thorpe's behaviour, Catherine must 'warmly [assert] the innocence' of the servant who she ran past as 'it seemed likely that [he] would lose the favour of his master for ever, if not his place, by her rapidity.'³⁷ As Catherine spends more time with the Tilneys, she becomes increasingly aware of their father's negative influence and the siblings' quiet anxiety regarding his temper. Undertaking the journey from Bath to Northanger, Catherine observes that the General 'seemed always a check upon his children's spirits' and after seeing 'his discontent at whatever the inn afforded, and his angry impatience at the waiters' she grows 'every moment more in awe of him'³⁸. The General, like Montoni, is to Catherine an embodiment of the sublime and her awe of him is what leads to her Gothic-inspired suspicions. Just as Montoni courts and subsequently marries Madame Cheron, then removes her and Emily to his castle so that he may take possession of their wealth, General Tilney's 'polite' attentiveness to Catherine and his invitation to Northanger stem from a desire to possess the fortune he believes she will inherit by marrying her to Henry. Just as Montoni tries to control Emily by commanding where she will travel, who she will marry, what she will wear, and what schedule she will keep, the General's rigid schedule and insistence on punctuality allow him to maintain control of his children. Both men act within the boundaries of the patriarchal power they are afforded by their station to use and manipulate those around them for their own gain.

As with Radcliffe's villain, the extent of the General's greed, selfishness, and disregard for his patriarchal duties are alluded to but not revealed until much later in the text. Listening to Eleanor Tilney's description of her mother, Catherine, recalling all that she has seen of the General and his children's attitudes around him, 'attempted no longer to hide herself from the nature of the feelings which, in spite of all his attentions, he had previously excited; what had been terror and dislike before, was now absolute aversion.'³⁹ Through her reading of gothic novels, Catherine is able to identify the characteristics and behaviours of a patriarchal tyrant, yet in her misreading of the allegory, and her being taken in by both Isabella Thorpe's instance

³⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p57

³⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p57

³⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p74

³⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p113

³⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p133

that novels such as *Clermont* are 'horrid' and Henry Tilney's overdramatic teasing, she is unable to come to the sensible conclusion. After all, the veil has not yet been lifted for Catherine. Having been interrupted in her reading of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by assemblies, new acquaintances and schemes of Blaise Castle, Catherine is able to discern the likeness between General Tilney and Montoni but not its significance. Catherine's not having yet discovered the truth of what lies behind *Udolpho*'s black veil is crucial to her narrative as bildungsroman: the black veil, as Adela Pinch argues, 'as in other instances of Radcliffean demystification [...] teaches a lesson about both the fallibility of individual senses and the need to discipline the emotions.'⁴⁰ What the novel satirises here is not that Catherine believes that 'such characters' as Gothic villains 'which Mr Allen had been used to call unnatural and overdrawn'⁴¹ can exist in polite eighteenth-century society, but how she believes they might manifest and the crimes she assumes they will commit. This is Catherine's key lesson, and the foundation of the novel's didacticism. As Marilyn Butler has argued, in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (1975), what *Northanger Abbey* shows its reader is 'that Catherine [learns] a significant general rule, that human nature is worse than she first thought'.⁴² Catherine, apart from her 'aberration over the general', has judged 'successively the Thorpes, Frederick Tilney, and perhaps even Henry, with all the sentimentalist's optimism about human nature.'⁴³ This lesson, as I have demonstrated over the course of the thesis, was at the heart of much of the Gothic fiction of the 1790s. The reader of *Northanger Abbey* who is familiar with *The Mysteries of Udolpho* should be aware of the lesson embodied by the black veil, and in turn that real danger lies elsewhere, even if Catherine Morland is not.

Like Emily St. Aubert, Catherine Morland is ultimately proven correct in her fears about the General's tyranny and mistreatment but misled as to their reality and the danger in which she herself is placed. Despite his posturing and the soulless 'class' of his home, Catherine fails to perceive that the gallantry with which she has been treated stems solely from the General's greed. Reflecting on her conversation with Henry, Catherine supposes that 'charming as were all Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and charming even as were the works of all her imitators, it was not in them perhaps human nature, at least in the midland counties of England, was to be looked for.'⁴⁴ But whilst Catherine resolves that she will 'always [be] judging and acting in future with greatest good sense'⁴⁵ she remains unable to properly see the General's behaviour, or his true intentions. Receiving a letter from her brother containing the news of Isabella Thorpe's unfaithfulness and the end of their engagement, Catherine is unable to conceal her distress at

⁴⁰ Pinch, p113

⁴¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p132-3

⁴² Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), p177

⁴³ Butler, p177

⁴⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p147

⁴⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p147

the breakfast table: 'Catherine could hardly eat anything. Tears filled her eyes, and even ran down her cheeks as she sat. The letter was one moment in her hand, then in her lap, and then in her pocket; and she looked as if she knew not what she did.'⁴⁶ For all his previous attentions to her, the General is unaware and unfazed by his guest's distress. Though 'her distress was equally visible' to Eleanor and Henry, their father 'between his cocoa and his newspaper, had luckily no leisure for noticing her'⁴⁷. The 'inexplicability of the General's conduct dwelt much on [Catherine's] thoughts'⁴⁸ but with her education incomplete, she remains ignorant as to the reason until the designs upon her are revealed. Catherine's revelation about the General may not come with the abject fear of Emily, Adeline, or Madeline Clermont, but is no less dangerous for a young woman of the midland counties of England in the late eighteenth century. The General, returning to Northanger Abbey at eleven o'clock on a Sunday evening, demands the removal of Catherine from his home immediately the following morning. Rather than delivering the news himself, it is Eleanor who is forced to inform her friend that 'not even the hour is left to [her] choice; the very carriage is ordered, and will be here at seven o'clock, and no servant will be offered'.⁴⁹ It is Eleanor too, in her distress and discomfort caused by her father's behaviour, who voices the real evils of the General's conduct and Catherine's situation: 'Good God! what will your father and mother say! After courting you from the protection of real friends to this – almost double distance from your home, to have you driven out of the house, without the considerations even of decent civility!'.⁵⁰ Although not threatened by a group of lawless martial men or pursued by an immoral libertine, Catherine's physical self and reputation are still placed in danger by the General's misconduct thus revealing him to be a Gothic villain in a domestic Regency setting.

With no servant to accompany Catherine, no guardian to chaperone her, and without even enough of her own money to provide for the journey, General Tilney consciously rejects his patriarchal duties once she is believed to no longer be of use to him. Eleanor, who like the intended reader, *has* read the Gothic 'properly' is acutely aware of her father's unjust treatment and its potential repercussions. Had Catherine read the Gothic not, because it was *horrid*, but for the *social and moral* lessons embedded in its analogies, then her early intuitions about the General might have saved her from his ire. It is not Catherine's readership of the Gothic that the novel criticises for failing to provide her with the proper framework to judge character and behaviour, but the society in which she resides. Ruminating on the 'abruptness, the rudeness, nay, the insolence' of being so suddenly turned away without protection, Catherine wonders

⁴⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p149

⁴⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p149

⁴⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p156

⁴⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p166

⁵⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p166

how 'such a man as General Tilney, so polite, so well-bred, and heretofore so particularly fond of her'⁵¹ could be so cruel and unthinking: or more perhaps, more fittingly for this thesis, so unchivlaric. It is the laws of polite society, then, not the Gothic that has misled Catherine in regards to the General: whilst her understanding of Radcliffe leads her to question the General and be suspicious of his controlling and cold manner, it is her perception of him as a gentleman, a soldier, and as Henry and Eleanor's father that prevents her from believing his intentions towards her could be anything less than kind. What *Northanger Abbey* inherits from the Gothic, particularly from novels such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Clermont*, is the danger young woman face from men who fail to fulfil their masculine roles or who perform ideals to hide nefarious intentions. In both Radcliffe and Roche's Gothic, the heroine is unable to rely on societal rules to guide her judgement or to protect her from harm and must instead rely on their own sensibility and intuition to navigate the world. Catherine and the Allens trust General Tilney because society suggests that he must be a man to be trusted: he has three seemingly well turned out children of his own, a well-kept and fashionable house, enough wealth to keep lodgings at Milsom Street and, we must assume by his title, a decorated career in the military. Yet he is also a man who visibly disregards the values of husbandry and sensibility because he is an unkind master, a controlling father (the General frequently asks Eleanor for her opinion, only to immediately speak over her), and a terrible host. Johnson suggests that in *Northanger Abbey*, 'Austen's mock-gothic juxtapose[s] the "alarms of romance" to the 'anxieties of common life' in order to enable us to see their interdependence.'⁵² Though Catherine's mistakes and mortification are played for humour, the satire serves to force the reader to question their own understanding and expectations of her situation. Hints about the General's true character are given to both Catherine and, via the narrator, the reader immediately after he is first introduced to the text. Yet despite the fact that Catherine repeatedly notices the unease of his children, his ungentlemanly treatment of his staff, and his strictly enforced routine, the General is protected by his social status and appearance.

The Allens, acting as agents for Catherine's parents, agree to let Catherine visit Northanger Abbey because the General *seems* to be the sort of man to whom one might entrust the daughter of a gentleman. The novel provides no evidence outside of this, nor any history of the General himself: neither Catherine, the Allens, or the reader are aware of how the General entered the military, how he won his promotion, what wars or campaigns he served in, or the real origin of his wealth. The soldier, as we have seen in previous chapters, was a profession to which a certain moral code and respectability had been attached: the wearer of the red coat was assumed to embody the values it had come to represent. The satirical humour of Catherine's

⁵¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p167

⁵² Johnson, *Northanger Abbey*, pxv

disagreeable but uneventful journey home is undercut by the response of her parents, who 'in their consideration of their daughter's long and lonely journey' felt that 'General Tilney had acted neither honourably or feelingly – neither as a gentleman nor as a parent.'⁵³ What the Morlands do not mention is that the General's behaviour is also at odds with his military profession: if the soldier's code of conduct was inherited from the Age of Chivalry, then his dismissal of Catherine is not only ungentlemanly but ill befitting of a soldier. The military was imagined to be the weapon by which the innocence and virtues of British women were protected from outside threats; the soldier was perceived as a defender of the British constitution, and thereby the nation's social order. No harm comes to Catherine, and though the scene is played for humour, both heroine and reader are aware of the unspoken dangers faced by a young woman travelling alone. The Morlands, unremarkable and sensible, leave the matter largely unaddressed: they decide 'after a due course of useless conjecture' to the reason for the General's behaviour that 'it was a strange business, and that he must be a very strange man'⁵⁴. But the issue is not dropped so easily by the novel. The question suggested, though not directly asked, by the novel is that if the General possesses no chivalry and has no care or concern for the defenceless, then what sort of soldier is he?

Catherine struggles to return to life at Fullerton, altered by her experiences in society and still troubled by the mystery of her sudden ejection from Northanger Abbey, mimicking Emily's initial uneasiness on her return to La Vallée before her final reunion with Valancourt. Echoing *Udolpho*, it is the arrival of Henry Tilney that sets Catherine at ease by revealing the truth behind the General's conduct and reassuring her of the affection of both his sister and himself. It is only at this point that Catherine and the reader learn what has really occurred: the General had falsely believed Catherine to be an heiress because he had asked for intelligence of her from John Thorpe, and had failed to see through his boasting. That John Thorpe is not a man to ask for reliable information has been made repeatedly evident to the reader during the novel's scenes at Bath, but is reiterated again by the narrator:

Upon such intelligence the General had proceeded; for never had it occurred to him to doubt its authority. Thorpe's interest in the family, by his sister's approaching connection with one of its members, and his own views on another, (circumstances of which he boasted with almost equal openness,) seemed sufficient vouchers for his truth; and to these were added the absolute facts of the Allens being wealthy and childless, of Miss Morland's being under their care, and – as soon as his acquaintance allowed him to judge – treating her with parental kindness. His resolution was soon formed.⁵⁵

This revelation fundamentally disrupts General Tilney's identity: his trusting of Thorpe's words, his reasons for doing so and his behaviour subsequently are all at odds with his identity as a

⁵³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p173

⁵⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p173

⁵⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p181

soldier and a gentleman. Thorpe's presence in the novel, ultimately, is what repeatedly places Catherine in danger: though not likely to break into her chamber and attempt to kidnap her, like Radcliffe's Count Morano, Thorpe embodies a similar threat. His friendship with James Morland results in an unwise engagement with Isabella, his behaviour and speech jeopardises Catherine's reputation, he imposes upon her socially, and he spreads misinformation regarding her. In both *John Thorpe* and *General Tilney*, the Gothic's fears about masculinity in excess – a manliness that defined itself not by chivalry and sensibility, but by bravado and machismo – are translated to the domestic setting. Like *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *Northanger Abbey* is a novel preoccupied with failed masculinity: Catherine's reputation and happiness are nearly ruined because those who should protect and defend her ignore their duties and act without chivalry. Catherine is allowed to enter into situations that might ruin her with impropriety because Mr Allen, her substitute father, fails to educate her on proper behaviour – advising her only when asked, and after it is too late – and James Morland allows her to risk her reputation and exposes her to the odious company of John Thorpe because he is too preoccupied with his own desire for Isabella to properly care for his sister. In reading Austen through the lens of the Gothic, considering her engagement with the mode and her interpretation of its concerns, what we see is an anxiety not that writers such as Roche and Radcliffe have misled young women and filled their minds with unrealistic fancy, but that those crucial lessons about female understanding of masculinity and male failings have been lost amongst the terrors used to convey them.

Though, as Warren Roberts notes in *Jane Austen and the French Revolution*, many critics and historians have been inclined to view Austen's work as 'remaining aloof from the great events of the day'⁵⁶ the realities of war time Britain and the aftershocks of the French Revolution are far from absent in her novels. In all of Austen's six published novels we witness not only the unspoken anxieties of war time but the pressures of long-term conflict within the domestic sphere, and the social change and disruption it brings. In an essay discussing the representation of the militia in *Pride and Prejudice*, Tim Fulford argued that Austen 'is a historical novelist who concerns herself not with battles and bills but with the context of those battles and bills, away from the public arena, in the country as a whole.'⁵⁸ Whilst *Northanger Abbey's* parades of the Pump Room, balls at the Upper Rooms, and evenings at the theatre might suggest a complete unawareness of a nation at war, neither Austen nor her creations are ignorant of its effects. In the tenth chapter of the first volume Catherine, hoping for news of the Tilneys, enquires of Mrs Allen's morning with Mrs Thorpe. The two women, meeting at the Pump Room, have had 'a great deal of talk together' including that 'there was hardly any veal any to be got at market' as

⁵⁶ Roberts, p4

⁵⁸ Fulford, p157

'it is so uncommonly scarce'⁵⁹. The mundanity of this point adds to the satire of the scene, in which Mrs Allen echoes the Radcliffean servant characters who distress and waylay the heroine by their slow release of information and constant asides, yet it also reveals fundamental details about the state of the nation at large. The conflict in Europe blocked a number of British merchant routes, whilst the breakdown of trade with France severely limited the supply of certain goods and materials. By the time Austen came to write what would become *Northanger Abbey* Britain had been at war for four years – three years longer already than Pitt's government had believed would be the case – and the Directorate, bolstered by Napoleon's military leadership, had made a series of beneficial treaties with the former coalition nations. That neither Mrs Allen or Mrs Thorpe appear to be concerned with *why* there is no veal to be had at market, simply that there is very little, recalls Favret's arguments concerning the physical and temporal disturbances between the military and domestic society. War, Favret argues, 'was at once unremarkable and nearly imperceptible; something nonevident that could not always be made evident [...] Felt and unfelt, impersonal and intimate'⁶⁰. What we see here is the real, tangible effect of wartime on the daily lives of civilian people, but the scene raises a number of questions that the text does not answer: are Mrs Thorpe and Mrs Allen aware enough of the war to comprehend its being responsible for the lack of veal? How much information about the frontlines has made its way into the domestic sphere? And if veal is scarce, what of other more crucial staples? Troop movements, the gains of successful campaigns and the losses of failed ones, the men who fought and those who died are all too far removed from the Mrs Allens and Thorpes of society, too abstract to be fully comprehended. It is these disruptions to civilian life that Austen is interested in; the ability of war to intimately disturb domesticity whilst remaining an abstract, distant concept.

The French Revolution and the War of the First Coalition may never be addressed or discussed directly in *Northanger Abbey* but – as if a Gothic spectre itself – war lurks constantly in the background, its influence and impact evident on the lives and conversations of the novel's characters even if they are unaware of it. 'Almost every novelist of Jane Austen's day', suggests Butler, 'is in some degree or other in the most literal sense a reactionary.'⁶¹ As we have seen, 'pamphleteers, cartoonists, and above all, clergymen summoned up the threat of pillage, massacre at the hands of an invading French soldiery' with, as Linda Colley notes, 'considerable success'⁶². As Napoleon rose to power and the threat of invasion grew, so too did Francophobia in British society. But *Northanger Abbey* also alludes to another form of anxiety about French

⁵⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p48

⁶⁰ Favret, p29

⁶¹ Butler, p8

⁶² Colley, p256

influence in the British domestic sphere: the émigré. Many French aristocrats, fearing for their safety after the Revolution, had fled France to seek refuge in other countries (including the family of Austen's cousin, the Fuellides). A number of these émigrés settled in Britain and often appeared in society, including Louis XVI's youngest brother, the future Charles X, who was provided an allowance by George III. In their first conversation after meeting, Catherine asks if John Thorpe has ever read *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Thorpe's reply – 'Oh, Lord! not I; I never read novels, I have something else to do'⁶³ – demonstrates not only his disregard for 'feminine' pastimes or refinements, but his own Francophobia. Thorpe confuses Radcliffe with Frances Burney, remarking to Catherine that 'I was thinking of that other stupid book, written by that woman they make such a fuss about, she who married the French emigrant.'⁶⁴ The other 'stupid book' to which Thorpe refers is Burney's 1796 novel *Camilla*, which Austen references again later in *Northanger Abbey* during her defence of the novel. Burney, who had risen to fame with her 1778 novel *Evelina* and later became Queen Charlotte's Keeper of the Robes, was among those who publically empathised with the ideologies of the French Revolution and, in 1793, married the émigré General Alexander D'Arbly. Thorpe disregards *Camilla* as 'unnatural stuff', claiming that 'I took up the first volume once, and looked it over, but I soon found it would not do; indeed I guessed what sort of stuff it must be before I saw it'⁶⁵. Thorpe does not divulge to Catherine exactly *what* sort of 'stuff' he considered *Camilla* to be, but clarifies that 'as soon as I heard she had married an emigrant, I was sure I should never be able to get through it.'⁶⁶ This is not the only instance of xenophobia expressed by Thorpe, who refers to Mr Allen as 'as rich as a Jew'⁶⁷ and later General Tilney 'as a very fine fellow, as rich as a Jew'⁶⁸, but his dismissal of Burney's work as 'unnatural' and 'the horridest nonsense you can imagine'⁶⁹ arguably stems entirely from his perception of her Frenchness.

That it is Thorpe – a man who dismisses novels, disrespects his mother and sisters, and disregards his duties as a gentleman – who expresses such Francophobia may not be sufficient to discern Austen's own feelings on the Revolution or the war, but is at least telling of the types of men who might engage in strident anti-French rhetoric. Thorpe, Austen demonstrates frequently, is brutish in both his manners and instincts. His fondness of, and supposed skill in, violent, hypermasculine pursuits forms the basis of his attempts to woo Catherine, whom he imagines to be impressed by his retelling of 'some famous day's sport' foxhunting when 'the boldness in his riding, though it had never endangered his own life for a moment, had been

⁶³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p32

⁶⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p32

⁶⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p32-3

⁶⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p33

⁶⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p44

⁶⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p69

⁶⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p33

constantly leading others into difficulties, which he calmly concluded had broken the necks of many.⁷⁰ Whilst not directly violent in his behaviour to Catherine – though his reckless driving does twice threaten to injure her – Thorpe’s impropriety and abrasiveness endanger her in other ways. Having already once missed her engagement with Eleanor Tilney for ‘the Clifton scheme’⁷¹, Catherine refuses to do so again despite the attempts of Isabella, Thorpe, and James to convince her otherwise. Here the impropriety of the situation – that if Catherine does not join the party, it would be improper for Isabella to go – is used as an attempt to manipulate Catherine, who deflects by suggesting that Thorpe take one of his other sisters. Thorpe responds that to drive his sisters would make him ‘look like a fool’⁷² – though it is in fact his duty to escort them as their brother and gentleman – and instead ‘settles’ the situation by chasing after Miss Tilney: ‘Well, I have settled the matter, and now we may all go to-morrow with a safe conscience. I have been to Miss Tilney, and made your excuses.’⁷³ Thorpe abuses the power that he, again as a so-called gentleman and as James’ friend, holds over Catherine to effectively force her to act as he wishes her to; a behaviour that Gothic villains, such as the Marquis de Montalt from Radcliffe’s *The Romance of the Forest*, also attempt as a means of controlling the heroine.

In altering Catherine’s plans without her permission, Thorpe both subverts her agency and risks her reputation: Thorpe assumes the authority of Catherine’s voice, claiming to Eleanor to speak on her behalf and thus placing her unwillingly in his power. Though Thorpe is impressed by what he believes to be the decisiveness of his own action – ‘A pretty good idea of mine – hey?’⁷⁴ – Catherine is mortified by the rudeness of it, declaring that ‘if I could not be persuaded into doing what I thought was wrong, I never will be tricked into it.’⁷⁵ Catherine determines to go immediately after Eleanor so that she may explain herself, asserting that Thorpe ‘had no business to invent any such message’⁷⁶, but is physically restrained not only by Isabella but by Thorpe. Though the scene parodies that of the Gothic heroine’s loss of agency and physical restraint, undercutting Catherine’s distress with humour, there is still an element of severity to it. Whilst not in a secluded chateau or castle, where the Gothic villain might have absolute power over the heroine, the incident *does* take place in public. Both the argument and the Thorpes’ grabbing hold of Catherine’s hands occur in the streets of Bath and so, we can assume, are witnessed by many. Catherine’s acquaintance in Bath might be limited to just three families, but her visibility is not: just as Catherine visits the same shops, walks the same routes, and attends the same assemblies each day, so do the dozens of others in the city for the season. This

⁷⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p47

⁷¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p70

⁷² Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p71

⁷³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p72

⁷⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p72

⁷⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p73

⁷⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p72

visibility is alluded to early in the novel, during Catherine's first evening at the Upper Rooms. Catherine and Mrs Allen watch the dancers, Mrs Allen passes comment on the fashions of others and Catherine herself is 'looked at [...] with some admiration' by the young men in attendance, including 'two gentlemen who pronounced her to be a pretty girl.'⁷⁷ The point of being in Bath, after all, with its daily promenades and public assemblies was to be seen. As such, though Catherine may not know those who she is seen by, she may still be known by them. Appearance and reputation are thus closely linked and so Thorpe, with his reckless driving, his late arrival to assemblies he has promised to dance at, and his aggressive behaviour, risks damaging Catherine's reputation far beyond the sphere of her own acquaintance.

The potential for Thorpe, in his bragging and bullishness, to severely injure Catherine's reputation and to have a direct impact on her person is evidenced by the treatment she receives from General Tilney. It is because of Thorpe that he believes her to be a great heiress, which influences him to flatter her and invite her to Northanger Abbey, and that he later discovers otherwise, resulting in her being unceremoniously ejected from the abbey without a servant or enough money to ensure her safe journey home. Interestingly – considering his dismissal of Burney's work for its perceived Frenchness – in his aggressive xenophobia and uncouth treatment of women, John Thorpe operates within a model of masculinity that recalls the character of Captain Mirvan in Frances Burney's *Evelina*. Catherine's distress during her interaction with Thorpe recall Emily St. Aubert's worries that her reputation will be forever harmed by the words and behaviours of her aunt, Count Morano, and Montoni (who deliberately weaponises this to control her) regardless of her own conduct and values. Without the strength of her reputation to support her, Emily fears that she will never be able to achieve or reclaim her own agency: that she will be remembered by society always as she has been negatively framed, and that her struggles to maintain her virtue and values so that she may return to La Valleé and Valancourt will be in vain. Austen's humour in these scenes, then, can be read as not ridiculing Catherine, but instead highlighting the ridiculousness of social 'graces' and the difficulties faced by young women. Like Emily, Catherine Morland has little power over how she is perceived. Her limited acquaintance means she is not well known, and so her ability to control her own reputation is severely hindered: what is known widely of her is largely what has been relayed, faithfully or not, by others. Whether John Thorpe behaves poorly because he is ignorant of propriety and of Catherine's precarious social status or because he is influenced by his own arrogance and selfishness is unclear – if anything, the novel suggests it to be both – but what is crucial is that Catherine has little defence against him. Though she acknowledges Thorpe's flaws and is far from fond of his company, she is unable to avoid or deflect him for much of her time in

⁷⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p13

Bath and her happiness is almost ruined by him during her stay at Northanger Abbey. Austen's association of Francophobia with a man who is so violent in his behaviour and so flagrantly disregards his duties as a gentleman, suggests that the patriotic fervour of the pro-war pamphleteers had the potential to breed a dangerous mode of masculinity.

The ongoing conflict and the mounting fear of a French invasion, cemented by Napoleon's rise to power, had largely done away with what Fulford calls 'the traditional English fear of a standing army'⁷⁸ by 1798. But in her depiction of Thorpe Austen arguably demonstrates a new fear about male violence, drawing on Burney's depiction of the ill-mannered Captain Mirvan: one of a brutish masculinity, emboldened by the cries for a more bold, martial manliness capable of withstanding French threats and by state authorised violence in the name of nationalism, that possessed a disregard for sensibility and little care for patriarchal duties. As Michele Cohen has shown, the fashioning of the English gentleman had in the first half of the eighteenth century been rooted in inherently French ideals of politeness, sociability and sensibility. Fears that such 'Frenchification' of British manliness might lead to a crisis of effeminacy, which had been much discussed in the aftermath of the American Revolutionary Wars, grew again in the years following the execution of Louis XVI. In John Thorpe, Austen seems to suggest a tension between the need for a strong, national masculinity untouched by effeminacy and the idea of the 'gentleman'; a tension that permits a man like Thorpe to exist in society. He must be tolerated because he is by status a gentleman and goes unchallenged because he is, by his own estimation, hyper-masculine and determinedly not effeminate. Though it is Henry Tilney – who is knowledgeable about muslin, reads novels, and cares for his sister – with whom Catherine ultimately wins her happy ending, this stability is repeatedly threatened and almost completely derailed by John Thorpe.

This notion that a time of war troubled masculine ideals and accepted models of manly behaviour is reflected in the soldier's entry into the domestic space, which occurs in both *Northanger Abbey* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Neither Catherine nor any other of *Northanger Abbey's* characters appear interested in the reasons of either General or Captain Tilney's entering the military: the General's explanation for Fredrick's profession comes at his volition, rather than at Catherine's wonder or prompting. For a young gentleman to be an officer was by 1798 far from uncommon, as the ranks of the British military continued to grow to support the war effort. Captain Fredrick Tilney, 'a very fashionable-looking, handsome young man'⁷⁹, does not appear until the second volume of the novel: though appearing infrequently on the page, he is much discussed throughout and his presence has a significant impact on the plot itself. Seeing

⁷⁸ Fulford, p158

⁷⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p94

him for the first time at an assembly Catherine 'looked at him with great admiration' and supposes 'that some people might think him handsomer', but finds 'his air was more assuming, and his countenance less prepossessing' than that of his younger brother.⁸⁰ Having overheard him protesting against dancing and laughing 'openly at Henry for finding it possible'⁸¹, she decides that Captain Tilney's manners too must be 'beyond a doubt decidedly inferior'⁸². Again Catherine, unwitting in her naivety, is far from inaccurate in her judgement of character (even if her observation is informed more by her attraction to Henry than by anything else): although markedly different from John Thorpe, Captain Tilney's manners, like his father's, are at odds with his status as both an officer and a gentleman. Following the first dance of the evening, the brothers ask Catherine if Isabella 'might have any objection to dancing' as Fredrick 'would be most happy to introduced to her.'⁸³ Catherine, having heard Captain Tilney's earlier avowal of dancing, assumes that the offer is a courteous one and that, having seen Isabella sitting alone, he 'fancied she might wish for a partner'⁸⁵. But whilst Catherine remarks 'that is was very good-natured of him to think of it'⁸⁶, imagining that Fredrick wishes to save Isabella from the embarrassment of having to sit out the dancing, Henry suggests otherwise: 'Henry smiled, and said, 'How very little trouble it can give you to understand the motive of other people's actions'⁸⁷. Though Catherine does not understand the meaning of Henry's flirtatious teasing and is astonished when Isabella – who had professed that in James Morland's absence she 'would not dance upon any account in the world'⁸⁸ – stands up with Captain Tilney, she is intuitive enough to be concerned by Fredrick's presence despite being unaware of the reason. Captain Tilney's entrance into the novel and to Catherine's social sphere disrupts the balance built by the first volume, by interrupting and complicating the engagement between James Morland and Isabella Thorpe. Though Isabella professes that 'her heart and faith were alike engaged to James'⁸⁹ and that, whilst he is absent from Bath, Catherine must 'not insist on her being very agreeable'⁹⁰, Captain Tilney's arrival quickly throws such claims into question. Their dancing together, Isabella claims, had only occurred because the Captain 'would take no denial': 'You have no idea how he pressed me. I begged him to excuse me, and get some other partner – but no, not he; after aspiring to my hand, there was nobody else in the room he could bear to think of; and it

⁸⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p94-95

⁸¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸² Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p96

⁸⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

⁸⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p86

⁹⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p94

was not that he wanted merely to dance; he wanted to be with *me*.⁹¹ Whilst Isabella's comments to Catherine speak of impropriety on Fredrick's side and unwillingness on hers, she concludes that his 'being such a smart young fellow, I saw every eye was upon us.'⁹² That Isabella is a woman who enjoys seeing that others are interested, enamoured or jealous of her is already known by the reader if not by Catherine, in her treatment of her younger sisters and the scene in which she and Catherine are followed by two young men whilst they discuss novels. Though she may declare that he is not 'at all in [her] style of beauty' and 'amazingly conceited'⁹³, Isabella's delight at being seen with such a man as Captain Tilney is evident.

As Catherine continues to observe the interactions between Isabella and Captain Tilney, unwilling to believe her friend false in her love for James or to fully recognise Isabella's disappointment in his financial prospects, she surmises that 'Captain Tilney was falling in love with Isabella, and Isabella unconsciously encouraging him'⁹⁴. Yet despite her reluctance to suspect Isabella of encouraging Fredrick's attentions to her, Catherine 'wished Isabella had talked more like her usual self, and not so much about money; and had not looked so well pleased at the sight of Captain Tilney.'⁹⁵ Catherine's discomfort at the situation is aggravated by the multitude of its impact: she becomes uneasy in her friendship with Isabella, concerned for her brother, for General Tilney and by extension her own growing friendship with his family. 'Though [Captain Tilney's] looks did not please her' his connection to Henry and Eleanor arouses Catherine's concern for him and 'she thought with a sincere compassion of his approaching disappointment'⁹⁶. Of course, what Catherine believes to be the cause of this disturbance is only a half-truth informed by her own innocence. She perceives that, though 'in spite of what she had believed herself to overhear in the Pump-room, his behaviour was so incompatible with the knowledge of Isabella's engagement, that she could not, on reflection, imagine him aware of it.'⁹⁷ Though ignorant (somewhat wilfully) of Isabella's role in it, Catherine is aware that the disruption to her small sphere results from the presence of Fredrick Tilney. That the Tilneys will soon return to Northanger Abbey becomes Catherine's consolation, as 'Captain Tilney's removal would at least restore peace to every heart but his own.'⁹⁸ What is opaque to Catherine, though, is clear to Henry Tilney: he knows that Fredrick *is* aware of Isabella's engagement, that his brother does not intend to leave Bath and that Isabella is not so uninterested as she claims.

⁹¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p97

⁹² Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p97

⁹³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p97

⁹⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p107

⁹⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p107

⁹⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p108

⁹⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p108

⁹⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p108

Whilst Henry Tilney perceives and acknowledges the truths that Catherine cannot, she is – just as with her suspicions about the General – not misguided in her belief that Captain Tilney’s presence in Bath has upset the course of the narrative. Henry believes that, regardless of Fredrick’s staying in Bath, the issue will soon pass because his brother’s time in the city is limited by profession: ‘His leave of absence will soon expire, and he must return to his regiment. – And what will then be their acquaintance? – The mess room will drink Isabella Thorpe for a fortnight, and she will laugh with your brother over poor Tilney’s passion for a month’.⁹⁹ The future as predicted by Henry, however, never comes to pass. Whilst she is away at Northanger her brother, as Catherine feared, discovers and is severely injured by the dalliance between Isabella and Fredrick: a letter to his sister to announce the end of engagement offers no details, assuming that Catherine ‘will soon hear enough from another quarter to know where lies the blame’ and hoping that her stay at the abbey ‘may be over before Captain Tilney makes his engagement known, or you will be uncomfortably circumstanced’¹⁰⁰. Neither Captain Tilney nor any such announcement ever arrive at Northanger, but instead Catherine receives a letter from Isabella that speaks of a misunderstanding between herself and James that she wishes Catherine might smooth over and the news that Fredrick has left Bath: ‘I rejoice to say that the young man whom, of all others, I particularly abhor, has left Bath. You will know, from this description, I must mean Captain Tilney, who, as you may remember, was amazingly disposed to follow and tease me, before you went away.’¹⁰¹ Isabella’s letter, however, reveals she has been just as deceived in Captain Tilney as James Morland has been in her: hoping to catch herself a more profitable match and allured by the figure Captain Tilney cuts in his regimentals, Isabella has misread and miscalculated the reason for Fredrick Tilney’s attentions to her. What becomes of Isabella is left unsaid by the novel, but both Austen’s intended reader in 1798 and her actual reader in 1818 must have suspected that the future of a girl who had publicly lost one engagement by attempting to court another was unlikely to be bright. Captain Tilney, however, might return to his regiment without issue: as Henry suspects, the incident will be toasted for a fortnight by his brother officers and then subsequently forgotten. Unlike Isabella, Fredrick is likely to suffer little to no consequence for his actions as he is protected not only by his being a gentleman but by his being an officer. The incident can have no real repercussions for Fredrick; he is able to leave town without attracting suspicion thanks to the necessity of his regiment’s orders and any gossip that does follow him from Bath is unlikely to reach him before he can take control of it.

⁹⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p111

¹⁰⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p148

¹⁰¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p159

Captain Fredrick Tilney's interruption of *Northanger Abbey's* marriage plot – as his being in part responsible for the end of Isabella Thorpe and James Morland's engagement endangers Catherine's possible future with Henry Tilney – arguably then represents another inherently war time anxiety explored by Austen's fiction. Fredrick Tilney is not a rake or a villain; he lacks what Erin Mackie has called the 'criminality'¹⁰² of the rakes of the first half of the eighteenth century and the rapacious excesses of Gothic villains such as Radcliffe's Marquis de Montalt or Roche's Monsieur D'Alembert. At the assembly where Catherine first meets the Captain, the narrator remarks that 'whatever might be our heroine's opinion of him, his admiration of her was not of a very dangerous kind; not likely to produce animosities between the brothers, no persecutions to the lady.'¹⁰³ Drawing on the conventions of the Gothic antagonist, such as Lathom's Theodore, the narrator wryly states that '*He* cannot be the instigator of the three villains in horseman's great coats, by whom she will hereafter be forced into a travelling-chaise and four, which will drive off with incredible speed.'¹⁰⁴ The narration draws humour from the Gothic trope of the villain who disrupts the plot by physically imposing upon or stealing away the heroine, undercutting the 'danger' by Catherine's being 'undisturbed by presentiments of such an evil, or of any evil at all except that of having but a short set to dance down'¹⁰⁵ with Henry Tilney. Captain Tilney's role in *Northanger Abbey*, then, is not one of villain or antagonist for the novel's heroine: he is uninterested in both Catherine and his brother's attraction to her. The narration's satire implies that for either Catherine or the reader to suspect or fear Captain Tilney would be unfounded and ridiculous, that within the polite society of the text he can pose no such threat. Yet his actions, though not 'villainous' nor intending direct harm, throw the narrative into a chaos that affects all of the novel's central families. Fredrick Tilney is not a villain in the manner of the sentimental or Gothic novel but rather 'a lively, and perhaps sometimes a thoughtless young man'¹⁰⁶, the consequences of whose actions are felt by others rather than himself.

Those rules which govern the rest of the novel do not govern Captain Tilney. Though his siblings are forced to adhere to his father's strict timekeeping and routine, Fredrick Tilney is able to circumvent them: he 'was expected every hour'¹⁰⁷ during Catherine's dinner at the Tilney's residence on Milsom Street but does not appear until the following day, he chooses to stay in Bath when his father decides the family will return to Northanger Abbey and, according to his

¹⁰² Erin Mackie, *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates* (Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), p35

¹⁰³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

¹⁰⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

¹⁰⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p95

¹⁰⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p110

¹⁰⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p94

sister, is a man 'whose arrival was often [...] sudden.'¹⁰⁸ Similarly, there is little transparency to the Captain's motives or reasons: watching his flirtations with Isabella Thorpe, Catherine cannot conceive why Captain Tilney would behave so to a woman he knows to be engaged unless he were to be hopelessly in love with her, a truth which neither Henry nor Eleanor Tilney believe can be possible. It is only when later receiving the letter revealing there is no engagement that Catherine is able to comprehend that the Captain could have pursued without caring for her:

'Then you do not suppose he ever really cared about her?'

'I am persuaded that he never did.'

'And only made believe to do so for mischief's sake?'

Henry bowed his assent.¹⁰⁹

What 'for mischief's sake' might be to Fredrick Tilney is perhaps clearer to the reader – and, it is implied, Henry Tilney – than it is to the innocent Catherine Morland. If the unspoken but implicit sexual charms of Isabella Thorpe, being 'four years older than Miss Morland, and at least four years better informed'¹¹⁰ and of 'great personal beauty'¹¹¹, are enough to entice James Morland to forget propriety and engage himself before he has finished his education, then we might suppose they are also sufficient to catch the eye of Captain Tilney. Catherine's assertion that her friend could not possibly be persuaded to join the dancing and her being engaged encourages rather than dissuades the Captain, thus aligning him with villains of Gothic texts such as *The Romance of the Forest* and *The Midnight Bell*. But Tilney does not seek to possess Isabella by force; there is no kidnapping, no attempt at forced marriage, no schemes or threats. Unlike Adeline de Montalt and Madeline Clermont, who seek and receive lawful justice, there is no retribution to be levelled at Captain Tilney because he has broken no laws and committed no grave offences. Again, Austen transplants the Gothic form and the anxieties it represents, reframing it within the social and domestic spheres of a polite, middle-class British society.

As not simply Mr Tilney, but *Captain* Tilney, Fredrick is able to operate outside of the usual laws of society: as a military officer he is not beholden to his father but to his regiment, he may come and go from town as he pleases while he has leave, and his identity is intrinsically linked to his profession. Captain Tilney's interruption of *Northanger Abbey's* marriage plot speaks to an anxiety about the soldier's place in society and his potential for disruption. The transient nature of the officer during war time upsets the traditions of courtship; his time is managed not by his family or by social etiquette, but by his regiment. Fredrick's identity as a soldier protects him from the consequences he might otherwise face: he can detach himself from Isabella without

¹⁰⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p163

¹⁰⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p161

¹¹⁰ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p20

¹¹¹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p21s

issue, as to remain in Bath would be to disobey his orders. What *Northanger Abbey* implies is that the Gothic's fear about the tension between the appearances and realities of masculinity, of men enabled by status, fortune and profession to enter societies and make connections without their history being known is a real and present danger in the fashionable towns and cities of Britain. As a verse of 'A Soldier for me' states, 'a soldier so noble, so gallant and gay / will always the belle bear away'¹¹²: the officer, clad in his bright regimentals, was a new and exciting addition to a society but an entirely unstable one. The officer's presence might turn heads and capture hearts, disrupting the course of engagements and courtships or worse, but he was unlikely to ever be a permanent addition. War is a state without consistency or stability and so, by extension, the soldier; his whereabouts were subject to regiment rotations and campaign requirements, so whilst he was celebrated as charming, his masculinity worthy of female desire, he was an unwise choice of beau.

The most obvious of Austen's allusions to the war in *Northanger Abbey* occurs during Catherine's long-awaited walk with the Tilneys to Beechen Cliff. At a pause in the conversation Catherine, 'in a rather solemn tone of voice', informs her companions that she has 'heard that something very shocking indeed, will soon come out of London.'¹¹³ Though Catherine is speaking of a new publication, a novel said to be 'uncommonly dreadful' of which she expects 'murder and every thing of the kind'¹¹⁴, Eleanor Tilney assumes by her tone that she must be speaking of something more serious and begs Catherine to 'have the goodness to satisfy me as to this dreadful riot.'¹¹⁵ The conversation is then redirected by Henry Tilney, who cannot resist teasing his sister for her severe interpretation of Catherine's statement:

My dear Eleanor, the riot is only in your own brain. [...] And you, Miss Morland—my stupid sister has mistaken all your clearest expressions. You talked of expected horrors in London—and instead of instantly conceiving, as any rational creature would have done, that such words could relate only to a circulating library, she immediately pictured to herself a mob of three thousand men assembling in St. George's Fields, the Bank attacked, the Tower threatened, the streets of London flowing with blood, a detachment of the Twelfth Light Dragoons (the hopes of the nation) called up from Northampton to quell the insurgents, and the gallant Captain Frederick Tilney, in the moment of charging at the head of his troop, knocked off his horse by a brickbat from an upper window. Forgive her stupidity.¹¹⁶

Eleanor's fears of rioting and violence in London, and of the army being called to restore order, are ridiculed by her brother as unfounded and unnecessarily anxious. Eleanor's assumption, however, that news of something dreadful from the capital might be civil disorder and violence

¹¹² 'A Soldier for me'

¹¹³ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p81

¹¹⁴ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

¹¹⁵ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

¹¹⁶ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

seem hardly 'the fears of the sister [...] added to the weakness of the woman'¹¹⁷ her brother dismisses them as when considered in the context of 1798, 1803 or indeed 1816. Even by 1798, there were concerns about how the British government could continue to finance an ongoing, increasingly global war. By the time *Northanger Abbey* was returned to Austen in 1816, Britain had seen two more decades of almost constant conflict. The economy, which 'had been geared for so long to war', suffered a 'severe slump in agriculture, trade and manufacturing'¹¹⁸ in the post-Napoleonic period. In the May of 1816 the military was dispatched to restore order and arrest rioters in Cambridgeshire protesting rising food costs and unemployment rates in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. In 1819, two years after Austen's death, the British government would send the cavalry to quell protestors at Peterloo. Though Eleanor's fears are dismissed by Henry as the product of an overly anxious mind informed by sisterly affection, a large-scale riot in London was not improbable.

The scene reveals the domestic strains placed by war on both a personal and national scale. Like the scarcity of veal at the market, that a middle-class young woman such as Eleanor Tilney – whom the reader knows to be a sensible and conscientious character – would hear of something 'more horrible than any thing we have met with yet'¹¹⁹ and assume it to be civil unrest speaks to the economic strain the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars placed upon the British public. Though Catherine, sheltered in her upbringing at Fullerton, appears largely unaware of either the conflict or its domestic impact, Eleanor's worries and Henry's detailed teasing of her suggest that such topics are frequently discussed by the siblings: after all, they are a military family. As Johnson notes, 'riots and the fear of riots were not an uncommon feature of London life during the 1790s'¹²⁰ and Henry specifically refers to St George's Fields, where the Gordon Riots of 1780 had partially taken place. The enormous financial burden of the war had to be shouldered by the general populace, but as Mary Favret has shown, this was a populace largely unable to fully comprehend a war so detached from domestic life. Fears that, as had been the case with the Seven Years War, the conflict might be less for the safety of the nation and more the benefit of the upper classes alongside the growing 'alienation from those in authority [...] fostered throughout Europe by the French Revolution'¹²¹ meant that despite the growth of nationalist sentiment and the very real threat of invasion, attitudes to the war were not always positive. Eleanor's fear of a riot, then, indicates not only the social tensions resulting from the economic turbulence but also a middle-class concern that such unrest would upset the course of polite society.

¹¹⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

¹¹⁸ Colley, p321

¹¹⁹ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

¹²⁰ Johnson, *Northanger Abbey*, p369

¹²¹ Colley, p154

Eleanor Tilney's anxieties about violence in London are of course as much personal as they are political: she fears a riot is possible because she is aware of the wartime struggles and general unease, but her brother's response suggests her worries are those of a sister rather than a citizen. What Eleanor is really afraid of, Henry suggests, is their brother Fredrick's coming to harm in any such riot: that 'the gallant' Captain Frederick Tilney's heroics might be cut short as he is 'knocked off his horse by a brickbat from an upper window.'¹²² Eleanor, like many women in the years between 1793 and 1815 and like Austen herself, is the sister of a man in active service. These fears of serious injury or death in action for the young men serving in the army are evident in Eleanor's distressed response to Catherine's 'news'. To Eleanor, Catherine's statement suggests that the 'something' has already occurred, and that it is the news of it that she is waiting to hear: even in Bath, news of London must have at least a day's delay to it. News of war and conflict, then, would suffer an even greater delay. As Favret notes, 'in the late eighteenth century, news of war came with considerable lag time; reports of a particular event, the loss of a battle or the death of your brother, could take months to be communicated home and confirmed'¹²³. This, we might assume by her reaction, is the reality Eleanor has been living with for some time. Though Henry ridicules his sister for what he perceives to be a flight of fancy, the anxiety that this report triggers in Eleanor indicates the extent to which war altered the female experience in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. Just as the transient nature of the soldier made him a social disruption and untrustworthy lover, the ever-growing ranks of the military after 1793 also meant an increasing number of young women whose adult experience was dominated by a war that they could not see, could not feel and often could not know.

By the battle of Waterloo in 1815, there would be young women out in society who had never known anything but a Britain in a state of war. As has been noted in previous chapters, women were central to the conceptualisation of war: it was for the protection of women, the vessels of national virtue, on whose behalf war must be fought and French invasion repelled. Many women, as Linda Colley has suggested, supported the war for exactly such reasons. The treatment of Marie-Antoinette by the Revolutionaries and the female victims of the guillotine seemed to have 'exposed women to political violence as never before'¹²⁴, and many British women thus 'saw this war with France as a cause in which their own welfare and status were peculiarly involved.'¹²⁵ Whilst early Gothic novels such as Radcliffe's *A Sicilian Romance* and *The Romance of the Forest* presented soldiers as heroes, as brothers, lovers, and husbands whose happy endings were

¹²² Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p82

¹²³ Favret, p14

¹²⁴ Colley, p256

¹²⁵ Colley, p256

defined by glory in military service, such texts largely skirt the realities of having a relative or loved one in active service. Whilst, from Henry's fictionalised riot and Fredrick's entrance into the text a few chapters later, we can suppose Fredrick Tilney to currently be stationed at the barracks in Northampton and not on the continent, the nature of Eleanor's response suggests her awareness that her brother could at any time be injured or killed and that it could be days or weeks before the news would be received. Favret argues that the temporal distortion in wartime reporting complicated feeling, disrupting the ability to navigate emotional responses. 'The punctuated eventfulness within dailiness which organised the public's experience of distant war', Favret suggests, 'created simultaneously a sense of living in the meantime, waiting for news which happened at a distance both geographical and temporal.' This waiting, living in the gaps between reports, created 'an epistemological gap between the news and event' and what Favret terms the 'temporal and affective unease' of 'meantime'¹²⁶. For women, living in a time of war was paradoxical; the delay in news from the front meant that they were at once safe and unsafe, the war both won and lost at any point. By the time the letter assuring the safety of a military brother, father, cousin or fiancé had been received, he may have been injured or killed. Yet the daily necessities of polite society – 'shops were to be visited; some new part of the town to be looked at; and the Pump Room to be attended, where they paraded up and down for an hour'¹²⁷ – must still be adhered to, as Favret puts it, in the meantime. War then, for the multitudes of young women like Eleanor Tilney, becomes a Gothic reality: a spectre that is both absent and present, which threatens to cause devastation at any moment and which disrupts or hinders emotional responses. Just as Radcliffe's Emily experiences psychological trauma after witnessing the violence at Udolpho, Eleanor's fearful response to Catherine's 'something very shocking'¹²⁸ indicates a female experience fundamentally traumatised by the distant threat of war.

Thus, whilst *Northanger Abbey* may present a heroine ignorant of the struggles and anxieties of a nation at war, and indeed many of the greater political and economic concerns of her society, it serves as a constant undercurrent to the text. Though not addressed directly, war's effects socially, economically, and even emotionally are present throughout the course of the novel but simultaneously too distant to be tangible. In its satire of Gothic readership the novel suggests that for young women like Catherine, too far detached from the conflict to be conscious of it, the Gothic analogy had become lost in translation. As Johnson notes, '*Northanger Abbey* and Austen's other early works were drafted during [the] turbulent period' that saw the first coalition fail, the second begin and Napoleon rise to power 'and the social criticism aired during

¹²⁶ Favret, p73

¹²⁷ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p14

¹²⁸ Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p81

this time makes an unmistakable mark upon them.¹²⁹ This mark is evident in *Northanger Abbey*, but also in *Pride and Prejudice*. Though the war itself is no more visible in *Pride and Prejudice* than in *Northanger Abbey* – indeed, the social and economic effects are perhaps more explicit in the latter – the militia are a crucial part of Austen’s narrative. *Pride and Prejudice* is a novel intimately interested in the shifting social values and boundaries of the Napoleonic period, interrogating on a domestic level the effects of the social upheaval caused by extended conflict in Europe. The novel opens with the arrival of Mr Bingley, his sisters and his friend, Mr Darcy, in the small, countryside society of Meryton. The news is received, with varying degrees of excitement for varying reasons, by the Bennets of Longbourn: a family of five daughters, none of whom are able to inherit their father’s property due to an entailment on the male line. In his renting of the otherwise vacant Netherfield Hall Mr Bingley, being ‘of a respectable family in the north England’ whose fortune has been made in trade and who possesses no landed property¹³⁰, represents the changing face of the British middle and upper classes. Bingley’s father, having made a fortune to elevate himself and his son to the status of gentleman, had ‘intended to purchase an estate but did not live to do it’¹³¹. The responsibility of cementing the family’s status amongst the landed gentry falls then to his son, who chooses to take the lease at Netherfield Hall. The narrator suggests however that the eventual purchase of his own estate is unlikely and rather that Mr Bingley, ‘now provided with a good house’ without the responsibility of its estate, might instead ‘spend the remainder of his days at Netherfield, and leave the next generation to purchase.’¹³² That a large house in a country village in the south England sits unoccupied and, the reader may assume from Mrs Bennet’s exclamations in the first chapter, has done for some time is emblematic of the disruption to the traditional British social structure witnessed during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras. What is significant, too, is that Mr Bingley may be a gentleman independent of landed property: Bingley is in no great rush to purchase an estate nor be tied to one, suggesting his fortune is sufficient to survive without agricultural profits or tenant rents.

Mrs Bennet despairs in the early chapters that Mr Bingley ‘might always be flying about from one place to another, and never settled at Netherfield as he ought to be’¹³³ not simply because she considers him a potential match in marriage for one of her daughters, but because it negatively impacts the neighbourhood. Mr Bingley is not truly the master of Netherfield, simply its current tenant, and thus not beholden to the duties (including playing host for social

¹²⁹ Johnson, *Northanger Abbey*, pxx

¹³⁰ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, ed. by James Kinsley, 4th edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p10

¹³¹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p10

¹³² Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p10-11

¹³³ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p6

engagements) of a landed gentleman. Though conscious of the loss felt by her society in Bingley's not being present, Elizabeth Bennet acknowledges that they cannot expect the same responsibilities of Bingley, remarking that 'perhaps, Mr. Bingley did not take the house so much for the convenience of the neighbourhood as for his own, and we must expect him to keep it or quit it on the same principle.'¹³⁴ Mr Bingley, then, is a new breed of gentleman: one whose fortune is made not by heritage or legacy but by trade, and thus is free to move about the country as he pleases without the traditional responsibilities of the social class to which he has been elevated. This movement is made possible, in part, by a period of war: though immense strain was placed on the British people, with conflict on the continent blocking trade routes and a largescale needs for goods to outfit the army and navy there were opportunities for British merchants and tradesman to make considerable profits.

Bingley's arrival at Meryton is an important addition to the society of Meryton, largely for the number of unmarried young women who reside in the neighbourhood. The arrival of a young, unmarried gentleman to the house that should serve as the primary seat of their society brings for women like the Bennet sisters the possibility of a busier social calendar, the opportunity to make or further acquaintances and, as a result, a greater chance of securing a husband: which, as the character of Charlotte Lucas indicates, was as much a way of seeking a way to provide themselves with independence from their families and financial stability as it was about romance or love. As Mrs Bennet declares to her husband in the novel's first chapter, the arrival of 'a single man of large fortune four or five thousand a year' is 'fine a thing for our girls!'¹³⁵ But whilst Mrs Bennet is preoccupied with the arrival of an eligible gentleman to Meryton, her youngest daughters, Catherine and Lydia, are more preoccupied with 'the recent arrival of a militia regiment in the neighbourhood' who are 'to remain the whole of the winter'¹³⁶. For the two youngest Miss Bennets the arrival of the militia brings with it 'a source of felicity unknown before'¹³⁷, which renders the arrival of Mr Bingley inconsequential to them: 'They could talk of nothing but officers; and Mr Bingley's large fortune, the mention of which gave animation to their mother, was worthless in their eyes when opposed to the regimentals of an ensign.'¹³⁸ Though their father, 'from their manner of talking' about the militia, declares them to be 'two of the silliest girls in the country', their mother dismisses his suggestion that 'our two youngest daughters are uncommonly foolish'¹³⁹. That young women will be overly excited about the arrival of officers, Mrs Bennet argues, is entirely natural: 'you must not expect such girls to have

¹³⁴ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p135

¹³⁵ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p1

¹³⁶ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p20

¹³⁷ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p20

¹³⁸ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p20

¹³⁹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p21

the sense of their father and mother. When they get to our age I dare say they will not think about officers any more than we do.’¹⁴⁰ Mrs Bennet further justifies her daughters’ behaviour by claiming that she can ‘remember the time when I liked a red coat myself very well – and indeed so I do still at my heart’¹⁴¹. Mrs Bennet, ever the pragmatist, is conscious too that the arrival of the officers might also improve her daughters’ chances at marrying well. ‘A smart young colonel, with five or six thousand a year’¹⁴², Mrs Bennet believes, would be a fine match for any of this Miss Bennets of Longbourn. This reception is a far cry from that of the years following the Seven Years War, the red coat no longer a sign of ‘highwaymen, who have been heroes’¹⁴³ but of a pleasant addition to a neighbourhood.

Where the soldier had suffered from a reputation tarnished by a national unease about his violence and a government unwilling to continue his pay, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars saw a renewal in martial pride that was epitomised by the splendour of military dress. As Linda Colley notes, ‘never before or since have British military uniforms been so impractically gorgeous, so brilliant in colour, so richly ornamented or so closely and cunningly tailored’¹⁴⁴. Regimentals were, it seems, capable of instantly enhancing ‘the physical impressiveness of the wearer however inadequate he might be in fact.’¹⁴⁵ Much of the pro-war propaganda, such as that discussed in this and previous chapters, which sought to convince the nation to enlist or support the ever-growing British military hinged on the idea of the British soldier as a hero, embodying the virtues of the constitution and the Glorious Revolution: ‘men endowed with rational understandings’¹⁴⁶ of ‘one heart, that is loyal to the King’ ready to put down ‘the Macaroni Jacobins’ and repel invasion.¹⁴⁷ Central to this notion of national heroism and valour was the soldier’s uniform: where once poems and songs had spoken of its loss of value and degraded status, the years following 1793 marked new fervour for the redesigned regimentals. The passion for military dress would become a defining factor of British society in Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, fundamentally altering men’s fashion for generations to come and inciting many to join for the honour of wearing it. The cut and padding of the coat, breeches, and boots worn by officers in the majority of regiments, such as Captain Tilney’s cavalry, allowed for a strong, masculine silhouette that hid any number of flaws whilst signalling

¹⁴⁰ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p21

¹⁴¹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p21

¹⁴² Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

¹⁴³ Walpole to Dalrymple, 2nd May, 1763 in Yale, ‘Yale Edition of Walpole’s Correspondence’ (2011), <<http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/>> [accessed 11 March 2016].

¹⁴⁴ Colley, p186

¹⁴⁵ Colley, p185

¹⁴⁶ *The Soldier’s Answer*, p2

¹⁴⁷ *The Soldier’s Answer*, p3: It is unclear in the pamphlet if the author refers here to supporters of the Revolution or the Revolutionaries themselves. However, the use of the term ‘macaroni’ references the fear of effeminacy discussed previously.

martial prowess. As 'the more exclusive a regiment an office belonged to, and the higher his rank, the more dazzling his uniform was likely to be'¹⁴⁸ the soldier's uniform intrinsically linked its wearer with the notions of heroism, bravery, and valour. Martial masculinity, 'in every sense dressed to kill'¹⁴⁹, was thus perceived as the antidote to effeminacy and Frenchification. The officers' uniform was designed not only to be 'the embodiment of authority' whilst also 'denoting service to the nation'¹⁵⁰, but to enhance 'manly' qualities in a way that, as Linda Colley has suggested, was sexually appealing. For Kitty and, most particularly, Lydia Bennet the soldier's red coat becomes emblematic of female sexual awakening and desire. For the majority of the novel, neither Kitty nor Lydia are willing or able to see past their excitement at the presence of the militia in Meryton. They are uninterested in Mr Bingley and his fortune or in the impending arrival of Mr Collins, the cousin to whom their father's estate is entailed: 'To Catherine and Lydia, neither the letter nor its writer were in any degree interesting. It was next to impossible that their cousin should come in a scarlet coat, and it was now some weeks since they had received pleasure from the society of a man in any other colour.'¹⁵¹

Unlike the Bingleys and Mr Darcy, whose arrival into Meryton comes with lengthy discussion of their families, fortunes, and personal history, the militia simply seem to appear: apart from the arrival of Wickham, who offers his history to Elizabeth, the officers are integrated into society almost automatically. Though Mrs Phillips provides her nieces with the 'knowledge of the officers' names and connections'¹⁵² Austen offers the reader none of this intelligence, except that 'the officers of the - shire were in general a very creditable, gentlemanlike set'¹⁵³. The officers are welcomed into Meryton's social sphere precisely because they are officers, and thus a certain quality of manners, education, and birth is assumed. The militia are stationed in the area ostensibly as protection from the threatened invasion from across the channel, the fear of which was rife between 1796 and 1798 and renewed after the breakdown of the Peace of Amiens in 1803. As Tim Fulford notes, in response to Napoleon's gathering of his 'Armée d'Angleterre' the British militia had 'swollen to three hundred thousand men under training a year'¹⁵⁴. The militia's purpose in these country towns and villages then was to be visible symbols of national pride and protection, their appearances in society intrinsically connected to the ongoing war with France. Yet *Pride and Prejudice* gives very little insight into this aspect of the militia, which has perhaps given critics cause to accuse Austen of avoiding the broader social and political issues of her time. The only real glimpse of the military in *Pride and Prejudice's* militia, outside

¹⁴⁸ Colley, p186

¹⁴⁹ Colley, p186

¹⁵⁰ Colley, p186-7

¹⁵¹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p48

¹⁵² Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p20

¹⁵³ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p57

¹⁵⁴ Fulford, p156

of titles and seasonal movements around the country, comes in an otherwise throwaway line at the end of a chapter. Jane and Elizabeth Bennet, returning to Longbourn after their unexpected stay at Netherfield Park, are informed by their youngest sisters that ‘much had been done and much had been said in the regiment’ in their absence: ‘several of the officers had dined lately with their uncle, a private had been flogged, and it had actually been hinted that Colonel Forster was going to be married.’¹⁵⁵ This off hand reference to military punishment, Fulford argues, indicates not only the Bennet sisters to be lacking in moral sense, but the militia too.¹⁵⁶ Lydia and Kitty are uninterested, we might assume, because the man flogged is merely a private and not an officer but the triviality of the statement – that is thrown in amongst news of social engagements and gossip – suggests also that to the Bennet girls the officers are soldiers in uniform only. But though they view the soldiers ‘in terms of romantic naïveté’¹⁵⁷, as handsome uniforms to enliven assemblies rather than as men training to defend their country, the officers themselves do little to offset or challenge their perception.

Though Colonel Forster’s regiment are said to be a respectable company of gentlemanlike young men, Austen repeatedly demonstrates the opposite. When Lydia is invited to accompany the Forsters to Brighton in the novel’s second volume, Mr Bennet reassures Elizabeth that ‘Colonel Forster is a sensible man, and will keep [Lydia] out of any real mischief’¹⁵⁸. This, of course, is not the case: whilst in Brighton Lydia abandons her friends and runs away with Mr Wickham, only narrowly avoiding complete ruin thanks to the intervention of her uncle Gardiner and Mr Darcy. But that Colonel Forster should be far from an ideal guardian for a young woman who ‘from ignorance and emptiness of her mind’ is ‘wholly unable to ward off any portion of that universal contempt which her rage for admiration will excite’¹⁵⁹ *should* have already been known. Responsible for the behaviour, appearance, and training of the men in their command, officers were expected to be always exemplary: ‘The officers are to take heed to their steps, how they march before their men.’¹⁶⁰ Officers were not only ‘to see that every man is properly instructed in his duty and discipline’ but were expected to manage their regiments’ finances, ensuring ‘that there are proper provisions for [each soldier’s] support.’¹⁶¹ By populating the officer class with men of the middle and upper classes, it was expected that they would bring their gentlemanly values and education to their military professions. In his military correspondence during the Seven Years War (discussed in Chapter One), Henry Seymour Conway frequently discussed not only the discipline of the men in his service but his responsibility to keep them properly

¹⁵⁵ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p44

¹⁵⁶ Fulford, p165

¹⁵⁷ Fulford, p164

¹⁵⁸ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p177

¹⁵⁹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p177

¹⁶⁰ *An Alarm*, p6

¹⁶¹ *An Alarm*, p5

supplied and outfitted. A good officer, Conway believed, was firm but fair and proper leadership would ensure proper soldiering amongst the private ranks. Austen's Colonel Forster, however, is unlikely to have won Conway's approval.

The Colonel is first mentioned at an assembly at Sir William Lucas', when Elizabeth Bennet talks of 'teasing Colonel Forster to give us a ball at Meryton'¹⁶². Even for Elizabeth, more sensible than her younger sisters, it is the potential the Colonel has to improve and enliven the neighbourhood's society that makes him a welcome addition, rather than his possible protection of it. We then hear of him again at Netherfield, when Lydia talks of pressing him to give a ball if the Bingleys will give theirs, and at Longbourn when the younger girls have learned he is to be married. Of his duties as a commanding officer, the reader hears nothing: his function appears to be less to do with drill exercises or managing the encampment, and more with providing gossip and entertainment for the local young ladies. What we do hear of him, though, does little to suggest that his title has been earned by his good sense or responsible behaviour. Lydia tells her mother, for example, that 'my uncle Philips talks of turning away Richard, and if he does, Colonel Forster will hire him'¹⁶³: that a militia colonel would hire a servant, turned away by the local attorney, does little to imply sensible financial or personal management. What is perhaps most telling, though, is the Colonel's choice in bride. Mrs Forster 'was a very young woman, and very lately married' who possesses a 'resemblance in good humour and good spirits'¹⁶⁴ to Lydia Bennet, with whom 'out of their *three* months' acquaintance' had 'been the intimate of *two*'.¹⁶⁵ Whilst we learn little about the Colonel's engagement or relationship with his new bride from the text, the implication is that this is a match made out of lust and poor sense rather than either sense or sensibility. Though the Colonel's age is not given, we can assume by his senior military title and command of a regiment that he is significantly older than his bride. For a man of Colonel Foster's rank and presumed status to marry, after what seems to be a very short engagement, a woman of a similar age and temperament to Lydia Bennet hardly suggests a man of the good sense or judgement that Mr Bennet professes him to be.

It is the militia, ultimately, that almost risk the ruin of the Bennet family, yet Lydia's association with the regiment is not in itself dangerous or transgressive. They are gentlemen, in the service of king and country, and trained in the requirements of polite society; the Bennets may not be wealthy but, as Elizabeth notes to Lady Catherine de Burgh, their father is a gentleman. If the soldier's code was derived from the values of chivalry, pledged to the defence of those moral values embodied by British women, then Lydia Bennet's involvement with the militia and her

¹⁶² Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p17

¹⁶³ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p52

¹⁶⁴ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p175

¹⁶⁵ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p175

trip to Brighton should place her in no danger either to her person or her reputation. What occurs, however, is the opposite: at Meryton her bold public flirtations, encouraged by the officers, jeopardise Jane's relationship with Mr Bingley and earn the family Mr Darcy's disapproval, and at Brighton she 'throw[s] herself into the power'¹⁶⁶ of Mr Wickham who takes her to London with no intention of marrying her. Though the shock of the Bennets (excepting Kitty) at Lydia's attachment to Wickham is expected, Colonel Forster's failure to notice the extent of the relationship signals his inefficiency as a military leader. Rather than a culture of chivalry and national pride, Forster has fashioned a society of fashionable young men who delight in society but are lacking in moral fibre. Colonel Forster pursues the couple, but he believes them gone to Scotland to marry and only learns otherwise after he has already left for Longbourn. Jane reveals that the intelligence comes from Denny, suggesting that the scheme had been more broadly discussed and known than originally believed: Wickham, the text suggests, may perhaps be the worst of the regiment but he is by no means alone in his immorality. The Colonel, ultimately, is unable to recover Wickham and Lydia and the task instead falls to Mr Bennet and Mr Gardiner, who only succeed in rectifying the situation without too much scandal thanks to the assistance of Mr Darcy. The incident with Wickham highlights the Colonel's ineffectuality as a military officer: he is unable to fulfil his responsibilities, either to his men or his society, nor does he command enough respect amongst them to encourage proper behaviour or fear of punishment. Though Jane writes that she is 'sincerely grieved' for Colonel Forster and that 'no one can throw any blame'¹⁶⁷ on him, the text suggests otherwise. Mr Gardiner, discussing the situation with Elizabeth as the party leave Derbyshire, suggests that Wickham must intend to marry Lydia because the situation is too reckless to consider otherwise:

It appears to me so very unlikely that any young man should form such a design against a girl who is by no means unprotected or friendless, and who was actually staying in his colonel's family, that I am strongly inclined to hope the best. Could he expect that her friends would not step forward? Could he expect to be noticed again by the regiment, after such an affront to Colonel Forster? His temptation is not adequate to the risk!¹⁶⁸

Mr Gardiner, as a partial outsider, responds to the situation rationally: how could a soldier think to betray his commanding officer and his regiment without expecting serious punishment or consequence? But Wickham suffers no such retribution, at least not from the Colonel: unable to track them down, Forster relinquishes his responsibility to Mr Bennet and returns to Brighton. When Elizabeth returns home, Jane reveals not only that the Colonel *had* 'often suspected some partiality, especially on Lydia's side, but nothing to give him any alarm'¹⁶⁹ but that he had also failed to get the information about Wickham's intentions himself: 'when questioned by [Colonel

¹⁶⁶ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p209

¹⁶⁷ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p208

¹⁶⁸ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p213

¹⁶⁹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p220

Forster] Denny denied knowing anything of their plan, and would not give his real opinion about it.¹⁷⁰ Not only then is the Colonel insufficient threat to deter Wickham, but he has no power or ability to incite Denny to tell the truth. When Elizabeth asks if the Colonel had known of Wickham's true character, Jane confesses that 'he did not speak so well of [him] as he formerly did' and that he declared him 'to be imprudent and extravagant.'¹⁷¹ Jane Bennet, in her goodness, may be unwilling to suspect the Colonel of failure or wrong doing but the reader is able to infer otherwise: either the Colonel had known of Wickham's true character and, perceiving Lydia's fondness, failed to counsel her accordingly or he was unaware and thus guilty of being ignorant of the men under his command. In this depiction of Colonel Forster, *Pride and Prejudice*, suggests that the Gothic novel's anxieties about masculinity that is performed rather than genuine is alive and well in the militia.

As with *Northanger Abbey*, Austen influences the reader by providing information that her characters are not privy too or do not observe; the Bennets do not comment on Colonel Forster's choice of bride or lack of military discipline, thus failing to see his inadequacies as both a gentleman and an officer. Austen's pointed descriptions and narrative asides, however, reveal the truth to the reader even whilst her characters are unaware. The heroines of the Gothic exercised constant introspection, questioning their own emotional responses and analysing the possible rationales and reasons of those around them. Unable to rely on social conventions to inform them and often isolated, the heroines of novels such as *Clermont* must use their own intuition to navigate the dangers they face: the truth of identities, histories, and situations are constantly obscured from Madeline Clermont and that information which she is given is often fragmented or untrustworthy. What saves Madeline from ruin is her instinct to deconstruct and question each action or speech, allowing her to intuit who can be trusted and who cannot. If *Northanger Abbey* used the conventions of the Gothic and Catherine's misinterpretations of them to demonstrate their real world value to the reader, then *Pride and Prejudice* reminds the reader of an important Gothic lesson: that things are not always as they seem, nor as they should be. Whilst the Gothic novels warned readers by way of analogy, Austen applies the principles of the mode to the domestic sphere of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as mode of caution. Elizabeth Bennet is no Gothic heroine: she has a large family, both a beloved sister and a close friend to serve as her confidants, and no fortune. But *Pride and Prejudice* reiterates the moral lessons of the Gothic novels, like *Northanger Abbey*, by reinterpreting them within a domestic, countryside setting. For Elizabeth, like Madeline Clermont, the reality that she has accepted is proven false: neither Mr Wickham nor Mr Darcy are the men she thinks them to be, the revelation of which fundamentally alters the course the

¹⁷⁰ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p220

¹⁷¹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p220

narrative. Elizabeth, unlike her Gothic counterparts, is certain of her own mind and thus, until Mr Darcy's first proposal at Huntsford, rarely questions her emotions and reactions. The truth, as the attentive reader may already suspect, is not obscured from Elizabeth as it is for Madeline: her realisation is that she is already aware but has not acknowledged the issues and inconsistencies in Wickham's story. In *Clermont*, as argued in the previous chapter, Roche's use of the Gothic mode suggests an anxiety about women's ability to recognise faulty, failed and corrupt masculinities during a time of war. It is these anxieties too, realised in the domestic sphere, that Austen embraces in *Pride and Prejudice*.

The militia, Tim Fulford argues, posed a problem to the social order of the 1790s and the early 1800s, because 'a soldier posted away from his home district was free from those who knew him and his reputation.'¹⁷² In volunteering or purchasing a commission a man's 'very identity was changed: he was now an officer by title, and his previous self and his social status were covered by his gaudy dress.'¹⁷³ This concern, though never directly discussed, is at the heart of *Pride and Prejudice*. At Meryton, Mr Darcy is perceived by his manners as proud, aloof, and unpleasant but in Derbyshire he is rendered more pleasing to Elizabeth Bennet by the knowledge that he is a good and well-liked landlord, a kind brother, and a gentleman of refined taste. Mr Wickham, on the other hand, is well received by the neighbourhood thanks to his easy charm and handsomeness, both of which are enhanced by his regimentals, and able to perform a masculine ideal that hides his true character. Impressed instantly by the openness of his manner, Elizabeth believes his story of his childhood and disownment not only because she is pleased by Wickham but because she it supports her dislike of Darcy. Although Elizabeth is not swayed by the allure of regimentals as her younger sisters are, she nonetheless assumes that Wickham's identity as an officer denotes him as a gentleman – in all senses of the word – and she, along with the rest of Meryton, fail to question him otherwise. Wickham's introduction, too, borrows from the conventions of both Gothic and sentimental fiction to position him as a heroic figure:

But the attention of every lady was soon caught by a young man, whom they had never seen before, of most gentlemanlike appearance, walking with another officer on the other side of the way. The officer was the very Mr. Denny concerning whose return from London Lydia came to inquire, and he bowed as they passed. All were struck with the stranger's air, all wondered who he could be; [...] Mr. Denny addressed them directly, and entreated permission to introduce his friend, Mr. Wickham, who had returned with him the day before from town, and he was happy to say had accepted a commission in their corps. This was exactly as it should be; for the young man wanted only regimentals to make him completely charming. His appearance was greatly in his favour; he had all the best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Fulford, p157

¹⁷³ Fulford, p157

¹⁷⁴ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p54

Whereas Mr Darcy first introduction – as man of ‘fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien; and the report [...] of his having ten thousand a year’ – is immediately followed by a general ‘disgust’ at his manners ‘which turned the tide of his popularity’¹⁷⁵, Wickham’s introduction is overwhelmingly positive: he is pleasing to the young ladies, and quickly welcomed by the rest of Meryton. What does follow this pleasing introduction, however, is the evident tension between Wickham and Darcy. Mrs Philips – from whom the majority of the Bennet girls’ intelligence about the officers originates – having no knowledge of him can ‘only tell her nieces what they already knew, that Mr Denny had brought him from London, and that he was to have a lieutenant’s commission in the –shire.’¹⁷⁶ Whilst the scene may hardly seem enough to be foreboding regarding Wickham’s true character, either to Elizabeth or the reader, it indicates an alarming quickness to welcome Wickham without any knowledge of his person or history. Despite having no reputation or connections to recommend him, Wickham’s newly purchased profession immediately affords him an invitation to the Philips for dinner and subsequently to all social engagements in the neighbourhood. Wickham’s unquestioned integration into Meryton’s social sphere is based solely on his being now an officer and that he is ‘far beyond [his fellows] in person, countenance, air and walk’¹⁷⁷.

As Tim Fulford notes, ‘men got commissions in the local militias without needing ever to have owned a residence in the area – thus they could acquire social status regardless of their merit or their reputation’¹⁷⁸. In Wickham, Austen realises that fear hinted at by Roche in *Clermont’s De Sevignie*: that as much as a man may look and sound like a hero, he could still be revealed to be a villain. Elizabeth is so impressed by Wickham’s appearance and his manner that she fails to question the legitimacy of his story or her own reactions. That Wickham should so quickly and easily reveal his history with Darcy to a society already acquainted with the gentleman does not occur to Elizabeth; influenced by her own bias against Darcy and her attraction to Wickham the impropriety of his sharing such a story so early in acquaintance goes unchecked. Wickham’s story of Darcy is not the only missed signal of his true character. Discussing ‘more general topics’ with ‘gentle but very intelligible gallantry’¹⁷⁹ Wickham informs Elizabeth that ‘it was the prospect of constant society, and good society [...] which was my chief inducement to enter the –shire.’¹⁸⁰ He knew the regiment to be, he claims, ‘a most respectable, agreeable corps’ and was persuaded by Denny’s account of the good society to be found at Meryton as his ‘spirits will not

¹⁷⁵ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p6

¹⁷⁶ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p55

¹⁷⁷ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p57

¹⁷⁸ Fulford, p157

¹⁷⁹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p59

¹⁸⁰ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p59

bear solitude'¹⁸¹. Wickham's purpose for taking a commission is, by his own admission, far from altruistic: he seeks profit and company, and the pleasures that both bring. Wickham's reasons for entering the militia were not uncommon; unlike the regular army, even with the threat of invasion on the horizon, the militia enjoyed shorter marches, better conditions, and were far less likely to come to any physical harm. As such, the promise of elevated social status and personal income without the hardship or danger of a regular commission was incitement for many young men to enter the militia. But this idea of soldiering for profit complicated the soldier's heroism: whilst it was reasonable for the soldier to be rewarded financially for his personal sacrifice, there was an anxiety that soldiering for profit might pervert the values of the profession. This tension between the soldier and his wages problematised the idea of the soldier as a champion of national virtue, a manly hero willing to sacrifice himself for the defence of his country. Austen, conscious of the realities of polite society and the need for many young men of respectable families to find employment, appears to have largely rejected too this notion – influenced perhaps by her own two younger brothers' naval careers – when it comes to active service, evidenced by her portrayal of Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility*, William Price in *Mansfield Park* and the naval officers of *Persuasion*. The militia, however, are not afforded such preferential treatment.

Wickham is able to control the situation at Meryton because he is trained to be pleasing, aware of his own good looks, and his appeal to women. That Wickham is so pleasing should be a warning to Lizzie and the rest of the society at Meryton, but Wickham is no fop: his behaviour is artful and performed, constructed to be pleasing to women in a way that should signal transgression and subversion but that is neither effeminate or foppish because it works within his identity as an officer. What Wickham implies is that the soldier was becoming an increasingly problematic model of masculinity; complicated by the distant violence of actual warfare and the performed military discipline of the militia. As Napoleon Bonaparte used his military might to seize power, undermining the very values the Revolution had sought to install, the anxiety that heroism was a quality too much performed to be trustworthy seems to have grown. Like *Clermont*, *Pride and Prejudice* suggests that war has complicated the ways in which masculinity could be judged and decoded. Mr Wickham is able to easily perform the role of the wronged, noble gentleman and Elizabeth, too used to being able to easily read the characters of her limited country society, fails to question or interrogate his behaviour. The system, *Pride and Prejudice* suggests, has been broken: Wickham's villainy is not discovered or suspected because he is neither a fop nor a rake, and so his performativity goes unnoticed. The issue is not that Elizabeth is insensible to the reason why Wickham's behaviour is suspect, but that she does not

¹⁸¹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p60

acknowledge it until after Darcy's revelation. As with *Northanger Abbey*, the concern here is that the Gothic's attempt to instruct its readers to question not only the reasons of others but their own emotional responses has been lost in the mundanity of middle and upper-class society. Unlike the Gothic heroines, who are actively terrorised by those who would ruin them, Elizabeth is too far removed from the violence of the war and Napoleon's desire for conquest to consider herself under threat or in danger: she has never had any reason to check her responses or question her emotions, never needed to restrain her sensibility or her imagination. Conscious of proper manners and social graces, able to discern the snobbery of characters such as Caroline Bingley and the simpering ridiculousness of Mr Collins, both Elizabeth and the reader have no reason to suspect that her assumptions may be misguided. In revealing Wickham the villain and Darcy the hero, proving Elizabeth fundamentally wrong in her reading of both men, Austen subverts the conventions of the Gothic whilst simultaneously reinforcing its anxieties about masculinity.

What both *Northanger Abbey* and *Pride and Prejudice* do, then, is reimagine the concerns and anxieties of the Gothic about masculinity within the domestic sphere. In response to a society rapidly altering to accommodate the demands of war, Austen perceived a need to abandon the Gothic analogy in favour of realism to demonstrate that the lessons taught by authors like Ann Radcliffe were not so far-fetched and fantastical as they might seem. What these novels suggest is that the dangers of performed masculinity, which threatened to pervert and transgress, were not limited to recognisable archetypes such as the fop, the rake or the man of feeling. The rise of nationalism, the need to support the nation and defend its borders permitted the violent hypermachismo of men like John Thorpe, whilst the desperate need to expand the ranks of the army meant that men such as General and Captain Tilney, Colonel Forster and Mr Wickham might enjoy the good reputation and respect commanded by the soldier without embracing the military's values or duties. Though Austen may not have been a Gothic writer, her work nonetheless engages with the concerns and fears that Gothic expressed, realising them in the domestic sphere whilst continuing to respond to an ever-changing state of war. What Austen's novels do is begin an exploration of the consequences and impact of wars on the lives of the women who lived through them; an exploration taken up by the more overtly Gothic writer Mary Shelley.

Mary Shelley's 1823 novel *Valperga, or the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* has been regarded by previous scholarship as a historical rather than a Gothic novel. The text's medieval setting, its engagement with Catholicism, the sublime, and notions of barbarity, and its supernatural elements – though somewhat ambiguous, the second heroine, Beatrice, is a 'prophetess' and the novel includes scenes of supposed witchcraft – place it firmly within the

Gothic tradition. The novel's choice of protagonist also aligns *Valperga* with the Radcliffean Gothic: the central character, Castruccio, is the powerful leader of an army of condottieri that *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* Montoni aspires to be. In her first novel after *Frankenstein* (1818), Shelley carefully and extensively researched the real Castruccio during her stay at Pisa; as Stuart Curran notes, 'few novels of the early nineteenth century are so meticulously grounded in historical sources.'¹⁸² Deviating from Niccolo Machiavelli's much embellished *Life of Castruccio Castracani* (1520), Shelley grounded the novel in geographical and historical accuracy but made adjustments and alterations of her own, chiefly the inclusion of the two female characters: Euthanasia and Beatrice. The novel describes itself within the text as being comprised of 'private chronicles'¹⁸³ – another element which places *Valperga* within the Gothic mode – which Curran suggests was an important distinction: public histories were preoccupied with the details of battles and the men who fought them but lacked intimacy, emotion, and, perhaps most significantly, women. As Angela Wright notes, authors such as Austen and Shelley 'renegotiated the porous boundaries of romance, historical novel and 'Gothic story' in order to explore the hidden, often Gothic histories of women, those dissonances between female experience and the more formal annals of history.'¹⁸⁴ What both Austen and Shelley do in these novels is re-centre war in the domestic sphere and in female experiences, using the conventions laid down by the Gothic novelists of the late 1700s to consider and remember that war is not contained to the battlefield.

In its depiction of an Italy torn apart by the 'the antient[sic] quarrels of the Guelphs and the Ghibelines', which had been resumed 'with renovated zeal, under the new distinctions of the *Bianchi* and the *Neri*'¹⁸⁵, *Valperga* consciously demonstrates the terrible realities for women living through an age of war, with tragic consequences. Although not published until eight years after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Curran suggests that Shelley's early work on *Valperga* must have been begun sometime in 1817, just two years after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. The novel's connection to Napoleon has been well defined: Percy Bysshe Shelley referred to Castruccio as 'a little Napoleon', whilst Michael Rossington has identified that contemporary reviewers took issue with the 'obvious' parallels between Castruccio's narrative and Bonaparte's.¹⁸⁶ But *Valperga*, unlike the Gothic of the 1790s and the early novels of Jane Austen, is not a wartime novel but a *post-war* novel: in its depictions of the violence and ravages of war

¹⁸² Stuart Curran, *Valperga*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Shelley*, edn. by Esther Schor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103–115, p106

¹⁸³ Mary Shelley, *Valperga, or the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), p378

¹⁸⁴ Angela Wright, *Mary Shelley* (University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 2018)

¹⁸⁵ Shelley, p5

¹⁸⁶ Michael Rossington, in *Mary Shelley, Valperga, or the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), pxi

in the fourteenth century, the text reflects the aftershocks of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte had been the celebrated hero of the Revolution's forces, a brave and valorous leader who had claimed martial superiority over the monarchist forces of the First Coalition. A pamphlet published after Napoleon's November 1799 coup titled *Les Adieux de Bonaparte* – a 'hastily translated'¹⁸⁷ version of which was published in English as *France after the Revolution of Bonaparte* – hailed Bonaparte as a force that had 'darted from the crowd, illuminated like a meteor'¹⁸⁸ to lead the Revolutionary armies to triumph. By the end of 1799, Napoleon was regarded to have 'shewed himself to be an able warrior and generous conqueror' whose 'exploits gave lustre to [the French's] national reputation': in his victories he had 'prepared happiness for France by procuring peace'¹⁸⁹. The language of the pamphlet, however, is in itself contradictory and conflicting: how could a military leader both excel at war and bring peace, or successfully conquer whilst remaining generous? By the May of 1804 Napoleon's identity was no longer that of the Revolution's hero but Emperor of France, establishing an increasingly autocratic regime. By 1823, Shelley was responding not only to the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat in 1815 but, as Curran suggests, the continuation of a hegemony of tyranny¹⁹⁰ as Bonaparte's regime was replaced not by a new democracy but by the Hapsburg Emperor of Austria.

This narrative of the failure of military heroism and its eventual descent into tyranny is at the heart of *Valperga*. Castruccio begins the novel as a young man who has been wrongfully and violently forced from his homeland and his childhood by the persistent conflict between the two factions, and his dreams of chivalric glory are fuelled by the hope that one day he may return to Lucca and bring stability to his people. Yet the more Castruccio commits to his military identity, the more his capacity for empathy and sensibility diminishes. Castruccio's command of the Ghibellines, Curran argues, 'represented an oppressive centralised authority exerted over all Europe and embodied in a single man'¹⁹¹ that mirrored Napoleon's rise and fall, but also drew attention to the conflict at the very heart of military masculinity and the pursuit of war. Florence, the heroine Euthanasia's beloved native city, is used by Shelley to create 'a republican vision of civic polity that pointed the way for a new political order in a post Napoleonic era'¹⁹² that is almost destroyed by Castruccio's increasing lust for power and war. Castruccio's

¹⁸⁷ Joseph Michaud. *France after the revolution of Bonaparte, on the eighth of November, 1799* (A. Dulau and Co: Soho, 1800) in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <http://find.gale.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&docLevel=FASCIMILE&prodId=ECCO&userGroup=Name=su_uk&tabID=T001&docId=CW3303796686&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0> [accessed 6th December 2019], p4

¹⁸⁸ Michaud, p5

¹⁸⁹ Michaud, p7

¹⁹⁰ Curran, p109

¹⁹¹ Curran, p108

¹⁹² Curran, p109

persistent desire to make war with Florence, driven by a quest for vengeance which permeates the entire novel, results in a state of barbarity and destruction in the name of one man's quest for power that echoes Napoleon's betrayal of the Revolution:

From Altopascio, Castruccio advanced with his army to the very gates of Florence. The peasants fled before him, and took refuge, with what property they could save in the city; the rest became the prey of the Lucchese army, who marked their progress by fire and devastation. All the harvests had been brought in; but Castruccio's soldiers wreaked their vengeance upon the fields, tearing up and burning the vines, cutting down the olive woods, seizing or burning the winter-stock, and reducing the cottages of the poor to a heap of formless ruins.¹⁹³

This senseless, indiscriminate violence is a stark contrast to the skirmishes of Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* in 1789 but fatally fulfils the fears of novels such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Clermont* in the 1790s. In *Valperga*, war's reach is extended as even the peaceful, civilised idylls of Florence and the castle of Valperga fall prey to the violent disruptions of war.

What *Valperga* embodies then, in the journey of Castruccio from a promising hero to a destructive, authoritarian tyrant, is a complete failure of chivalry. Castruccio begins the text 'an apt and sprightly boy bold in action' but 'careless of consequences, and governed only by his affection for his parents.'¹⁹⁴ Driven from Lucca, Castruccio spends his adolescence in the care of his father's friend and former brother in arms, Gunigi, a man 'of about forty'. Although 'the hardships of war had thinned the locks on his temples before their time, and drawn a few lines in his' Gunigi is a man who '[beams] with benevolence'¹⁹⁵ and has rejected violence in favour of farming. With Gunigi and his young son Arrigo, Castruccio passes his adolescent years in rural peace and pastoral simplicity: although initially disappointed – having seen 'a gay banner waving from the keep of the castle, as he heard the clash of armour, and beheld the sun-beams glitter on the arms of the centinel'¹⁹⁶ on his arrival to the region – in Gunigi's peaceful endeavours, 'he soon found that he was introduced to a new world' of 'simple but sublime morality [...] of the duty of man to man, laying aside the distinctions of society'¹⁹⁷. But although Gunigi attempts to encourage his charge to share in his hopes 'to lay a foundation-stone for the temple of peace among the Euganean hills'¹⁹⁸, the young Castruccio's 'thoughts always dwelt on the power which he would one day acquire, and the protection he would then afford to others.'¹⁹⁹ The young Castruccio, in the early portions of the novel, however still embodies the

¹⁹³ Shelley, p337

¹⁹⁴ Shelley, p10

¹⁹⁵ Shelley, p25

¹⁹⁶ Shelley, p26

¹⁹⁷ Shelley, p26

¹⁹⁸ Shelley, p27

¹⁹⁹ Shelley, p31

heroic ideals of chivalric but sentimental masculinity not dissimilar to Radcliffe's Valancourt or Vivaldi: whilst his education with Gunigi 'had indued him with a manliness of thought and firmness of judgement beyond his years' the 'vivacity of his temper often made him appear rash, and the gaiety of his disposition led him to seek with ardour the common diversions of his age.'²⁰⁰ The Castruccio that lands in England in 1307, seeking to further his education and his quest to prove himself in the pursuit of the martial arts, echoes the Gothic heroes of the 1790s:

He was bred as a young esquire in all those accomplishments which were deemed essential to a gentleman, and was expert in feats of horsemanship and arms, in the dance, and in other exercises peculiar to his country. His countenance, which was uncommonly beautiful, expressed frankness, benevolence and confidence; when animated, his eyes shone with fire; when silent, there was a deep seriousness in his expression, that commanded attention, combined at the same time with a modesty and grace which prepossessed every one in his favour. [...] He had read little; but he had conversed with those who had studied deeply, so that his conversation and manners were imbued with that refinement and superior sweetness, which are peculiar to those who unite the cultivation of the mind to exterior accomplishments.²⁰¹

The eighteen year old Castruccio is possessed of heroic potential, courageous and ambitious but unaffected and sensitive. Castruccio's education, too, avoids the pitfalls of military schooling that Wollstonecraft had warned against in 1792: rather than the prescriptive, potentially effeminising military training that *Vindications of the Rights of Woman* criticised, Castruccio learns by the experience of others through intellectual conversation. But in contrast to Radcliffe's Osbert, the sublimity of the landscape and the peace of Gunigi's agricultural lifestyle are unable to sufficiently temper or refine Castruccio's militaristic impulse. During his time in the English court, amongst the company of Edward II and Piers Gaveston, and later with the Italian general Scoto, Castruccio begins to learn the arts of power and political intrigue. Despite his early capacity for refined sensibility, Castruccio is too easily swayed by the allure of military glory to maintain it. Where once 'his mind had been innocence, and all his thoughts were honour', 'the court of England had infused some laxity in his moral creed' which Scoto, his 'crafty instructor', takes advantage of.²⁰² As Castruccio continues to make war, slowly building his allegiances and personal power, the further away he moves from his heroic masculinity. Initially driven by the desire to retake his homeland, to avenge his father, and to become powerful enough to protect his people, the more success Castruccio enjoys the more corrupt his morals become. Despite the pleas of his beloved childhood friend Euthanasia, now the Countess of Valperga, who dreams of bringing peace to the region, Castruccio is unable to set aside war. After spending a peaceful winter in Lucca and in the company of Euthanasia, Castruccio joins

²⁰⁰ Shelley, p36

²⁰¹ Shelley, p37

²⁰² Shelley, p47

the army of the condottieri leader Uggucione in his campaign against the Florentines: the 'long and bloody battle' sees Uggucione's son Francesco killed and the duty of command fall to Castruccio. Rallying his men, Castruccio 'saw above the high seated castle that he must storm; he saw the closely set ranks of the enemy' and 'his spirits were exhilarated, his heart swelled, – tears – tears of high and uncontrollable emotion filled his eyes'²⁰³. After the battle, 'his cheek [...] pale from the consequences of his wound', Castruccio's figure appears to Euthanasia enhanced by his experience in battle: 'Truly did he look a hero; for the power sat on his brow, and victory seemed to have made itself a home among the smiles of his lips.'²⁰⁴ Despite Euthanasia's interior conflict – dismayed at the violence but also in love with Castruccio, the battle 'excited in her feelings of confusion and sorrow'²⁰⁵ – when she beholds Castruccio, rendered the wounded hero, and hears his victory speech she is moved in his favour: 'Upon such words could but pardon and reconciliation attend?'²⁰⁶ Castruccio's believes, however, 'that the sword has made [him] master of peace and war'²⁰⁷ and so Euthanasia's ability to forgive his violence cannot last. The more he is victorious, the more Castruccio desires war and the further he moves from his original intention. Although the initial depictions of Castruccio at war demonstrate his soul enlivened and his qualities brought to life by his martial activities, he is 'shown to 'decay' and 'decline' under his unflagging pursuit of conquest, revenge and war.'²⁰⁸ Crucially, as Wright notes, this decline is framed and communicated to the reader chiefly through Euthanasia, who witnesses the loss of his chivalry and sensibility with horror. That it is Euthanasia who bears witness to Castruccio's violence and who feels its destructive potential not only signals the failure of his chivalry but reminds the reader that although women were not often present in battle, they were nonetheless its victims.

By his thirty-third year, having 'now been lord of Lucca for six years', Castruccio's character 'was formed; and his physiognomy, changed from his youthful expression, had become impressed by his habitual feelings.'²⁰⁹ We learn that 'the strong emotions' of anger, pride and revenge 'to which he was subject, had left their mark on his countenance'²¹⁰. The adult Castruccio is markedly changed: 'his eye had grown hollow, and the smooth lustre of his brow was diminished by lines' of which 'some, more straggling and undefined, shewed those passions whose outwards signs he suppressed, yet preyed upon the vital principle; his eyes had not last

²⁰³ Shelley, p99

²⁰⁴ Shelley, p100

²⁰⁵ Shelley, p100

²⁰⁶ Shelley, p101

²⁰⁷ Shelley, p101

²⁰⁸ Wright, p74

²⁰⁹ Shelley, p335

²¹⁰ Shelley, p335

their fire, but his softness was gone.’²¹¹ The change in Castruccio is gradual yet unavoidable; although his deviation from chivalry culminates in his betrayal of Euthanasia and his campaign against Valperga, each victorious campaign sees the slow abandonment of his early heroic passions and principles. The more violent Castruccio becomes, the more he is fulfilled. When he is manipulated by Galeazzo Visconti to finally make war against Florence, having chosen to maintain peace initially out of respect for Euthanasia (though still making war elsewhere), ‘the latent flame in the soul of Castruccio; a flame covered, but not extinguished’ is set alight:

He swore the destruction of the Guelphs, and interminable war to Florence; and his blood flowed more freely, his eyes shone brighter, his soul was elevated to joy, when he thought that one day he might be the master of that proud city.²¹²

Castruccio’s fall comes not because his heroic sensibilities are corrupted, the novel suggests, but because chivalric, martial masculinity is unsustainable. In his pursuit of war, regardless of his initially honest intentions, Castruccio cannot maintain his heroism or his sensibility. His campaign against Florence does not serve to protect his people or bring stability to the region, but rather his quest for revenge and his personal power.

This corrupting, destructive nature of war is highlighted in the staunchly anti-war sentiments and speeches of the principal heroine, Euthanasia, who as Countess attempts to use her power to resist the constant conflict and maintain stability for her people. Euthanasia, for whom ‘a hatred and fear of war’ is a ‘strong and ruling passion in [her] heart’²¹³, is conscious of the ravages and ruin that war brings to the region and attempts to soften Castruccio’s passion for combat. Yet even Euthanasia, whose form ‘was shaped according to those rules by which the exquisite statues of the antients[sic] have been modelled’²¹⁴ and who ‘expressed the softest sensibility’ alongside ‘a wisdom exalted by enthusiasm, a wildness tempered by self-command’²¹⁵, is ultimately unable to prevent Castruccio’s descent into tyranny. Whereas previous Gothic texts had used the castle as the domain of the villain, used to detain and distress the heroine, the castle of Valperga functions as an extension of Euthanasia’s sensibility and represents the potential for a peaceful, matriarchal state without war. *Valperga* also continues the narrative of complicated heroism begun by Radcliffe and Roche, as the hero transitions into a villain: unlike Valancourt, Castruccio’s love for Euthanasia does not preserve or redeem his heroic nature. Instead Castruccio’s increasingly paranoid state, antagonised by his position as a leader, is used by others to manipulate Castruccio to move against Euthanasia despite his affection for her and their peace agreement. Unlike other Gothic villains Castruccio, Wright

²¹¹ Shelley, p335

²¹² Shelley, p141

²¹³ Shelley, p112

²¹⁴ Shelley, p87

²¹⁵ Shelley, p88

argues, does not move against Valperga because he wishes to possess the castle and Euthanasia with it, but because her peaceful society threatens him. 'Castruccio lays claim to the castle', Wright argues, 'in order to erase its existence.'²¹⁶ To maintain 'the supremacy of necessity' Castruccio must silence 'any counter-narrative, any voice of protest': as a champion for peace and a critic of his violence, 'Castruccio's erasure of Euthanasia's castle is an attempt to erase her significance.'²¹⁷ If, as Wright claims, Castruccio's campaign against Valperga is an attempt to erase a counter-narrative, then arguably what *Valperga* demonstrates is that to maintain a narrative of military glory women must be erased. The actions of Castruccio dismantle and destroy the identities of both heroines: whilst Castruccio continues to make war indiscriminately, Euthanasia and Beatrice are made to suffer the consequences. Castruccio courts Euthanasia's love but ultimately refuses to fulfil her wishes for peace, eventually using his intimate knowledge of Valperga to forcibly remove her from the castle and confine her to Lucca. Stripped of her ancestral home and her identity as Countess to satisfy Castruccio's desperation to secure his power, after the death of Beatrice, Euthanasia is so dismayed by Castruccio's increasingly cruel and absolute rule that she is eventually persuaded to join a conspiracy against him. The plot is discovered, and although Castruccio is unable to move himself to sentence her to death as he has his other enemies, Euthanasia is arrested and imprisoned. Although 'full of dread and breathless expectation'²¹⁸ as she awaits her sentence, the brief scene of the heroine's imprisonment highlights the refinement of her character to further condemn that of Castruccio:

To remove a cruel tyrant from his seat of power,--to devote those days, which she might have spent in luxury and pleasure, to a deep solitude, where neither love nor sympathy would cheer her; – to bear his anger, perhaps his hate, and in the midst of all to preserve a firmness and sweetness, that might sustain her, and soften him, – to quit all her friends, and her native country for ever, to follow in the steps of one she had ceased to love, but to whom she felt herself for ever bound by her wish to preserve him from that misery which his crimes would ultimately occasion him: these were her errors.²¹⁹

Rather than put to death, Euthanasia is sentenced by Castruccio to banishment, again forcing her from her beloved Valperga and Florence and refusing her the identity she has attempted to craft for herself. But Castruccio's final determination – to save Euthanasia from a death sentence – is unsuccessful: the vessel set to transport her to Sicily is caught in a storm and 'nothing more was ever known'²²⁰.

²¹⁶ Wright, p81

²¹⁷ Wright, p81

²¹⁸ Shelley, p365

²¹⁹ Shelley, p365

²²⁰ Shelley, p376

The novel's second heroine, the Ancilla Dei turned Paterin Beatrice of Ferrara, similarly suffers a tragic fate: the daughter of a heretic who claimed to be the female embodiment of the Holy Spirit, Beatrice is raised in ignorance of her origins under the care of the Bishop of Ferrara. Despite being unaware of her mother's supposed powers and heresy, in her devout education Beatrice comes to believe herself a prophetess and is thus styled as an 'Ancilla Dei': a handmaiden of God. Castruccio, during his attempts to court alliances to further his political power, discovers Beatrice and is entranced by her beauty (though he has already promised himself to Euthanasia). Like Euthanasia, Beatrice is intrigued and allured by Castruccio's masculinity and casts off – spiritually and literally, by removing the plate that marks her as a handmaiden – her identity, believing 'that heaven itself had interfered to produce so true a paradise'²²¹ as a relationship with Castruccio. Beatrice's paradise with Castruccio, however, is short-lived: he must return to Lucca, and to Euthanasia. Realising she has been misled, Beatrice is left distraught. Although it 'stung [Castruccio] to reflect, that he was the cause of the sharpest pain to one who loved him' and that 'he knew her delusions, and ought not to have acted towards her'²²², Castruccio's shame and regret is short-lived. When Beatrice returns to the forefront of the plot, it is not into Castruccio's narrative but to Euthanasia's: her faith and her spirits broken by her encounter with Castruccio, it is Euthanasia, not Castruccio, who is placed as Beatrice's potential saviour. Having once met at Valperga during Beatrice's doomed pilgrimage, it is Euthanasia who acts on Beatrice's behalf to induce Castruccio to have her released after she is imprisoned by the Inquisition. Residing together at Lucca, the two women attempt to offer solace and recovery to one another: Euthanasia's quest to restore Beatrice's mind and rehabilitate her faith allows her to fulfil the desire to care for and nurture her subjects, which the loss of Valperga takes from her.

But despite the women's affection, and their shared journey towards recovery, they cannot ultimately escape the destruction wrought by Castruccio. Preyed upon by the witch, Mandragola, who hopes to use her as a means to destroy Castruccio, Beatrice suffers 'a shock which saner nerves than hers could hardly have sustained.'²²³ Although Beatrice's death is 'smoothed by the affectionate ministrations' of Euthanasia and is a delivery into peace, Euthanasia is denied her opportunity to grieve her friend or attend her funeral – though 'she longed for solitude to weep in peace' – and must instead be 'obliged to receive the visits of the Lucchese ladies, who came to condole her on this occasion, and perhaps to satisfy their curiosity concerning its object.'²²⁴ The novel's depiction of the mental, emotional, and physical distresses of the heroines and 'their

²²¹ Shelley, p173

²²² Shelley, p177

²²³ Shelley, p332

²²⁴ Shelley, p333

inability [...] to survive the fratricidal struggles of warring masculinity of the Middle Ages', Curran argues, 'is the true index of its history.'²²⁵ In *Euthanasia and Beatrice*, Shelley re-centers the narratives of war: in *Valperga* war's encroachment onto the domestic sphere is complete. The matriarchal space of Valperga, the idyllic republic of Florence, and the physical bodies of both heroines are dismantled by Castruccio's unending quest for military dominance. Chivalry, *Valperga* suggests, is a fallacy: the soldiers' heroism is fundamentally unsustainable. Whilst Castruccio begins the novel with noble intentions and chivalric sensibility, his war-making disregards the protection of feminine virtues and the heroines are instead consumed by his violence: a reality that is cemented in the death of Euthanasia. Despite her refinement, her excellent education, and her brilliance Euthanasia is condemned to be forgotten: 'She was never heard of more; even her name perished. She slept in the oozy cavern of the ocean, with the seaweed tangled with the her shining hair'²²⁶. But whilst 'the spirits of the deep wondered that the earth had trusted so lovely a creature to the barren bosom of the sea'²²⁷, Euthanasia's legacy and her history are erased. For all her superior qualities, 'Earth felt no change when she died; and men forgot her.'²²⁸ What is significant here is that Euthanasia's end serves to amplify the tragedy of her narrative and condemn that of Castruccio; the novel ends pages later, with the claim that the private chronicles ended with Euthanasia's death and that there is little more to tell of significance. This ending reiterates the novel's aim to contextualise war in female, rather than male, narrative. Euthanasia's passing signals the complete failure of Castruccio's masculinity, and with it the failure of chivalric masculinity. 'War's trauma', Ramsey and Russell argue, 'haunts post-war Romantic Britain'.²²⁹ What *Valperga's* bitterness and staunch anti-war sentiments demonstrate then is a post-war continuation of the wartime concerns of *Northanger Abbey* and *Pride and Prejudice*: that despite the attempts of earlier Gothic fiction to rehabilitate the soldier as hero, his violence and his pursuits of war fractured and corrupted his manliness.

²²⁵ Curran, p107

²²⁶ Shelley, p376

²²⁷ Shelley, p376

²²⁸ Shelley, p377

²²⁹ Ramsey and Russel, *Tracing War*

Conclusion

'This comes of the peace': War and the Gothic beyond the Napoleonic

Anne was tenderness itself, and she had the full worth of it in Captain Wentworth's affection. His profession was all that could ever make her friends wish that tenderness less, the dread of a future war all that could dim her sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm for belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance.

Jane Austen, *Persuasion*¹

Accompanying the Admiral and Mrs Croft in their carriage, Anne Elliot, the heroine of Jane Austen's final novel *Persuasion*, finds herself included in a conversation between the couple regarding Mrs Croft's brother, Captain Frederick Wentworth. The Crofts have become a fixture in Anne's Somersetshire society because they have taken the tenancy of Kellynch Hall, which has been placed for let thanks to the poor financial management of Anne's father, Sir Walter Elliot. The Crofts' arrival puts Anne once again in the company of Wentworth, whose proposal she had been persuaded to reject years before despite a genuine, shared affection. Although Wentworth's arrival is an occasion of some distress for Anne, the addition of a handsome, respectable, and decorated naval officer such as Captain Wentworth to their society is cause for celebration for the Miss Musgroves, Henrietta and Louisa. We learn early in the novel that the return of the Musgrove girls, 'young ladies of nineteen and twenty, who had brought from a school in Exeter all the usual stock of accomplishments'², to Uppercross has the family, 'like their houses', 'in a state of alteration, perhaps of improvement.'³ Whilst Mrs and Mrs Musgrove are firmly 'in the old English style'⁴ their children are 'firmly in the new', being of 'more modern minds and manners.'⁵ The Crofts suppose that as Wentworth, having made his name and his fortune during the Napoleonic Wars, is now able to settle in England and that the Miss Musgrove's having 'hardly any eyes but for him'⁶ since their meeting, they might expect an engagement before long. Wentworth's apparent indecisiveness as to exactly *which* of the Miss Musgroves he might select to be Mrs Wentworth, the Admiral supposes, is thanks to leisure

¹ Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, ed. by James Kinsley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

² Austen, *Persuasion*, p38

³ Austen, *Persuasion*, p37-8

⁴ Austen, *Persuasion*, p38

⁵ Austen, *Persuasion*, p38

⁶ Austen, *Persuasion*, p55

afforded by a period of peace: 'Ay, this comes of the peace. If it were war now, he would have settled it long ago. We sailors, Miss Elliot, cannot afford to make long courtships in time of war.'⁷

Persuasion has often been regarded as the most mature and retrospective of Austen's novels: as Deirdre Lynch notes, at twenty-seven Anne Elliot is older than any of Austen's previous heroines. Rather than a coming of age narrative or a lesson in introspection and self-awareness, *Persuasion* 'presents us with a heroine who has completed her growing up.'⁸ We learn from Sir Walter's perusal of the Baronetage that Anne was born on the 9th of August 1787, thus placing the first courtship of Anne and Wentworth at some time in 1806 and the events of the novel in 1814: the same year of the Treaty of Fontainebleau and Napoleon's exile to Elba. The following year however would see Napoleon return to France, the formation of the Seventh Coalition, and the final campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars (now known as the Hundred Days). By the summer of 1815 when Austen began drafting *Persuasion*, Lynch argues, 'Bonaparte had become a has-been: a relic of a past that Europe was resolutely putting behind it.'⁹ It was, Lynch suggests, 'an era of aftermath'¹⁰: an aftermath that *Persuasion* is both acutely aware of and intimately concerned with. In the novel's bittersweet, reflective prose is a narrative of change, and a change that is intrinsically connected to war. The novel's signalling of a shift in styles – of manners, houses, fashions, and more – and a move towards a new modernity is closely tied to the proceeding conflicts: whilst the Elliots can no longer afford to maintain the seat of their baronetage, an Admiral – a 'very hale, hearty, well-looking man, a little-weather beaten' – who is 'quite the gentleman in all his notions and manners' if not in his breeding can easily afford 'a ready-furnished house of [such] consequence' as Kellynch Hall.¹¹ The Napoleonic War's impact on Britain's social hierarchy and economy are evident in the financial stability of its naval characters. The Fredrick Wentworth who makes his suit to Anne Elliot in 1806 – a year in which, due to peace negotiations between Britain and France, there had been a general lull in military activity – is regarded as a young man 'who had nothing to recommend him, and no hopes of attaining affluence, but in the chances of a most uncertain profession.'¹² The Captain Fredrick Wentworth who is presented at Uppercross in 1814, however, is man of both status and means: thanks to 'the genius and ardour' of his character he 'had very soon after engagement ceased, got employ [...] He had distinguished himself, and early gained the other step in rank – and must now, by successive captures, have made a handsome fortune.'¹³ On the surface, then, *Persuasion*

⁷ Austen, *Persuasion*, p77

⁸ Deidre Lynch, 'Introduction' in *Persuasion*, ed. by James Kinsley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pvii

⁹ Lynch, pvii

¹⁰ Lynch, pvii

¹¹ Austen, *Persuasion*, p24

¹² Austen, *Persuasion*, p27

¹³ Austen, *Persuasion*, p29

is a novel about the powerful transformative potential offered by war: men who are unworthy, such as Sir Walter, suffer the loss of their estates and fortunes, becoming ridiculous relics of the pre-Napoleonic age, whilst those brave and earnest men, such as Admiral Croft and Captain Wentworth, are granted the titles, fortunes, and social mobility. Wentworth and his fellow officers reap the social rewards of their naval heroics, and even the snobbery of Sir Walter acknowledges that to say he has let Kellynch to Admiral Croft 'would sound very well; very much better to any mere *Mr.*'¹⁴

Yet beneath *Persuasion's* celebration of modernity and social change, hidden in Austen's wry prose and embedded even within its happy ending is a narrative of loss, uncertainty, and fear. Whilst the novel celebrates those who war has made successful, it is not silent on that other outcome of a military and naval professions: death. Although the story of the Musgrove's son Richard – the 'thick-headed, unfeeling, unprofitable' Dick Musgrove 'who had never done anything to entitle himself to more than the abbreviation of his name' – who is sent to sea 'because he was stupid and unmanageable on shore'¹⁵ is played for comic effect, it reminds us that the death of military men by the end of the Napoleonic era was far from uncommon. Numerous families, like the Musgroves, had sent sons to the army and to the navy over the course of the two decades the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars spanned: and many of those men never came back. So long and bloody was the conflict that young women such as Louisa Musgrove, at nineteen, had never known a Britain that was not at war. Others, such as the unfortunate Fanny Harville would spend their lives waiting for its conclusion without reward. Although Captain Benwick is eventually honoured with fortune and promotion, it comes too late: his fiancé 'did not live to know it. She had died the preceding summer while he was at sea.'¹⁶ Although in ways that are remarkably different from *Northanger Abbey*, war also threatens *Persuasion's* marriage plot. The felicity of Anne and Wentworth's reconciliation, declaration of love, and eventual union are complicated by the novel's final lines. Rather than ending on a scene of future marital bliss or familial contentment, *Persuasion* ends with anxiety: although we are told Anne 'gloried in being a sailor's wife', we learn also that 'she must pay the tax of quick alarm' of being tied to the Navy. If we are to assume the novel to be set in 1814, then what both the contemporary and modern reader of *Persuasion* must know is that the Napoleonic Wars were not over: indeed, some of its most famous and violent campaigns – including the Battle of Waterloo – were yet to come. Framed in this way, *Persuasion* becomes a tense, fraught text which demonstrates that the trauma of war was not so easily alleviated by times of peace. Admiral Croft's comments in the early portion of the novel and the narrator's comments at its

¹⁴ Austen, *Persuasion*, p25

¹⁵ Austen, *Persuasion*, p45

¹⁶ Austen, *Persuasion*, p81

end remind the reader of the insecurity and uncertainty of war, and of those identities forged within it. Peace, the ending seems to tell us, is not a permanent state of being: what is apparent in the final lines is that the very profession which has made Captain Wentworth a desirable, respectable suitor could also easily destroy the marital felicity it has helped to build.

What has become clear over the course of this research and as this thesis began to take shape, is that the Gothic's engagement with war and with ideas of military masculinity in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is more significant and more in depth than has been previously been acknowledged. What this thesis has sought to demonstrate is that the Gothic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was a literature of conflict: responding to the chaotic, ever-fluctuating but never fully tangible or visible nature of war. Born in the aftermath of the Seven Years War, the Gothic would become a literary model that attempted to employ the imagined, medieval past and the supernatural (be it explained or unexplained) to understand the shifting anxieties of the present. Within these Gothic landscapes, the figure of the soldier would find himself again and again cast as both the hero and villain. Whereas the pre-war Gothic of the late 1780s and early 1790s sought to rehabilitate the soldier as a hero in response to calls for a strong national British masculinity, the outbreak of actual war in 1793 would fundamentally fracture and disrupt his heroic identity. As war continued to rage - as coalitions were made and broken, grounds were won and lost, leaders rose and fell - the Gothic would attempt to employ its analogy as means to illuminate and comprehend its increasing encroachment on domestic spaces. What the novels of Ann Radcliffe, Regina Maria Roche, Mary Shelley, and - although not 'Gothic' in their style - Jane Austen would show after 1793 was a desire to emphasise the destructive capacities of war for both soldiers and civilians; to highlight that war was not confined to the battlefield, but that its reach could be felt even in the most rural of English villages. In turn the tensions between the desire for a strong national identity and the violence required to maintain it became, as I have shown, increasingly more fraught as the years passed. The ideals of sensibility and chivalry used to paint the soldier as a hero of valour and feeling in immediate aftermath of the Revolution would begin to fall apart as war continued to dominate Europe's landscape into the 1800s and the brutalities of campaigns were slowly and often fragmentedly reported back. By Mary Shelley's *Valperga* in 1823, the ideal would be all but torn asunder by the realisation that masculinities forged in war were too violent and unsustainable to be trusted as the protectors of virtue and peace.

As critics such as George Haggerty have noted, gender and gender roles were fluid concepts in the eighteenth century. But as this thesis has explored, Britain's increasing desire towards the end of the eighteenth century to define itself as a global power would require the creation of a clear, national model of British masculinity. As the nation continued to pursue its quest for

empire into the nineteenth century, it would increasingly look to its past and to its military glories as a means by which to define itself against – and often as superior to – those who they sought to conquer. This idea of a white, united British masculinity, the inheritor of ‘Anglo-Saxon’ glories and the defender of constitutional freedom, would be explicitly coded into the nation’s martial identity. But as Britain entered into a new period of modernity, so too would warfare: the rapid advancements in technology would change the art of war forever. Whilst the focus of this thesis is concerned with the origins of the Gothic and how the mode was shaped in reaction to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the Gothic’s fascination stretches far beyond 1823. Over the last two centuries, the Gothic has continued to interrogate the terror, horror, and anxiety surrounding war over a vast array of new mediums such as film, television, and video games. Equally, whilst the Gothic of the 1790s was concerned with the immediacy of war, Charlotte Smith’s letters (discussed in the Introduction) remind us that war also brings injury, loss, and enduring trauma: increasingly, particularly in the last two decades, it is this trauma and alienation of the returned soldier, rather than the active, that the Gothic has been used to explore. What is clear here, I hope, is that as a literature in which the anxieties, fears, and horrors of societies are explored, the Gothic has since its inception been crucial to the way in which war might be considered and discussed away from the battlefield: where the social, emotional, and personal ramifications may be considered alongside the endless cycle of territories won and conquests made.

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